

Man And Woman In God's World

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“Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” So states the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution. As of today, this amendment needs to be ratified by only four more states in order to become the law of the land. If it is adopted, NOW, the National Organization for Women, one of its chief sponsors, will be able to chalk up another victory in its relentless drive to place women on an equal plane with men and to eliminate all distinctions between them so far as this is humanly possible.

The issue of the role and rights of women is undoubtedly one of the burning questions of our day. Since the early 60's a vocal and well-organized women's liberation movement has successfully promoted the passage of new women's rights legislation and the reinterpretation of existing laws in this direction.

The effects on the social, political, economic, and family life of our nation have been far-reaching. Employers have had to change their policies and practices so as to give women equal pay and equal opportunity with men. Schools have had to change their enrollment policies, their phy. ed. and scholarship programs, and their procedures in hiring and promoting teachers. Even the Supreme Court decision legalizing non-therapeutic abortion was a direct result of the propaganda and pressure of the new feminism.

But the women's liberation movement is also reaching into the church. A battle over the ordination of women is shaping up in the Episcopal Church, where several women have now been ordained by bishops sympathetic to their cause. The Lutheran Church in America and The American Lutheran Church, two of the largest Lutheran bodies in the United States, have declared that they find no reason to refuse ordination to women, and they now have a number of women pastors on their clergy rosters. The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod has till now resisted the pressure to ordain women, but it has abandoned its former stand against woman's suffrage in the church.

No doubt about it - the feminist movement is making waves, and our Synod, too has felt the effects. In its recent 43rd biennial convention the Synod revised its salary scale for women teachers in response to pressure brought to bear on it by the Department of Labor, although, as a matter of principle, it refused to concede the government's right to determine or regulate the salaries paid by religious bodies to their called ministry.

It was our Synod's conviction that in the matter of salaries we are not being asked by the government to violate scriptural principles. A warning that the time may come, however, when we will be confronted with just such a demand was issued by Professor Carleton Toppe in an editorial in the July 27, 1975, issue of *The Northwestern Lutheran*. Professor Toppe writes: “Given a U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare determined to impose its concept of equal rights and equal opportunity on the citizenry of this country, a confrontation between the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and this government bureau regarding the ordination of women seems almost inevitable” (p. 241).

In such a climate it is well for us to discuss the subject of this essay, “Man and Woman in God's World.”

I. THE ORDER OF CREATION ACCORDING TO GENESIS 1 - 3

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Gn 1:27). With this summary statement in the first chapter of Genesis Moses teaches us that God is the Creator of the two sexes. The differences between man and woman originated with God. When He surveyed everything that He had made at the end of the sixth day, He pronounced it “very good” (Gn 1:31). This verdict applied also to His creation of man as male and female.

In the second chapter of his book Moses gives us further details about the creation of man and woman. Here we learn that God created man, the male, first. He took the dust of the ground and shaped it to form man’s body. Then He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being. The special care which God took in creating man is evidence of God’s special love for him and points to the special purpose He had in mind for man. Man was the crown of God’s creation. He was to be God’s companion and friend. That is why God created man in His own image, that is, in perfect holiness and righteousness. God intended to have fellowship with man, a personal being. He wanted to share with him His wondrous glory and eternal rest.

God took special care in creating the woman also. First of all He deliberated over her creation. He said, “It is not good that the man should be alone I will make him an help meet for him” (Gn 2:18).

In other words, the woman was to play a beneficial, yes, vital role in man’s life. Without such a partner man would be lonely and lacking something that God recognized as necessary for his welfare here on earth.

The word “help” defines her God-ordained place and purpose in life. She was not to be man’s head, but his helper, his subordinate. Now it is true, of course, that one who is over us and stronger than we are may also be called our helper. So the Psalmist confesses to the Lord, “Thou hast been my help” (Ps 27:9). But the context in the creation account makes it clear that the word “help” is used in this instance in the sense of “assistant,” as when we speak of an assistant pastor. Everyone understands at once that the assistant pastor is the head pastor’s subordinate, not his superior. So the woman was not created to be man’s superior, nor even his equal, but his assistant and subordinate. God planned that she should be man’s helper not only in propagating the human race, but in the whole range of human activities.

Man’s primacy with respect to the woman is indicated also by the words “meet for him,” which mean, literally, “as his counterpart.” She was designed by God to correspond to man physically, mentally, and spiritually. She was not to be inferior to him, as the animals are, but she was to be a true human being, like man in every respect, except for the differences related to her sex. She was, however, made for the man, not the man for her, a point that Paul stresses in 1 Corinthians 11:9. Man was God’s original masterpiece; woman was to be a copy of man with variations to complement him. He was to be her head; she was to be his junior partner, his subordinate.

To be subordinate is not the same as to be inferior. “Subordinate” defines a person’s position. “Inferior” suggests poorer quality. Children are to be subordinate and obedient to their parents, but that does not mean that they are inferior creatures of God. They are human beings, redeemed with the precious blood of Christ that they might live with Him eternally. So God also planned to create the woman as a creature who would in every sense of the word be a human being, a person with whom He could have fellowship through all eternity. To enable her to fulfill her God-ordained role in life as man’s counterpart God planned to endow her with the physical and psychological characteristics necessary to complement man. He had given man the abilities

and characteristics needed for his leadership role. Woman's nature and talents were to be different because her role in life was to be different. In comparison with man, woman is, in the words of Peter, "the weaker vessel" (1 Pe 3:7).

To impress on Adam the desirability of having such a partner, God first of all brought all the other living creatures to Adam for the purpose of giving them names. Adam did this and noted in the process that among all of God's creatures he was the only one of his kind. There was no other creature that corresponded to him, no other that was human.

Then, as we know, God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam. While he slept, God took a rib from Adam's side and used this to form a woman. When He brought her to Adam, Adam recognized her at once as a fellow human being. He also knew at once where she had come from. He said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man" (Gn 2:23).

It is significant that God did not create the woman at the same time as the man, nor in the same way. He could have done that, of course. That would have indicated that they were independent and co-equal as human beings. By creating the man first God gave expression to His will and purpose that man was to have the primacy. He was to be the head of the woman and to exercise leadership in human affairs. Man's priority in creation is indicative of the leadership role in life for which he was created.

Not only did God indicate that this was His will by the sequence in which He created the man and the woman. He expressed this also by the manner of their creation. By taking the woman from the man God was giving expression to His intent and will that the woman was to be dependent on the man. She was not to have an independent or equal status. Her purpose and place in life was to serve man in an auxiliary capacity. That Adam realized this can be seen from the name he gave her, "Woman," which serves as a perpetual reminder of her origin and her role. In the language of dogmatics the hierarchy which God established between man and woman at creation is generally referred to as "the order of creation."

This head/helper relationship was established by God between man and woman with respect to their sex as male and female, not merely with respect to their relationship as husband and wife, as some have suggested. This is clear from the fact that Adam gave her the name "Woman" irrespective of her married status. She has this name by virtue of the fact that "she was taken out of man."

It is true, of course, that we have in these verses from Genesis 2 the account of God's institution of marriage. Moses is describing how God instituted the estate of holy matrimony. He is not merely describing the marriage of Adam and Eve. God did not merely create one woman to be a wife for Adam; He created the female sex and instituted marriage for the welfare of all mankind. He planned the difference in the sexes with a view to marriage. It is for this reason that the Bible, when it speaks about the relationship between men and women, frequently does so in terms of marriage. Marriage is the normal, usual state. The relationship between the sexes has its center in marriage.

Adam recognized God's intent and purpose. He was expressing God's thoughts when he said, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gn 2:24). Because Adam was correctly reflecting the will of God, Jesus in Matthew 19:4-6 quotes these words as the words of God, saying to the Pharisees, "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined

together, let not man put asunder.” It is to be noted that man is described as taking the initiative in entering into marriage. This is another indication of man’s God-ordained leadership role in life.

Now some may say that we are reading things into this account of creation that are not there. Radical and even some Christian theologians, characterize this interpretation as rank male chauvinism. If that were true, this writer would be the first to disavow it. If this is not exegesis but eisegesis, not interpretation of the Scriptures but misinterpretation, then we want no part of it.

The fact is, however, that Scripture interprets Scripture. The New Testament unmistakably supports our interpretation, as we shall see. But even the very next chapter in the book of Genesis supplies clear evidence that we have not been wresting the Scriptures.

After the Fall into sin God said, on the one hand, to the woman, “Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee,” and, on the other hand, to the man, “Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying. These shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake” (Gn 3:16,17). These words are instructive. From them we see that it was rebellion against God’s order of creation when the woman seized the initiative, ate of the forbidden tree, and gave the fruit also to her husband (Gn 3:6).

When God confronted Adam and Eve with their sin, He graciously promised them a Savior. But at the same time He expressly restated and reemphasized His holy will regarding their relationship. Man is to exercise the leadership role for which he was created, and the woman is to be subordinate to him. To prevent the tragic consequences which would inevitably result from the permanent overthrow of the order of creation God emphatically reestablished man’s authority. “He shall rule over thee” was a pointed reminder to the woman of her subordinate role.

In His words to Adam God expressly pointed out that he had sinned in abdicating his God-given position as the head of his wife. The words, “Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife,” reminded Adam that he had permitted her to usurp his divinely established position as her head. He had tolerated her rebellion. He had accepted his wife’s insubordination without protest. In a disastrous reversal of roles he had obeyed her. From now on his sweat and sorrow in making a living are to be a continual reminder to him of the leadership role he is to fill and the tragic consequences of failing to measure up to this responsibility.

