



James C. Peterson

# What Has Been Accomplished, and How Much More Needs to Be Done

**T**he initial theme for this issue is neurology, experience, and care for those dealing with Alzheimer's. As our population ages and with no cure yet in sight, if we are not already caring for a relative with this condition, the odds are that we will, or will experience it directly ourselves. That is a daunting challenge, but not one that we face alone. Bryan Auday overviews the impact and current understanding of the condition. He also raises key questions for the Christian tradition as to how to live with such a challenge—whether as a patient or among those caring for them. Suzanne Cahill and Ana Diaz-Ponce tap the social sciences for insights into the experience of Alzheimer's in a worship-centered retirement community. Then Elise Eifert describes the difference that the Christian faith and others can make for caregivers.

As a bonus after the theme articles, three of our Brazilian colleagues—Jonathan Freitas, Matheus Salgado, and Guilherme de Carvalho—bring computational tools to analyze the article content of two journals addressing science and Christian faith. Specifically, they studied this journal, *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith (PSCF)*, and the journal of the United Kingdom's Christians in Science titled *Science and Christian Belief*. The study categorizes the focus of articles in sometimes surprising ways. For example, two of the four articles of the *PSCF* animal theme issue did not fall under the category "Animal." By their analysis, one article in that theme issue was more focused on "Humanity" and another on "Broader Discussions." As an interdisciplinary journal, even the conversations of a theme issue are enriched and applied in a wider context.

It is noteworthy as well that, by definition, any sample has limits. The article surveys the five years from 2011–2015. The first issue published after the study period had four essays on the history of science and faith interactions. If that issue had fallen within the five years of the study, the proportion of historical articles would have been markedly different. Some

areas of investigation seem perennial, such as how to read the opening chapters of Genesis as we learn more from cosmology, genetics, anthropology, and hermeneutics. Yet, even within continuing topics, the study sees marked movement. Many ideas that were controversial when they first appeared in the journal have become routine as the discussion moves on to further questions.

What is most evident in the Freitas, Salgado, and de Carvalho article is that there is a striking breadth of investigation in *PSCF* from multiple disciplines. In the last issue of *PSCF*, the articles were written by a biologist, psychologist, historian, and physicist. Here, in this issue, we hear from the expertise of a neurologist, social scientists, and statisticians. Bringing into dialogue the best of the sciences with arguably the world's most global movement—the Christian tradition—raises countless points for interaction, challenge, and insight. With that breadth, this journal is unusually well positioned to tackle interdisciplinary challenges such as it does with Alzheimer's in this issue. Granted, it is a challenge for authors in *PSCF* to be true to the methods and insights of their own disciplines while, at the same time, speaking in a way accessible to readers expert in yet other disciplines—but it is well worth the effort.

Findings in one field can confirm or launch work in another. We have seen in these pages informative exchanges and expositions on creation care, teaching math, the nature of God, multiverses, the cognitive science of religion, fracking, science fiction as a tool of technology evaluation, phase transition from chaos to order, medicine and miracles, the possibility and role of chance in God's providence, open source software, bioethics, and more. In their article, Freitas, Salgado, and de Carvalho encourage us to reflect on what has been accomplished, and how much more needs to be done. ❖

**James C. Peterson**, editor-in-chief