

# Jon Dybdahl

(MA '66, BD '67, adjunct faculty, *Andrews Study Bible* editor)

## **When and how were you approached to consider the editorship of the *Andrews Study Bible*?**

In the fall of 2007 I received a phone call from Niels-Erik Andreassen. In our conversation he explained the idea of a study Bible and wondered if I might be interested in being the general editor. Over the next couple of weeks in several conversations we discussed the project in detail. It was clear Andreassen was enthusiastic about the study Bible and in the end I let him know I was happy to accept the challenge.

## **What interested you in the idea?**

I was very interested in the project for several reasons. First, I sensed that we were not as biblically knowledgeable as we should be. I thought the study Bible would encourage serious Bible study. I also learned that the project committee was interested in making the study Bible widely available internationally. Knowing the needs around the world, this fact excited me because I felt the study Bible would encourage contextual Bible study and broaden and deepen understanding of the great Bible themes. Even if we were only partially successful in these areas it would greatly benefit the cause of God.

## **Were you involved with the process of selecting the writers on the team and how were those decisions made?**

The project committee asked me to submit a list of possible contributors for their input and approval. I then contacted the names we had agreed on. All contributors were invited to a one-day meeting at Andrews where we discussed details of the project and assigned the specifics of each contributor's work. In the selection I deliberately tried to match the writing assignments to the special area of expertise of the writers. You can note that all the contributors have doctoral degrees in an area of specialty. We wanted the work to be based on solid in-depth scholarship but written on a level the average reader could understand. We also made a deliberate attempt to recruit a widely diverse group that demonstrated the international character of the church. Our church has many wonderful scholars who would have made great contributions but we could only choose so many based on these criteria.

## **What new insights did you gain from the study notes?**

As editor, I was the first one able to read the work of the contributors. I was convinced as I read how rich the church is in biblical scholarship. I realized how often we have not taken advantage of this richness and what a great opportunity the study Bible was to begin to share this treasure with others.

## **Are you satisfied with the finished product?**

I am sure there are flaws in our work, but I am very pleased with the finished product. I think the quality of scholarship as well as the actual volume itself is something the Church can be very pleased with. I am guessing that there will be translations into other languages soon and perhaps even editions based on other English Bible translations.

## **What do you hope it will accomplish for our community of faith?**

My hope and prayer would be that the study Bible leads to a renewal of serious Bible study which not only is intellectually sound but impacts in a positive way the spiritual life of those who use this Bible. Plans are also being made to use the Bible in evangelism around the world which is exciting.

Photo by Chris Drake