These truths regarding God’s order of creation are clear from these first three chapters of Genesis. The New Testament repeatedly calls our attention to them and makes it evident that God’s will has not been abrogated or altered in this matter. Turning now to other passages of the Scriptures, we see that the order of creation applies in various areas of life. We shall consider how it applies to man and woman 1) in marriage, that is, in the family; 2) in the church, that is, in the family of believers; and 3) in society, that is, in the human family.

II. MAN AND WOMAN IN MARRIAGE – THE ORDER OF CREATION IN THE FAMILY

God intended that man and woman should live together in marriage. Marriage and family life are the foundation of human society. Men and woman who can live a chaste and decent life without marriage, as Paul did, are exceptional individuals. Paul recognized that his was an exceptional gift (1 Cor 7:7-9). In marriage man and woman live together in the most intimate of all human relationships. It is in this relationship first of all, therefore, that God would have them live according to His will as expressed in the order of creation.

In his Epistle to the Ephesians Paul admonishes Christians to submit themselves to one another in the fear of God (Eph 5:21). In wedlock, however, this submission is not mutual, but one-sided. The wife is to recognize her husband as her head. "Wives" Paul writes, "submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be unto their own husbands in everything" (Eph 5:22-24).

A Christian wife will, therefore, subject her will and her desires to those of her husband. She will respect and honor him as her head (Eph 5:33) just as she respects, honors, and obeys the Lord. Paul repeats this admonition in his Epistle to the Colossians (3:18) and in his Epistle to Titus (2:4,5), here he instructs the older women to teach the younger ones to love and to obedient to their husbands. Peter expresses the same thoughts in his First Epistle (3:1-6), with the added reminder: "For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord" (vv 5,6).

In His wisdom God gave man the responsibility of being the head of his wife and of the family. As a result of sin man has often abused his authority. His rule has often been harsh. But God has not given His approval to the tyranny of men over women. Consequently, the New Testament repeatedly emphasizes that the husband is to love his wife. Paul parallels his admonition to Christian wives with an equally emphatic admonition to Christian husbands: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it... So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church" (Eph 5:35-39). Recalling Adam's words that a man is to leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife as one flesh, Paul concludes by reemphasizing that every husband is to love his wife even as himself (Eph 5:31,33). In his Epistle to the Colossians he adds the thought that they are not to be bitter against their wives (Col 3:19), a feeling that can easily develop when two people who are by nature sinful and self-willed live together under one roof day after day. Peter similarly speaks words of admonition to husbands that are equally as forceful as his admonition to wives: "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life" (1 Pe 3:7).

In marriage, therefore, it is God's clearly expressed will that the husband exercise the leadership which God has entrusted to him in a spirit of Christian love. The wife, in turn, is always to bear in mind that it is her God-given duty to obey her husband. God has not given her the responsibility to lead but to follow.

III MAN AND WOMAN IN THE CHURCH – THE ORDER OF CREATION IN THE FAMILY OF BELIEVERS

Next in closeness to the marriage relationship is the spiritual fellowship which Christians have with one another in the Christian church. In the life of the church also, according to express statements in the New Testament, God's holy, immutable will concerning the leadership role of men and the auxiliary role of women is to be respected. Any conduct which tends to undermine or overthrow the God-ordained relationship between man and woman is displeasing to God.

The first passage to which we direct our attention is 1 Corinthians 11: 1-16. From these verses we see that some of the Corinthians were under the false impression that the freedom which Christian women had in the Gospel gave them the right to disregard God's order of creation. "I would have you know," Paul declares, "that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God" (v 2). A man is to recognize Christ

as his head even as God is the head of Christ. So also the woman is to recognize the man as her head. For her to acknowledge his headship is no more demeaning or degrading for her than for Christ to acknowledge God as His head.

Since the custom of those times that women wore a veil when they appeared in public served appropriately to reflect and symbolize the God-intended relationship between men and women, Paul admonished the Christian women of Corinth to observe this custom when they were praying or prophesying in public. This was a matter of propriety in view of the local customs of that time. That is clear from his remark: "Judge in yourselves: is it comely (that is, proper) that a woman pray unto God uncovered?" (v 13). At other times and in other places different customs might prevail, but for a Christian woman in Corinth to appear in public without a veil would be considered immodest and would be interpreted as an act of rebellion against God and His order of creation. Her actions would be construed as a kind of declaration of independence and a demand for equality with men.

Such rebellion and immodesty would bring nothing but shame and disgrace on such a woman. We know what beautiful hair means to a woman. It is her glory, as Paul says in verse 15. A woman who disgraces herself by praying or prophesying without the customary veil might as well cut off all her hair and shave her head. The disgrace resulting from that would be no worse than that which she had already brought on herself.

That a man, according to prevailing custom, did not wear a veil when he appeared in public appropriately reflected the fact, according to Paul, that he was created in the image of God. He was a reflection of God's glory. Though man had lost that image as a result of the Fall into sin, God provided a way to restore that image through His Son Jesus Christ.

The woman was also, of course, originally created in the image of God (Gn 1:27). Since she was taken from man, however, she reflects God's glory in an indirect way. "The woman," Paul says, "is the glory of the man" (v 7). The noble characteristics of body, mind, and spirit which she has she received from man, to whom God had previously given them.

Paul points to creation as the basis for the headship of man. "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man" (vv 8,9). We elaborated on this point earlier in our discussion of Genesis 2. It is sufficient here to note how Paul stresses it.

Paul does not want his argument about the God-ordained relationship between man and woman to be misunderstood, however. He immediately points out, therefore, that there is a mutual dependence between the sexes: "Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord" (v 11). In the beginning God created the woman from a bone taken out of man, but He also determined that in the future the man was to be born of the woman. "For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman" (v 12). All this is "of God," as Paul emphasizes (v 12). He established this interlocking relationship of the sexes. Their mutual dependence on one another does not set aside, however, their divinely established role relationship to each other.

That Paul is speaking in this entire discussion about the relationship between man and woman in general, and not merely about that between husband and wife as some have claimed, is clear from his statement in verse 12, "Even so is the man by the woman." Obviously, this does not mean that the husband is born of the wife.

Expanding on the thought of what is proper, Paul asks, "Doth not even nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him?" (v 14). "Nature," as Paul uses the term here, does not refer to the created order of things, but to the feeling which had developed as a

result of the customs of the day. It was unnatural for a man to wear his hair long. It was a shame for him because it was characteristic of a woman. It was natural, on the other hand, for a woman to wear her hair long. It was her glory. It served as a covering for her even if she did not wear a veil.

It may be well to explain at this point that 1 Corinthians 11 is not setting up a dress code for Christians to follow till Judgment Day. The New Testament does not impose such regulations on us as the Law of Moses imposed on the Jews (Nu 15:38,39). The Law of Moses has been fulfilled by Christ. It is now abrogated (Rm 10:4; Ga 4:1-11; 5:1; Col 2:16,17). The only law that still speaks to us in New Testament times is the moral law, the holy, immutable will of God, which was inscribed by God originally in the hearts of all men, and which is repeated in the New Testament (Rm 13:8-10).

Why then does Paul insist that the Christian women of Corinth wear a veil when they pray or prophesy? His sole interest is to uphold the moral principles of modesty and of God's order of creation that "the head of the woman is the man." Since disregarding the custom of the time with respect to the wearing of a veil would be immodest, and since it would be construed as showing contempt for God's order of creation, Paul admonishes the women to conform to this custom. If, however, it is the custom for women to go without a veil in public, as it is among us, and if no contempt for God's order of creation or immodesty is manifested by such a practice, women may go to church without a veil or hat, and they need have no bad conscience about it. Wearing a hat in church is not a part of the moral law. The Augsburg Confession therefore says, "No one will say that a woman sins who goes out in public with her head uncovered, provided only that no offense be given" (1)

Wearing a hat or being circumcised or not eating pork are what we call adiaphora, matters which are neither commanded nor forbidden in God's Word. It is obvious, of course, that a Christian will not dress immodestly or indecently. Modesty and decency are required by the moral law. They belong to the Sixth Commandment.

Paul's concern that in the church, in the family of believers, the moral principle of God's order of creation that women are to be subject to men be observed is evident also in chapter 14 of his First Epistle to the Corinthians. There he writes: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church" (vv 34,35).

Paul emphasizes that women "are commanded to be under obedience." They are not to seek equality with men. On the contrary, they are to be subject to the men. This Paul says, is commanded in the law. The word "law" here refers to the Old Testament (cf Jn 10:34). In our discussion of chapter 11 we saw that Paul has in mind the creation account in the Book of Genesis. He will elaborate on this, as we shall see later, in 1 Timothy 2. In our present context, however, he underscores the fact that the subjection of the women to the men is the will of God by adding in verse 37 that the things he is writing "are the commandments of the Lord." He will not therefore tolerate any rebuttal or different practice. Pointedly he asks, "What? came the word of God out from you? or came it unto you only?" (v 36). The Corinthians should not suppose that God's Word and order originated with them or that they had some new word from God setting aside the teaching and practice of Paul and all the other churches.

Does Paul intend to restrict the prohibition that women are not to speak in the church to married women? Hardly! While it is true that in verse 35 he has wives in mind when he states that they should ask their husbands at home, it is self-evident that he does not exclude single

women when he makes the general statement, “Let your women keep silence in the churches” (v 34). His subsequent reference to wives is a practical remark in view of the fact that marriage is the normal state. Since most of the women in the churches were married, they could get the desired information from their husbands. Paul does not feel the need to explain further how single women might be informed without violating the order of creation. The concrete example he has given will serve as a guideline in handling other problems.

