

## The Fraser Prize 2019

The question set for the Fraser Prize 2019 was the topic of the Scottish Church Theology Society conference, which was held later, in January 2020:

*The Borderlands of Philosophy: Some Contact Points with Theology*

The Fraser prize title for 2019 was very broad in scope and authors were invited to submit papers on the following five topics: the relation of God to the world; theological or philosophical reflections on the meaning of life; poetry and the poet's world; belief/atheism and Creation; philosophy/theology and the concept of God .

The winning paper was by Derek King who is studying at the University of St Andrews. The title of the essay is:

*How to Tell Jerusalem From Athens: How a Faith-Methodology Distinguishes Theology from Philosophy*

The paper examines aspects of the fifth topic: the relation of philosophy, theology and the concept of God. The essay argues for a fundamental distinction between philosophy of religion and a faith-methodology and, at the same time, explores the nature of a scientific understanding of theology. A key distinction is made between the use of concepts and ideas in the philosophy of religion, on the one hand, and the importance of a faith commitment and personal knowledge on the other. Theologians, first and foremost study a *person*. Or as King argues, a faith-methodology is ‘a mode of operation whereby faith determines the practices and context of the discipline and is not merely incidental to it.’

The opinion of the Reading Panel was that ‘... while at the same time developing a constructive approach in its handling of the topic and engaging creatively with the chosen subject [...] this essay set out a concise argument for a clear distinction between theology and philosophy ...’.