



Saturday, September 19, 1998 11:58:10 AM



Message

**From:** ALTRUESDALE@NTS.EDU,Internet  
**Subject:** Re: 1999 WTS Meeting  
**To:** Bill Kostlevy

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Dear Bill,

Greetings from Kansas City late on Friday afternoon. I am trying to finish a few more tasks before heading home.

Thanks for your responses to the proposals. I agree that a number of strong proposals have arrived in response to the Call for Papers. I think that we can have a very profitable conference next March. Plans are also coming along well on the SNU campus. So the program should be printed and mailed with sufficient lead time.

Your letter led me to wonder whether or not you and I might differ regarding the roles of the first vice president and the executive committee in shaping the annual program. My understanding is that the role of the executive committee is advisory, not determinative. Finally, the composition of the program is the responsibility of the first vice president.

Last spring I received from Ken Collins a gracious statement of his willingness to participate in the 1999 program in any way that might be helpful. An undeveloped idea for a program component came to me by way of Barry Callen. But I have received no formal proposal from Ken. My commitment is to assign places on the program to persons who present clear proposals. Nevertheless, I think it is not too late to consider a proposal from Ken.

With regard to John Cobb, for numerous reasons I have no interest in pursuing the option of his responding to the keynote speaker.

With regard to some of the proposals being too technical, my response is that the Call for Papers intentionally invited a wide variety of topics and degrees of specialization. While I too believe strongly that topics of immediate pastoral significance should be welcome in the WTS, I also believe that topics developed by scholars working in specialized areas should be welcome. Given the fact that the schedule provides a number of parallel sessions, a person need not attend sessions he or she finds unattractive. I would hope that WTS offers a venue in which budding young scholars can "try their wings." and sharpen their communicative skills.

Short of actually soliciting papers that deal with specified areas, I don't know how to guarantee more papers in biblical studies. As you know, the Call for Papers went to all of the members. Persons in all the disciplines have opportunity to respond. I have to work with the proposals that persons choose to submit. A number of the current proposals do represent biblical studies.

I need to know when you will be available for a conference call. Please refer to the from I attached to the proposals and let me know of your availability.

In a few weeks I will need to print the program. I would appreciate receiving information regarding how the printing costs should be paid. Also, what is the procedure for mailing copies of the program?

I will appreciate receiving names of persons you believe could serve as conveners of the parallel sessions.

Cordially,

Al Truesdale

<Bill\_Kostlevy@ms1.ats.wilmore.ky.us> 09/17 10:43 AM >>>

Al,

I am sending my evaluation of the WTS proposals through the mail. We have some very strong proposals.

By the way, I had been led to believe that Ken Collins had submitted a proposed debate with Randy Maddox. If this is true, I think it would be a fun exchange worth the price of going to Oklahoma.

Also, have you thought of inviting John Cobb? He is a member and has shown considerable interest in the theme. How about a Cobb-Wayne Meeks exchange?

I do have several reservations about the conference. We seem very weak in Biblical Studies proposals. My experience with WTS suggests that Biblical Studies folks will feel let out. Also, I am concerned about the abstract nature of many of the proposals. I am suspicious of academic jargon and those who use it. Do we really expect people to set through a paper, such as the one proposed by Brint Montgomery? This is especially true of Post Moderism--an abstraction that means different things to different people. As you know, the majority of our members are pastors. Although in most cases they also scholars, they may not be patient with a conference filled with abstractions and elitist academic jargon.

I do think many of the proposals are very strong and this has the potential to be a very good conference, but I think we need to consciously lighten the program.

Bill K.

This is especially true of an inter-disciplinary society such as WTS.