In considering this passage we need to remember again that the New Testament does not set down any ceremonial regulations. It does not prescribe to us how we are to conduct our services, except for the fact that we are to observe the principles of the moral law in our worship just as at other times and places. This means that we will conduct our services “decently and in order”(1 Cor 14:40). It means also that we will not overthrow God’s order of creation when we meet together with our fellow Christians for worship or to conduct the work of the church. For that reason Paul insists that women are to remain silent in the churches. “It is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience.”

It is important to note that Paul makes a contrast here between speaking and being under obedience. This indicates that not all speaking is forbidden, but only that kind of speaking which conflicts with the principle that women are to be subordinate to men. Any speaking which does not undermine or overthrow the God-ordained relationship between men and women is not prohibited.

When, for example, women join the men in congregational singing, or in confessing the Creed, or in reading a Psalm responsively, or in praying the Lord’s Prayer in unison, they are not overthrowing the order of creation. It is also obvious that the will of God as expressed in His order of creation is not being disobeyed when a woman who has received the gift of being able to teach or to pray uses that gift among children in a school or in an assembly of women.

The order of creation is not necessarily overthrown either if a woman is asked to exercise the gift God has given her in a group of men or a mixed gathering of men and women when no man is present who is able to teach or preach or pray. Such cases will naturally be exceptional and rather rare, but the passage from 1 Corinthians 11, which we discussed a few moments ago, actually assumed such a situation and instructed the women to respect God’s order of creation also under such circumstances. Their speaking in such a situation is not a case of exercising authority over men but of rendering a service to the men. Humbly they will put the gift the Lord has given them at the disposal of the church, including the men, in a submissive spirit of Christian service. It is a similar matter when a woman is asked to play the organ or direct the choir. If she has the ability and no man is able or willing to do it, she will gladly render this service in all humility; and the order of creation is not subverted by her cooperation. In rendering such services, a Christian woman will want to be mindful at all times of the order of creation. Her service would obviously not be God-pleasing if she were to take the attitude: “Here’s my chance to lord it over the men.”

When a Christian woman renders such a service, the situation is similar to that of a husband who asks his wife to handle the checkbook because he recognizes that she can do it better than he can. Such an arrangement is no violation of the command that a wife is to be in subjection to her husband.

Speaking is not then in itself an act of exercising authority over men. When Paul here commands the women “to be under obedience,” he uses the same verb that he uses in Colossians 3:18, where he admonishes wives to submit themselves to their husbands, and that Peter uses in 1 Peter 3:1 to express the same thought. Nowhere does Scripture suggest that wives are not

permitted to speak in the home. Christian wives will, however, in their speaking always be mindful that “the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church” (Eph 5:23). When they forget this, as they do at times, it is because of their Old Adam, their sinful nature.

What 1 Corinthians 14 forbids then is not speaking as such on the part of women in an assembly of men, but speaking which violates the order of creation, speaking which proceeds from a rebellious, sinful heart. Women are not to step out of their subordinate role and assume leadership in the church. Neither are they to consider themselves on an equal level with men. Whatever is done with this in mind or in this spirit is displeasing to God and morally wrong. Christian women will not therefore enter into discussions or debates with men as equals. Neither will they participate routinely in the decision making process of the church by their vote. They will not demand equality with men; neither will the men in a Christian congregation abdicate their position of authority. They will not set aside the order of creation and grant equal status to the women.

As is well known, the claim has been made that women may speak and vote on all matters in the church except those involving the Office of the Keys. There is no warrant in the Scriptures for such a distinction, however. The admonition that women are to keep silence in the churches is based on the order of creation, not on the subject matter being discussed in the churches.

That under certain special circumstances the men of the church may wish to hear the ideas of the women before making a decision is not, of course, excluded. They may even on occasion ask them to express themselves by means of a vote. But such occasions will always remain the exception and not become the rule. We might compare them to the case of a pastor who asks his wife’s opinion before he decides whether or not to accept a call. What she says may have a great influence on his decision, but the decision is still his.

A Christian woman will always want to be conscious of her station in life as a woman. If men are present who can speak, she will out of deference to them generally remain silent in an assembly of the church. But if no men are present who are capable of praying or teaching, she will willingly serve with her God-given gifts in a God-pleasing way by showing her respect at all times for God’s order of creation. Whatever speaking she does will be in keeping with her position and in a spirit of helpful service.(2)

It is clear, therefore, that Paul’s words are not to be applied mechanically or legalistically. The important thing is that neither the men nor the women unconsciously overlook or deliberately overthrow the order of creation. That would be done if women were ordained as pastors or if they were given voice and vote in meetings of the congregation as a matter of policy. The exercise of voice and vote in an exceptional situation where every one is aware that it is an exception and takes special care to observe the order of creation is far different from a regular practice whereby women are *in principle* placed into a position of equality with men. The church, God’s family of believers, ought especially to observe His order of creation when it is at worship or at work.

Paul takes up this matter yet a third time in 1 Timothy 2. There we read: “Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression” (vv 11-14).

Although the Greek words which Paul uses for man and woman can also mean husband and wife, his use of these words in a general sense in the immediately preceding verses makes it

clear that they have a general sense also in the verses we are considering. In the preceding verses he admonishes the men to pray and the women to be modest, avoiding ostentation in their dress and adorning themselves with good works. These admonitions apply to all, the unmarried as well as the married.

Again we note that Paul's emphasis throughout is on the divinely instituted natural order between men and women. The woman is to be in subjection to the man. That is why she is to learn in silence. That is why she is not permitted to teach men. She is not "to usurp authority over the man." The word which is translated in the King James Version "to usurp authority over" means literally "to exercise authority over, to have full power over to dominate." For women to have such a position over men is contrary to the will of God. Man, not woman, was created by God for the role of leadership. If the men are not able to exercise such leadership, however, a woman who has such ability may and should, of course, as was mentioned, put her gifts into the service of the Lord.

Again Paul makes reference to the story of creation. We see that this is basic for an understanding of the principle involved. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve," Paul writes. The very order in which God created the man and the woman expresses His will concerning their relationship. Man's priority in creation is indicative of man's primacy in human affairs. This was God's design. This is the natural order. From the very beginning God wisely established a male-female hierarchy in society for the welfare of the human race.

The woman rebelled against God's will and order when she took the initiative and ate of the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil. She led Adam into sin. Paul alludes to this tragic event in human history when he writes, "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." The point here is not the relative guilt of the two, but the fact that the woman acted in a role for which God had not equipped her. She was deceived by the devil. Adam was not deceived. With his eyes open he deliberately chose to follow her misguided leadership down the deadly path of sin.

Paul's words, "I suffer not a woman to teach," are not to be taken absolutely. This is clear from the addition of the qualifying phrase, "Nor to usurp authority over the man." He does not exclude her from all teaching, but only from that which would involve exercising authority over men. In his Epistle to Titus Paul himself expressly instructs the aged women to be "teachers of good things," teaching "the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed" (Tt 2:3-5). A woman may, therefore very properly conduct devotions for a women's organization in the church. She may also teach a Bible class for women. But the prohibition that she is not to exercise authority over men clearly excludes her from becoming the pastor of a congregation. That is why we do not ordain women.(3)

Obviously, God's order and arrangement are not overturned either when women teach children or young people. Timothy learned the holy Scriptures from his childhood (2 Tm 3.15) at the feet of his grandmother, Lois, and his mother, Eunice (2 Tm 1:5). The church may therefore, utilize the special gifts which God has given to women for teaching children by calling them into the teaching ministry. It may establish schools and colleges to train women for this specialized form of the ministry by helping them to develop the innate characteristics and natural talents God has given them for this God-pleasing work. We thank God for the many consecrated women who have unselfishly dedicated their lives to serving the Lord by teaching the children of the church the truths of salvation. May the Holy Spirit continue to enrich the church with the gift of

such faithful laborers in the teaching ministry! Although their service may not be highly esteemed in the world, their reward will be great in heaven.

We wish to emphasize that the women who teach in our Christian schools are in the ministry. They are serving in the public ministry of the Word. They have a divine call to teach the children committed to their care. Romans 10:15 teaches the necessity of such a call. It says, "How shall they preach, except they be sent?" Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession states therefore that "no one should publicly teach in the Church or administer the Sacraments unless he be regularly called." (4)

Jesus has given His church no other task in this world but to preach and teach His Gospel (Mt 28:18-20; Mk 16:15-16). To enable it to carry out this important work more effectively He established the office of the public ministry (Eph 4:11,12; 1 Cor 12:28). The word "public" in this expression indicates that this ministry is not undertaken on one's own initiative but that the teaching and preaching is done in the name and on behalf of those who have been called to do this as the representatives of their fellow Christians. The Scriptures prescribe the qualifications for the office of the public ministry (1 Tm 3:1-12; Tt 1:7-9) and assure us that Christ has apostles, and continues to give His church ministers of various kinds, including apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and others (Eph 4:11,12; 1 Cor 12:28). Paul reminded the elders of the congregation in Ephesus that they had received their office from God when he told them, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (Ac 20:28).

From the Scriptures we see that women, too, served the church in various types of ministry. Acts 21:9 tells us that Philip, the evangelist, had four daughters who prophesied, that is, preached the Word of God. In Romans 16:1,2 Paul warmly commends Phebe to the congregation at Rome, informing them that she was a servant or deaconess of the church at Cenchræ and that she had been a great help to many people, including Paul himself. In that same chapter he greets Priscilla, the wife of Aquila, as a co-worker of his (v 3) and mentions a certain Mary (v 6) and two women by the name of Tryphena and Tryphosa (v 12), whom he praises for their hard work in the Lord's service. In Philippians 4:2,3 he names Euodias and Syntyche as women who labored with him in the Gospel. In 1 Corinthians 11, as we have seen, he instructs women to cover their heads when praying or prophesying. The whole context makes it clear that he is speaking about praying or prophesying in public, not in the privacy of the home.

