

## Studying the Manuscripts

The early manuscripts have taught us a lot about the stability of the text, but there is an equal amount of value to be found in the later manuscripts. From the sheer wealth of information we learn about the things that go wrong in copying and the things that rarely go wrong. Knowledge of what copying is helps us to understand how the differences between the manuscripts arose and were transmitted. As some modern translations draw attention to the differences that exist between manuscripts it will be illuminating to see how and for what reasons textual decisions are made.

**Dirk Jongkind** is a Dutch biblical scholar who finished his PhD at Cambridge University. His main scholarly interest is in the Greek text of the Bible and the Graeco-Roman backdrop of Acts and the letters. Currently, he is the Research Fellow in New Testament Text and Language at Tyndale House, Deputy Senior Tutor at St Edmund's College, Cambridge, and affiliated lecturer at Cambridge University. He has done much work on Greek manuscripts and other remains from the ancient world.

- I. The Wealth of Evidence: Extensive Manuscripts
  - A. From the fourth century and later
  - B. Also in languages other than Greek
  - C. Detailed study possible
- II. What is Copying?
  - A. From one page to the other: overview
  - B. Typical errors
  - C. Knowledge of errors helps to understand transmission
- III. The Rise of the Standard Church Text
  - A. Influence of liturgy
  - B. Influence of comprehensibility
- IV. How to Use Knowledge of Copying and the Manuscripts Apologetically?
  - A. Complex issues cannot be reduced to one-liners
  - B. Confidence in the text
  - C. Why a single variant has only limited effect
  - D. The boundaries of our knowledge