The prophet Joel foretold that the gift of prophecy would be given to women as well as to men when he wrote the words which Peter cited in his sermon on the first Pentecost: "It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy" (Ac 2:17,18; cf Jl 2:28,29).

The women who teach in our Christian schools are included in the fulfillment of this prophecy. When they explain the word of God to the children in their classrooms and help them to apply it to their lives, they are prophesying in the scriptural sense of the term. (You will recall that when Jesus says, "Beware of false prophets" [Mt 7:15], He is warning not only against those who falsely claim to be able to foretell the future, but against false teachers of religion of every kind.)

Why is it then that we are so strongly opposed to the ordination of women? Don't we usually have an induction ceremony for our women teachers? What is the difference between ordination and induction, and how do these two ceremonies differ from an installation?

In answering these questions, we must remember, first of all, that ordination is merely a custom of the church, not a divinely commanded rite. It is a ceremony in which public testimony is given to the fact that a person has been properly called by the church and that he has accepted the call. He is reminded of the responsibilities of his office and of God's gracious promises to help him in his work. With the laying on of hands and prayer the blessings of the Holy Spirit are invoked.

As far as the nature of the ceremony is concerned, there is no essential difference between ordination, installation, and induction. The only difference lies in the use we make of these three terms. We reserve the word "ordination" for the first time a pastor is installed into office. Any subsequent installation when a pastor has accepted another call is simply called an "installation."

This term is applied also to the ceremony by which a man teacher is inducted into office. "Induction," the third term, is a name for the ceremony by which a woman teacher or a person with a limited call, such as a tutor or an assistant instructor in one of our synodical schools, is formally and publicly installed. *

As was mentioned, there is no real difference between these ceremonies. Different terms are used merely to indicate that there is a difference in the scope of the work and the responsibility in these various offices. The scope of the work is outlined in the call. A pastor is called to minister to the whole congregation, a teacher principally to the children in the school. Pastors and men teachers also have the privilege and responsibility of voting membership in the Synod. Women teachers do not become voting members of the Synod, just as they do not become voting members of the congregation.

We do not call women to serve as pastors, and therefore we do not ordain them. The reason for this lies, like the reason for not having women's suffrage in the church, in the relationship which God has from creation established between men and women.

At this point in our discussion it may be appropriate to ask: How do the scriptural principles which we have learned apply to practical situations that confront us as a result of calling women into the teaching ministry? If we keep in mind the basic fact that women are not to exercise authority over men, I don't think we will have a great deal of difficulty in making the proper God-pleasing application in the various situations that arise. We take a look first at the voice women may have in the affairs at school.

May a woman teacher participate in faculty meetings? Since according to Scripture women may teach children, it is obvious that they will need to participate in the discussions with their fellow teachers which are necessary to carry on the educational program. Consultation and cooperation among the teachers are essential. It would be not only foolish but impossible to try to operate a school without hearing the opinions and suggestions of the women teachers, especially with respect to their classes and their work. Information and reports from the women members of the faculty will be needed in order to make many decisions.

During my ministry I have had the privilege of serving several congregations with Christian day schools: I regularly attended the faculty meetings. It has been my experience that the women teachers in those meetings were mindful of and respected God's order of creation. That was evident in the way they conducted themselves and in the spirit they manifested when they spoke. They recognized the leadership of the men who were present.

In some congregations women teachers are expected to attend the meetings of the school board, while in others they attend only when a matter is to be discussed in which they are personally involved. If their presence is requested, it is for the purpose of giving information or

advice in matters directly related to their work. The decisions are generally made by the school board, which is the body to which the congregation has entrusted the supervision of the school.

A related subject is the question of women's participation in teachers' conferences. Just as faculty meetings are necessary on the local level, so conferences which offer an opportunity for joint consultation by those who are engaged in teaching the children of the church are important on an area level. At such conferences experienced, veteran teachers are able to counsel, instruct, and help their younger colleagues. Sectional meetings particularly give the newer teachers an opportunity to benefit from the experience of the veterans. Women teaching Kindergarten or the primary grades, for example, will meet to discuss common problems.

I have attended a great many teachers' conferences, and it has been my observation that in joint meetings of the men and the women, the women have generally deferred in the discussion to the men who were present. I am sure this is because the women are conscious of the scriptural teaching concerning the order of creation and are observing it. When they do speak, it is in the spirit of God's order, recognizing their subordinate status. The contributions they make are made for the purpose of rendering a helpful service, not from a desire to exercise authority over men.

It is true that such mixed conferences might tempt one or another woman to step out of her proper place. If that should happen, the presiding officer would be obliged to give a tactful reminder concerning God's will and order. The mere fact that this might happen is not sufficient reason to discontinue such conferences, however, any more than the fact that a wife might on occasion be tempted to lord it over her husband is a reason to discontinue marriage. The choice of a man as the presiding officer of the conference is further evidence that God's order of creation is understood and respected.

May a woman serve as the principal of a school? If there is no man teacher on the faculty, the question of exercising authority over men does not arise though some congregations may prefer to have the pastor function as the principal in such a school. If there is a man on the faculty, our congregations, to my knowledge, give him the responsibility of the principalship because they are conscious of the order of creation.

Another question frequently asked is: On what grade level may a woman teach? There is no question that the church may call a woman to teach children on the elementary level. With respect to the high school and college level, the church will want to bear in mind that it is God's will that women do not exercise authority over men. On the high school level it is evident that boys are on the way to becoming men. This is even more true on the college level. Scripture does not, however, define for us the age at which a boy becomes a man. This is, therefore, a matter in which we will need to exercise Christian judgment. We will need to remember also that judgments may differ. God has not given us a book of rules covering every case that may arise. He has told us what His will is, and He trusts us to apply the principle of the order of creation in an evangelical spirit. Awareness of this principle is the reason, I am sure, that there have relatively few women teachers in our Lutheran high schools. On the college level there are even fewer, and they are working generally in such areas as physical education or music, where their students are principally women.

Many of our Christian women serve the Lord and His church by teaching Sunday school. What has been said about the meetings of a Christian day school faculty applies also to the meetings of a Sunday school staff. The usual procedure, to my knowledge, is that the pastor or perhaps the principal of the Christian day school conducts such meetings. The fact that they are conducted by a man will help to assure that the order of creation is respected in the discussions.

It is self-evident that just as men are to be witnesses for Christ in their daily lives, so also women are to confess their faith in private Christian testimony. Jesus' words, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Mt 10:32), apply also to women. The instruction which Priscilla, together with her husband, Aquila, gave to Apollos is an example of such private Christian testimony (Ac 18:24-26).

In this entire question of the relationship of man and woman in the church it is important to remember that the thrust of the New Testament passages is not to set down rules and regulations for the conducting of meetings but to uphold the order of creation. They do not impose absolute silence on women but require a recognition of the divinely established leadership role of the men and the subordinate status of the women. When this is recognized and respected, Christian men and women will find ways to carry on the Lord's work in a God pleasing manner within this framework.

IV. MAN AND WOMAN IN SOCIETY – THE ORDER OF CREATION IN THE HUMAN FAMILY

In this world Christians are in the minority. As the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Mt 5:13,14) they make their seasoning and saving influence felt, but they do not impose their Christian principles on their fellow men by the force of the law or the power of the sword. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (Jn 18:36).

Unregenerate man shapes and orders human society, not according to God's will as it is revealed in the holy Scriptures (1 Cor 2:14), but according to the principles of human reason. Human reason includes a measure of ability to distinguish between what is beneficial and what is harmful in secular matters. It includes also a limited ability to distinguish between what is morally good and evil. Natural man has this ability because of the law which is inscribed in his heart (Rm 2:14,15). God's order of creation belongs to the moral law. It is His holy, immutable will, as He reminded Adam and Eve (Gn 3:16,17).

Because of sin natural man's reason is blinded, however. His understanding of the moral law is defective and deficient, and his willingness and ability to keep it even outwardly are seriously impaired. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rm 8:7). This deficiency applies also to his understanding and keeping of God's order of creation. God's will concerning the relationship between the sexes and the role in life for which each was created is not clearly recognized and is often disregarded.

Sin manifests itself when men abdicate their God-assigned responsibility to lead and rule. It manifests itself also when women rebel against God's order of creation, demand equality with men, and seize authority over them. The fruit of sin is always bitter. When men do not assume the responsibilities God has given them, He may shame them by permitting women to exercise authority over them. When Barak refused to lead Israel into battle unless Deborah accompanied them, she replied, "I will surely go with thee, notwithstanding the journey that thou takest shall not be for thine honor; for the Lord shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman" (Jdg 4:8,9; c: also Is 3:12).

Christian men and women, living in a secular society, will conscientiously endeavor as a fruit of their faith in Christ, to shape their conduct according to God's will as they learn to know it from His holy Word (Rm 7:22; Ga 2:20). They will strive to remember and respect His order of creation. Christian men who hold positions of authority will exercise that authority in the fear of God. They will continually bear in mind that they on their part are accountable to their Master in heaven (Eph 6:9). Christian women may also at times occupy positions of responsibility in the business, professional, or political world, as Lydia of Thyatira, "a seller of purple," did (Ac

16:14,15). As Christians, such women will always be mindful of God's order of creation, however. They will not use their position to tyrannize men. They will not demand equality with men, take a domineering attitude toward them, or flaunt their independence, as the women liberationists do. Rather, recognizing that they are in an unusual and difficult situation, they will exercise their responsibility in a spirit of Christian love and service.

The 19th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which was adopted in 1920, declares that the right of citizens to vote shall not be denied or abridged on account of sex. In actual practice the government makes it the civic duty of every citizen to vote. Is it a sin for a Christian woman to exercise her right to vote? This is a question, like many others, that cannot be answered with a simple Yes or No.

In discussing the question of woman's suffrage in the church we pointed out that speaking and voting on the part of women are not in themselves prohibited and that therefore on occasion they may indeed speak and vote. What forbidden is that they exercise authority over men. The church will not therefore in principle recognize an equality between men and women. It will respect the order of creation.

Our government obviously operates on the principle that men and women are equal. It does not recognize God's order of creation. When the 19th Amendment was adopted in response to pressure exerted by an earlier feminist movement, many suffragettes rejoiced that they had won a victory for women's rights and struck a blow for equality of the sexes. Does this mean then that a Christian woman must refrain from exercising her right to vote? Not necessarily. The Bible does not say to women, "You shall not vote," but it does say they shall not exercise authority over men. Since voting is not in itself a sin, the spirit or attitude with which it is done will determine whether it is right or wrong. The spirit or the inner motive is the important consideration in all matters which are not in themselves immoral. It is the attitude in the heart that determines whether or not a man sins in looking at a woman (Mt 5:28). If a woman, therefore, exercises the privilege the state extends to her with the attitude that this gives her an opportunity to step out of her subordinate role in life and to demonstrate her equality with men, she is violating the order of creation and is guilty of sin. On the other hand, if a Christian woman casts her vote in a spirit of humility and service in full recognition of her subordinate role in God's order of creation, she can do so with a good conscience. It is necessary to distinguish carefully between the state's motive in extending the right of suffrage and a Christian's motive in exercising this right.

V. THE ORDER OF CREATION AND THE ORDER OF REDEMPTION

The order of creation was established by God only for life in this world. The leadership role of men and the auxiliary role of women, whether in the home, the church, or society, was designed by God only for man's life here on earth. Marriage, family life, government, and other social orders that exist in human society in this world will not continue in heaven (Lk 20:34-36).

The order of creation governs man's horizontal relationship with his fellow man. It does not affect his vertical relationship with his God. The God-ordained male/female, head/helper relationship has no bearing on the status of men and women in the eyes of the Lord. In their standing before God, man and woman are equal. "There is no respect of persons with God" (Rm 2:11).

In the sight of God both men and women are by nature miserable sinners who deserve nothing but eternal condemnation. He loved both equally, however, and "gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (Jn 3:16). With His precious blood Christ redeemed both men and women, boys and girls. All have been

justified through his death and resurrection without any distinction as to sex. Paul is speaking of the whole human race when he writes to the Romans, “As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous” (Rm 5:18,19).

Without regard to whether they are male or female, believers in Christ are equally privileged members of God’s family and share equally in the inheritance of eternal life. No one has an advantage over another, and no one is excluded. To the Galatians Paul writes, “As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus” (Ga 3:27,28). The Apostle Peter likewise reminds husbands that they are heirs of the grace of life together with their wives (1 Pe 3:7). Nevertheless, as Luther points out, the Gospel does not set aside the natural order, but confirms it as God’s order and creation.(5)

Radical advocates of women’s liberation brush aside the clear statements of Scripture on the status of women with the charge that such teachings are mere human opinions and that they are culturally conditioned, outdated, and irrelevant in the world of today. One feminist states: ‘I think that the pastoral commentary of Paul comes off to the modern women as pre-historic. You know, women should be silent in the church, women should cover their heads in church, the man is the head of the family, the woman must be obedient to her husband. All of those things have to be seen in the context of history. After all, Paul was not married, and it was a patriarchal society in which he lived.’(6) Obviously, this woman considers the writings of Paul to be nothing more than the personal views of a first century misogynist.

Perhaps you have heard of those extremists who want to rewrite the Bible and eliminate all the masculine references to God. Names such as Father, Son, King, and Lord are said to be sexist. What could be more blasphemous than such a charge? The feminists’ rebellion against God’s order of creation is exposed for what it really is - rebellion against God Himself. God keep us faithful to His holy Word!!

QUESTIONS FOR PROF. GAWRISCH

[the answers to the following questions are dated March 18, 1976]

by Wilbert R. Gawrisch

[PLEASE NOTE: ALL PAGE REFERENCES IN THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ARE SUBJECT TO THE ORIGINAL PAGE FORMATTING OF THE PAPER]

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QUESTION 1:

In connection with I Cor. 11:4-5 is it not true that the word “prophesy” has the meaning of teaching, preaching, refuting in, reproving, admonishing, comforting (cf. also I Cor. 14:3)? Is it not true from the context also that the passage speaks of prophesying in public? Does this not indicate that I Cor. 14: 34-35 and I Tim. 2:12 are not meant to be exclusive or absolute? Is this not supported by Acts 21:8-9 which speaks of Philip’s daughters prophesying in the company of men and also by Acts 2:17?

ANSWER 1:

It is true that the word “prophesy” according to I Cor. 14:4 means to speak “to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.”

It is also true that I Cor. 11:3-16 is speaking about prophesying in public. The essay states on p. 6, par. 5, “Since the custom of those times that women wore a veil when they

appeared in public served appropriately to reflect and symbolize the God-intended relationship between men and women, Paul admonished the Christian women of Corinth to observe this custom when they were praying or prophesying in public.” Also on p. 14, par. 2 it says, “The whole context makes it clear that he is speaking about praying or prophesying in public, not in the privacy of the home.” Please notice also that on p. 11, footnote 2, the statement by Prof. August Pieper is quoted with approval, “In the passage just discussed (I Cor. 11:1-16) he (i.e., Paul) actually takes for granted that she in fact appears in the congregation and publicly prays and prophesies.”

It is clear that I Cor. 14:34-35 and I Tim. 2:12 are not meant to be exclusive or absolute if by this the question means that all speaking and teaching by women is prohibited in the church. That under certain circumstances women may speak and teach in the church is carried out in the essay on p. 9, par. 4 to p. 11, par. 2. Please note, by way of example, p. 9, par. 4, “Any speaking which does not undermine or overthrow the God-ordained relationship between men and women is not prohibited”; and p. 10, par. 4, “What 1 Corinthians 14 forbids then is not speaking as such on the part of women in an assembly of men, but speaking which violates the order of creation, speaking which proceeds from a rebellious, sinful heart”; and p. 11, par. 1, “Whatever speaking she does will be in keeping with her position and in a spirit of helpful service.” (Please notice also the statements by Prof. Pieper which are quoted with approval on p. 11, footnote 2, “Paul does not wish to establish the legalistic or evangelical outward regulation that the woman is to keep silent in the congregation...When, therefore, her being in subjection is not contradicted by a woman’s public speaking, praying, and prophesying, it is neither immoral nor a hindrance to the Gospel.”

The final part of this question refers to Acts 21:8,9, which states that Philip the evangelist “had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.” This passage does not say, however, that they prophesied “in the company of men,” as the questioner asserts. The present participle *propheteuousai* merely indicates that they had the gift of prophecy. Whether they exercised that gift in the presence of Paul and his companions cannot be determined. Lenski remarks, “How these ladies exercised their valuable gift is not indicated by Luke; it certainly was not done in conflict with what Paul states in I Cor. 14: 34,35, and in I Tim. 2:11-14.” Kretzmann comments, “They simply shared the home life of their father, making use of their extraordinary gifts only as the Spirit directed, and did no public teaching.” Even if their teaching was public, however, and even if it was done “in the company of men,” their example cannot be used to set aside the clear prohibitions in I Cor. 14 and I Tim. 2, forbidding women to exercise authority over men in the public life of the church. In his article, “The Status of Woman in the Public Life of the Congregation” (WLQ, July 1971, p. 217 f.) Prof. William Henkel writes:

“But, someone else may say biblical examples can be cited showing that women not only in cases of necessity but also at other times stepped forward and taught publicly in the church and obviously with God’s consent. Thus we read in Acts 21:9 that the evangelist Philip had four daughters who prophesied. And in I Corinthians 11:5 Paul himself speaks of women who prophesied and prayed and did so before the assembled congregation. Luke 2:38 tells of a certain Anna that she was a prophetess and at the presentation of Christ in the temple stepped forward and spoke of Him to all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. In Joel 2:28 the Lord promises the members of the New Testament Church that their sons and daughters shall prophesy. Is God contradicting Himself? Does He sanction in one place what He forbids in another? If what Paul prescribes for the women in Corinth were a moral law, then God could certainly nowhere

have sanctioned the transgression of it. To that we reply: God repeatedly made exceptions to the moral precepts. He forbids killing in the Fifth Commandment and then commands Abraham to slay his son. He forbids stealing in the Seventh Commandment and commands the children of Israel before they leave Egypt to demand of the Egyptians gold and silver vessels and to take them along when they leave. He forbids the marriage of in-laws and commands it in certain cases. On this account He is not in contradiction with Himself. The moral Law, which flows out of God's unchangeable holiness, reads, "Thou shalt love." The individual moral precepts - the Ten Commandments - show how I should practice this love in the different situations of life. When the omniscient God sees that in a particular case the command of love would be better served in another way, then He does not contradict Himself if for this case He sets the commandment aside. If God Himself in our time would inspire a woman and would charge her with a special message to the Church, then Paul's precept with regard to the silence of women in the Church would in this case fall away. Incidentally we do not exactly know in the cases referred to above (except for the one mentioned in I Corinthians 11:5) whether public teaching was involved. In the Corinthians passage, on the other hand, it is not clearly stated whether it involves an actual or a supposed case. If an actual case is involved, it by no means has the approval of the Apostle, for how could he otherwise say three chapters later: "Let the woman be silent in the churches"? Anyway, it is bad practice to cite examples in order to annul a clear Word of God."

Stoeckhardt expresses the same thought in a somewhat different way when he writes, "Although God has forbidden women to speak and to teach in the congregational assembly, He did not tie His own hands when He gave this directive to the congregation. If He so chose, He could also reveal His will on occasion through a woman" (*Von dem Beruf der Lehrerinnen an Christlichen Gemeindeschulen*," (CTM, October, 1934, p. 770).

In Acts 2:17,18 Peter in his Pentecost sermon quotes Joel 2:28,29. The daughters of Philip who were prophetesses were an example of the fulfillment of this prophecy. In the essay mention is made of the fact that "the gift of prophecy would be given to women as well as to men" (p. 14, par. 3). The women who teach in our Christian day schools and Sunday schools are cited as examples. Others could be mentioned.

QUESTION 2:

In I Cor. 11 do you not choose what you wish to hold as being absolute and what you wish to hold as non-absolute?

ANSWER 2:

The questioner asks, "In I Cor. 11 do you not chose what you wish to hold as being absolute and what you wish to hold as non-absolute?" We understand the word "absolute" to refer to a binding moral principle and "non-absolute" to refer to changing customs. The question is understandable. How does one distinguish between apostolic commandments which are a part of the moral law and those which were intended only for the people of that day?

Prof. Henkel in the article cited above faced this question and has given a clear answer. He writes (WLQ, July 1961, pp. 212-214):

The question now is whether what Paul says to the women of his time is applicable to the women of all time, or, in other words, whether this has to do with a moral precept or not. So much is certain from the very start, that what Paul here prescribes to the women in his congregations in the last analysis has its root in the moral Law, so that it must be an expression of the attitude of the heart, which the moral Law, valid for all time and

founded on the holiness of God, demands. For Paul would really be the last one to try to gain authority in the New Testament Church for law of any kind besides the moral Law. Therefore the only question is this: Was the conduct prescribed to the women of those times in itself moral, or was it only the expression of a God pleasing mind demanded by the custom of that time? Was participation in divine worship with uncovered head and speaking before the assembled congregation on the part of woman in itself wrong, or only with respect to the meaning which the custom of that time gave to these actions? Are the Apostle's precepts only according to their sense and spirit or also according to the letter of a moral nature? When, for example, the Scripture says, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head," according to its sense this is a moral law, but not according to the letter. In itself rising before an old man is neither good nor bad; it, however, comes under the 4th Commandment when according to custom the rising before somebody is considered a testimony of respect.

Now certainly everybody will at once agree with me when I say that the precept given in I Corinthians 11:10 in itself is not moral law according to the letter. Whether a woman appears in the divine service with a covered or uncovered head is in itself neither good nor bad. But the custom at that time gave the appearance of a woman with an uncovered head a meaning which made it wrong. Which? The Apostle speaks of this in I Corinthians 11:5-10. He says first: A woman with an uncovered head in a public assembly is the same as a woman with cropped hair. She gives the impression that she is a loose woman. Then, however, Paul carries out the thought that woman should testify by the covering of her head that she stands in a definite relationship to man. Her head covering should symbolically show that she "has a power upon her head," that is, that she stands under the might, the power, and the authority of man. But does man have authority over her? Is he placed over her? Certainly, says the Apostle, and for three reasons. First, man is God's image and glory, but woman is the glory of the man (vs. 7). God created man in His image that he would be His honor and portray His glory, reflect His virtues. In the same sense woman is the glory of man. Created from his rib, she should, as woman, be a picture of man, who has been adorned by God with glorious gifts. Again, man is not from woman, but woman is from man (vs. 8), made of his flesh and bone, formed according to his being. Man was first, then woman finally, man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for man's sake (vs. 9). Woman was to be a helper to man, a "help-meet for him." To these historical facts, to the order of creation, the Apostle traces back the demand of the Law that the woman should be subject to the man and insists on it, that she should wear the symbol of authority under which she stands, namely, the usual head-covering, in the assemblies. But now since woman in our time by their head-covering have no more "a power upon their head," since their head-covering is no more a symbol of the authority of the man, this precept in I Corinthians 11:10 concerning the conduct of women in the divine service falls away. Today's women are no longer bound by it. But their subordinate position to man is not removed, because it does not have its roots in a custom which is subject to change, but it is founded on the manner and the way in which God created man and woman and, according to Paul, is commanded in the Law.

That the subordination of the woman to the man is an "absolute," an unchangeable moral principle is clear also from I Cor. 14:34, "They are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law," and from I Tim. 2:12-14, where Paul forbids the woman to exercise authority over

the man because of the order of creation and because of her nature as it became evident in her being deceived by the Tempter.

The “non-absolute” or changing character of customs, on the other hand, is recognized by the Augsburg Confession, Art. XXVIII, par. 53-56 (Trig., p.):

What, then, are we to think of the Sunday and like rites in the house of God? To this we answer that it is lawful for bishops or pastors to make ordinances that things be done orderly in the Church, not that thereby we should merit grace or make satisfaction for sins, or that consciences be bound to judge them necessary services, and to think that it is a sin to break them without offense to others. So Paul ordains, 1 Cor. 11,5, that women should cover their heads in the congregation, 1 Cor. 14,30, that interpreters be heard in order in the church, etc.

It is proper that the churches should keep such ordinances for the sake of love and tranquillity, so far that one do not offend another, that all things be done in the churches in order, and without confusion, 1 Cor. 14,40; comp. Phil. 2,14; but so that consciences be not burdened to think that they are necessary to salvation, or to judge that they sin when they break them without offense to others; as no one will say that a woman sins who goes out in public with her head uncovered, provided only that no offense be given.

QUESTION 3:

How do you explain the fact that God gives such tremendous gifts to so many women if they are to use them only when there is no capable man around when that same Lord commands the utilization of these gifts and decrees that an account of the stewardship of gifts will have to be given?

ANSWER 3:

The same God who gives His gifts in rich profusion also regulates their use. This is true of material blessings. The fact that God gave Noah a bountiful harvest in his vineyard did not justify Noah’s misuse of this blessing by drinking to excess (Gen. 9:20,21). The same is true of God’s spiritual gifts. In Corinth many had the gift of speaking in tongues. This did not justify the disorderly use of that gift (I Cor. 14:27,28). So also with the gift of prophecy. This was not to be exercised indiscriminately, but in an orderly way, “for God is not the author of confusion, but of peace” (I Cor. 14:33). It was to be exercised according to the moral principle, “Let all things be done decently and in order” (I Cor. 14:40). Faithful stewardship includes the use of God’s gifts according to His revealed regulations for their use. A wife may have a higher I.Q. than her husband, but this does not justify her use of her intelligence to lord it over her husband. God has given many spiritual gifts to women but they are not to be used in violation of His express command.

QUESTION 4:

Despite the fact that the Greek word *authenteo* very definitely has the meaning and connotation of one acting on his own authority as an absolute ruler, yet several times in your paper you use the words “exercise authority over men” as though they are interchangeable with “usurp authority.” Isn’t there considerable difference in the meaning each set of words conveys? For example, Queen Elizabeth was a legitimate sovereign and would come under the description of “the powers that be are ordained of God.” Certainly she “exercised authority” over men but in so doing did not “usurp authority” over them since she was simply discharging responsibilities inherent in the office which she legally and rightfully occupied. Would it not be correct to state that the discussion center lies in the “usurping of authority?” Or to use another example, does not a nurse often “exercise authority” over a male patient, particularly a recalcitrant one, and yet is

not “usurping authority?” By the same token, then, is it not correct for a woman called to teach in a high school or a college to “exercise authority” without being guilty of “usurping authority” since she would simply be carrying out the provisions of her call? Furthermore, isn’t admonition the function of all Christians regardless of sex?

ANSWER 4:

The word *authenteo* occurs only once in the NT, and that is in I Tim. 2:12. Arndt-Gringrich gives as the meaning “have authority, domineer over someone” Thayer’s Lexicon indicates that the etymology of the word is uncertain. It comes from *autos*, self, and *entea*, arms, or perhaps *hentees*, worker. The noun *authentees* means according to earlier usage “one who with his own hand kills either others or himself,” and in later Greek writers “one who does a thing himself, the author, one who acts on his own authority, autocratic.” Thayer defines the verb as “to govern, exercise dominion over,” listing I Tim. 2:14 as the only occurrence. Kittel’s Theological Dictionary of the New Testament does not discuss the word. Some contemporary translations render it as follows: NIV, “to have authority over”; NASB, “exercise authority over”; Beck, “have authority over”; RSV, “have authority over”; NEB, “domineer over”; TEV, “to have authority over.” Luther has, “*dasz sie des Mannes Herr sei*,” and the KJV, “to usurp authority over.” In the essay we have throughout quoted Scripture according to the KJV, including I Tim. 2:12 (on p. 11, par. 5 and p. 12, par. 4).

We have explained, however, in p. 11, par. 5, that the word means literally “to exercise authority over, to have full power over, to dominate” and when paraphrasing the passage have used expressions like these. The questioner is correct that there is a difference in connotation between exercising authority and usurping authority. Webster’s New International Dictionary (2nd ed.) defines “usurp” as follows: “1. To seize and hold in possession by force, or without right. 2. To seize and hold by or as by force. 3. To employ wrongfully; to use without authority; to assume unrightfully.”

It is evident from this that the KJV rendering is not a mistranslation. In view of the God-ordained role that a woman is “to be under obedience, as also saith the law” (I Cor. 14:34), her exercise of authority over the man is a usurping of authority in the eyes of God, even though she may have received this authority legally according to the laws of man, as in the case of Queen Elizabeth.

At this point we must confess that the thrust of the question is not entirely clear to us. The first part of the question seems to take issue with the use of the expression, “usurp authority.” The rest of the question seems to say that while Paul does not approve of a woman’s usurping authority, the exercise of authority that has been properly conferred as on a queen, a nurse, or a teacher is permissible.

In response we would say that *authenteo* is the opposite of *hypotassomai*, to subordinate oneself, the attitude Paul enjoins on women in I Cor. 14:34. with respect to the practical situations the question mentions (the queen, the nurse, the high school or college teacher), it is true that it may be difficult for a Christian woman to hold certain positions in life without succumbing to the temptation to lord it over men. There will be many questions of casuistry, just as there are in the application of the moral law in other areas of life. The problems that we have in applying the law to a particular situation are not a reason for setting aside the law, however, neither do we establish the moral principles from the standpoint of what is pragmatic. The moral principles concerning marriage and divorce, for example, are very clearly set forth in Scripture, but the application of them in an actual divorce case may cause a pastor much soul-searching and move him to fervent prayer for guidance in doing the Lord’s will.

Please note what is said on p. 11, par. 2: “It is clear, therefore, that Paul’s words are not to be applied mechanically or legalistically. The important thing is that neither the men nor the women unconsciously overlook or deliberately overthrow the order of creation.” On the same page in footnote 2 Prof. Pieper’s words are cited, “Paul does not wish to establish the legalistic or evangelical outward regulation that the woman 1., to keep silent in the congregation.... in 1 Cor. 14 the contrast is expressly made, ‘But they are to be in subjection, as also the law says.’ When, therefore, her being in subjection is not contradicted by a woman’s public speaking, praying, and prophesying, it is neither immoral nor a hindrance to the Gospel.” The same may be said of a Christian woman’s service in government. She may find herself thrust into a position of responsibility, as a queen coming to the throne by hereditary succession for example, and fulfill her duties in a spirit of humility and service. Practically this might mean that she would delegate the actual reins of government to her ministers, though not necessarily. She would serve like the choir directress or organist of whom we spoke (p. 10, par. 1), who does not subvert the order of creation by her cooperation in rendering needed services which she has the talent and ability to perform. A nurse or woman doctor is likewise to be thought of as rendering her patients a service, not as exercising authority over them, even when she gives them “orders.” Obviously, however, women in such positions of responsibility will be tempted more than others to lord it over men. With respect to women called by the church to teach on the high school or college level, the essay discusses this matter on p. 16, par. 5.

The relation of the question concerning admonition to the foregoing parts of this question is not immediately apparent. It is true that all Christians are to admonish a brother or sister who sins. But such admonition is not per se exercising authority over them. It is often a brother to brother matter (Mt. 18:15; II Th. 3:15). One appeals to an erring fellow Christian to repent; one does not command him to do it.

QUESTION 5:

If you discard out of hand the fore-going as not applicable and maintain that any “exercise of authority” over a man by a woman is sinful, wouldn’t you then, in order to be consistent, have to take the position that no woman in the Wisconsin Synod could teach on the high school or university level without being guilty of sin? Wouldn’t you likewise have to take the position that no man in our Synod could take courses at a university from a woman without putting himself into a position contrary to Scripture?

ANSWER 5:

On p. 16, par. 5 of the essay we say, “Scripture does not, however, define for us the age at which a boy becomes a man. This is, therefore, a matter in which we will need to exercise Christian judgment. We will need to remember also that judgments may differ. God has not given us a book of rules covering every case that may arise. He has told us what His will is, and He trusts us to apply the principle of the order of creation in an evangelical spirit.” We would not, therefore, “in order to be consistent, have to take the position that no woman in the Wisconsin Synod could teach on the high school or university level without being guilty of sin.” We would say, however, that a Christian woman teaching on those levels will need to ask herself whether she can carry out her duties without violating the order of creation. If she feels that she can, we would say to her, “God bless you as you serve Him in your daily work.”

Is it possible for a man in our Synod to take courses at a university from a woman without putting himself into a position contrary to Scripture? Our answer is Yes. It is possible, but circumstances alter cases. Miss Svenstad may render a very helpful service by sharing her knowledge of Swedish with me. She does not make me to feel that she is lording it over me even

though she makes assignments to help me learn the language. On the other hand, Miss Goldsteln, the sociology instructor, is a radical feminist and makes it clear in the first lecture that she considers it her mission in life to reverse the role of the sexes - in society. My first reaction is to drop the course, but I decide to continue in order to gain first hand information concerning the feminist movement. Obviously, I don't intend to let her lord it over me, and if she becomes overtly domineering, I will exercise my opinion and drop the course.

To apply the scriptural principle of the order of creation mechanically to such situations would be parallel to saying that no member of the Wisconsin Synod may attend a university class taught by anyone other than a member of the Wisconsin Synod because Scripture says "Beware of false prophets." There may be circumstances also of course, when one would drop a course also for this reason.

QUESTION 6:

How can you defend on any kind of Scriptural basis the sentence on page 10 (lines 7-8) which reads: "If she has the ability and no man is able or willing to do it, she will gladly render this service...."

ANSWER 6:

The Ministry of the Keys has been given to all Christians. All have the command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mk 16:15). Normally the public preaching is to be done by men who are "apt to teach" (I Tim. 3:2). If the circumstance would arise, however, that in a group of Christians there was no man who could speak, or who was willing to assume the responsibility of leading the group in worship, a woman who had the ability might well be asked to conduct the service. The alternative would be no service. Please notice that in this same paragraph the statement is made, "...the passage from 1 Corinthians 11, which we discussed a few moments ago, actually assumed such a situation and instructed the women to respect God's order of creation also under such circumstances." A statement to the same effect is made by Pieper on p. 11, footnote 2. The situation would be parallel to the home in which the husband asks his wife to read Meditations for their evening devotions because he is a poor reader. In such circumstances a woman will gladly render this service.

Luther cites the prophecy in Joel, "Your daughters shall prophesy," and Paul's instructions in I Cor. 11 that women are to pray or prophesy with covered heads, and then says, "Order, decency, and honor require, therefore that women keep silence when the men speak; if, however, there is no man to preach, then it would be necessary that women preach" (Quoted in Zerbst, *The Office of Woman in the Church*, p. 97). Henkel makes the same point (op. cit., p. 217):

Necessity knows no law. When there is no man at hand who possesses the necessary teaching ability, the preaching of the Gospel should not be discontinued on this account; and when man neither can nor will fulfill the duty which God had intended for him in His Kingdom, then woman is to take his place and do the work as well as she can. Perhaps someone may say: Many objections can be raised against your arguments. You yourself admit that in some cases woman may take an active part in the public life of the church, yes, may even teach publicly, How then can the word of Paul "I forbid the woman to speak in the church" be a part of the moral law? Surely the moral Law may under no circumstances be broken. I answer: The command of Paul, in so far as it is of a moral nature, does not read: Woman shall under no circumstances speak before the assembled congregation, but: She shall not by her speaking violate her submission to man. Where man cannot be considered at all for the office of preaching the Gospel

because he is a heathen, or has as good as no Christian knowledge, there woman by her public speaking does not become guilty of an infraction of the command to be subject to man. *Salus populi summa lex* - the welfare of the people is the highest law. Where it is clear that the welfare of the Church demands it, we may set aside a precept of the moral Law; certainly not in the sense that the end justifies the means, but in the knowledge that not the letter, but the sense and spirit of the law are decisive.

Ultimately, then the biblical basis for the statement is Rom. 13:10, "Love is the fulfilling of the law," or, as Paul says in Gal. 5:13, "By love serve one another."

QUESTION 7:

It is obvious from the Biblical record (Judges 4:4 to 5:31) that Deborah not only possessed keen intelligence and considerable common-sense but had been given also the gift of prophecy and the ability to compose religious poetry. As a judge she dispensed justice and gave considerable advice to men. She built up a small standing army. She trained Barak to be a military leader. She saw to the military preparedness of the army. Actually the defeat of Jabin's army was accomplished through a woman. In the light of some of your statements can you really defend Deborah? She certainly exercised authority, but did not usurp it.

ANSWER 7:

This question has been answered above under No. 1. To repeat the explanation given by Stoeckhardt: "Although God has forbidden women to speak and to teach in the congregational assembly, He did not tie His own hands when He gave this directive to the congregation. If He so chose, He could also reveal His will on occasion through a women." On p. 11 of the essay, footnote 3, the statement of Pieper is cited: "Therefore also the Lord....appointed menfor the administration, the public edification of the church—not women.... And when here and there He on occasion gives His church a prophetess or a woman evangelist, this happens rarely and by way of exception." Please do not overlook the comments on Deborah in the essay, p. 17, par. 7.

QUESTION 8:

II Kings 22:14-20 and II Chronicles 34:21-33 give us an account of Hulda. The Lord obviously chose this woman as a prophetess, as a person who was to publicly witness for Him. She had a great effect on King Josiah to renew the covenant with Jehovah. It is obvious too that as a prophetess she influenced for good many other people, men included. Again in the light of some of your statements can you really defend Hulda? She exercised authority although she did not usurp it.

ANSWER 8:

"The Lord obviously chose this woman as a prophetess." Those words in the question sum up the situation correctly. They are the full explanation.

QUESTION 9:

You refer in your paper to the New Testament women and sort of equate them with our lady teachers in the frame of reference of the Joel prophecy. Are you not, however, minimizing the part these women played since there can be little question that they played a rather large role in the introduction of Christianity to the heathen world? Isn't it difficult to evade the implications of descriptions like the following: "...which labored much in the Lord; ...who labor in the Lord; ...which labored with me in the Gospel, with Clement also, and with other of my fellow-laborers?" Do not these words indicate that they were doing considerably more than merely extending hospitality to missionaries or offering domestic services like Mary of Bethany? Is it not likewise; true that the context leaves little room for a contention that theirs were duties normally associated with a deaconess?

Do you not also minimize the activity of Priscilla of whom the Bible says she “expounded unto him (Apollos) the way of God more perfectly?” Was she not teaching a man, actually a man who was a preacher, and really serving in the capacity of a theological professor?

ANSWER 9:

The Joel prophecy has been fulfilled in many ways. The women referred to in the essay, p. 14, par. 2, whose names are mentioned in the NT are included in this fulfillment. So also are our Christian women who serve in our day schools and Sunday schools today. We by no means wish to minimize the service rendered by the women mentioned in the NT. Please notice that we say that they “served the church in various types of ministry.” We consider them to have been in the public ministry. This is evident from the word *diakonon* which Paul uses to describe Phebe in Rom. 16:1 and from the phrases cited in the question which speak of their labor in the Gospel. Although the nature of their service cannot be determined more precisely, it seems obvious that “they were doing considerably more than merely extending hospitality to missionaries or offering domestic services like Mary of Bethany.” On the other hand, it is not apparent why it should be true that “the context leaves little room for a contention that theirs were duties normally associated with a deaconess.” One thing is certain, however, namely, that Paul’s words of high commendation exclude any activity on their part contrary to the restrictions which Paul himself says the Lord has placed on a woman’s activity.

With respect to Aquila and Priscilla, we certainly do not wish to minimize their service. But neither should Priscilla’s role be exaggerated. The Bible does not say that “she” but they “expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.” Both Aquila and Priscilla did this together. Neither should Priscilla’s role be exaggerated by equating her with a theological professor. She was not called by the church to train future pastors. She was not functioning here in the public ministry. What Aquila and Priscilla did was a private matter. It was, as the essay states (p. 17, par. 2), “private Christian testimony.” Furthermore, since Aquila and Priscilla were close friends of Paul, one can be certain that Priscilla was well aware of Paul’s teaching concerning the role of women and was careful to observe God’s will in this respect.

QUESTION 10:

In your paper on the bottom of page 3 and the top of page 4 are you not expressing a personal opinion when you say: “It is for this reason that the Bible....?” Is it not also true that when the Bible speaks about the relationship between men and women, it invariably does so in the frame-work of the marriage relationship rather than frequently? Is this, then, not quite significant in view of the Old Testament and New Testament roles of some women and in view of the fact that usurpation of authority lies in acting on one’s own authority in an absolute way?

ANSWER 10:

The statement referred to is intended to express the thought that God created man with a view to marriage. This lies in the word “therefore” “Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife” (Gn. 2:24). Marriage and family life are the very foundation of human society. God planned it that way, and He protects His institution by means of the Sixth Commandment. As is mentioned on p. 5, par. 2, “Men and women who can live a chaste and decent life without marriage, as Paul did, are exceptional individuals.” The Bible throughout emphasizes that marriage is pleasing to God (e.g., Heb. 13:4).

We say that when the Bible speaks about the relationship between men and women, it frequently does so in terms of marriage because to say that it invariably does so would not be true. For example, I Cor. 11:12, “For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman,” does not speak about the marriage relationship between them, but the first part of the

statement speaks about the creation of the woman from the man and the second part about the birth of man from woman. Another example is I Tim. 2:11,12, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."

QUESTION 11:

Which portions of I Corinthians 12 would you consider to be applicable to women?

ANSWER 11:

We understand the point of this question to be: Does God give spiritual gifts also to women? The answer, obviously, is Yes, and He gives them both profusely and in great variety. Jesus did not, of course, as we know, choose any women apostles. The Bible does not expressly tell us at all the gifts that are listed in I Cor. 11 were given to women, but it does tell us that women prophesied (I Cor. 11; Acts 21:9). There is no reason to assume, however, that the other spiritual gifts that are mentioned were limited to men.

QUESTION 12:

Re: "Does this mean then that a Christian woman must refrain from exercising her right to vote?" Is it possible to distinguish between a woman's voting as a "service" and a woman's voting as expressing the same kind of preference as a man expresses with his vote?

ANSWER 12:

Voting is by its very nature an expression of preference. By casting her vote a woman expresses her preference for the candidate of her choice just as a man does by his vote. Since 1920 this has not only been her right, but this has been made her civic duty. We know what efforts are made at election time "to get out the vote." Men and women are repeatedly reminded of their obligation. When a Christian woman responds by casting her ballot, she will do this, as the essay states, "in a spirit of humility and service in full recognition of her subordinate role in God's order of creation." The thought in the heart with which the right of suffrage is exercised determines whether the action is sinful or not.

QUESTION 13:

Re; "Christian women may also at times occupy positions of responsibility." May a Christian man take employment in a corporation that is controlled by a woman? May a Christian man vote for a woman who is running for a seat in the legislature in Dodge County (Esther Doughty Luckhardt)? May a Christian in Alabama have voted for Mrs. Wallace as governor?

ANSWER 13:

"May a Christian man take employment in a corporation that is controlled by a woman?" This question is similar to the one that asked whether a Christian man can take courses at a university from a woman without putting himself into a position contrary to Scripture. These are difficult questions to answer without knowing all the circumstances. The mere fact that a woman controls the corporation does not decide the question just as the fact that a woman directs the choir does not make it impossible for a Christian man to sing in it. It all depends on how she does it. If the choir directress becomes domineering toward the men, they will drop out. If the woman head of a corporation makes a point of lording it over her male employees, a Christian man will quit. If the corporation is large, many of the male employees will probably not know very much about the woman who controls the corporation. The corporation may be a very impersonal thing, and they will not feel any personal relationship toward its head.

As we see it, the question of whether to vote for a woman who is running for a seat in the legislature would not be decided on sex alone. All things being equal, we would not vote for a woman seeking a policy making position such as a seat in the legislature. But if her opponent

were a crook, we would either vote for her and so ask her to serve in a situation where no competent, honest man is willing to serve, or, more than likely, we would abstain from voting. This would naturally be our decision if the woman candidate had demonstrated herself to be a feminist. The same would apply to voting for a woman governor. When men fail to exercise the leadership they ought to exercise, Scripture describes the situation as one that brings shame on the men (Judges 4:8,9, quoted on p. 17, par. 7). According to Isaiah God's judgment on Israel included this that He deprived them of competent, strong leadership: "I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them....As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them" (Is. 3:4,12).

Again we wish to emphasize that Scripture clearly sets forth the moral principles which are to govern Christians in their life of sanctification. but Scripture does not give us a set of rules and regulations spelling out precisely how far we may go in every situation in life that we may encounter without transgressing God's commandments For example, the Sixth Commandment is clear. but God does not tell us which TV program we may watch and which we must avoid. He does not give us an Index of prohibited books. A pastor, for example, may therefore examine a copy of Playboy so as to determine whether this is actually an obscene magazine or not. The motive determines the morality of the act.

Every day we must make many moral judgments, and not every Christian's judgment will be the same in a given situation. Here each one must act according to his conscience. When our conscience is properly instructed and when our heart is filled with thankful love for Him who first loved us, our actions will be guided and governed by what we recognize as the will of our heavenly Father. He deals with us not as minor children who must be given a list of do's and don'ts , but as His mature sons and daughters by faith in Christ Jesus. That is why we say, "Paul's words are not to be applied mechanically or legalistically" (p. 11, par. 2).

END NOTES

(1) Art. XXVIII, 56. Trig., p 91. Cf. the remarks by Prof. August Pieper in his article, "*Gibt es im Neuen Testament gesetzliche Verordnungen?*" ("Are There Ceremonial Ordinances in the New Testament?") in the *Theologische Quartalschrift*, XIII, 3 (July, 1916), pp 179ff: "But what about I Cor. 11:1-16? If anything in the New Testament looks like a general outward ordinance for the services and social life, then it is what Paul says there about the covering of the woman who prays and prophesies in the assembly. He is plainly speaking in general terms: *Pasa de gune*, and he bases this on the created relationship of the woman to the man.—But we know that this directive is neither a part of the Law nor of the Gospel, but it was merely a Hellenistic custom for the woman by which her subordination to the man and her modesty were to be expressed. We know also that Paul therefore in no way wishes to institute a Christian style of dress, but to inculcate the two *moral* matters which are based on God's order of creation: the modesty and the subordination of the woman under the man, which in morally loose Corinth were endangered also among the Christians. He is not concerned about a social custom for its own sake, but only insofar as it expresses a general moral principle. If the outward custom is different in a different society, then this custom takes the place of the other in the command, while the actual sense always remains the abstract moral principle. The outward action and form is never in itself a moral command. A woman's dress which in mid-summer is altogether inoffensive in New Orleans, may be altogether indecent in winter in St. Paul. The behavior of a boy which one accepts as self-evident can in the case of a Lutheran pastor become the basis for disciplinary action. Morality and immorality depend on the customs of a people ('*Laendlich, sittlich; laendlich, unsittlich*')."

(2) Cf Pieper, op cit. p 180: “Paul does not wish to establish the legalistic or evangelical outward regulation that the woman is to keep silent in the congregation. In the passage just discussed (1 Cor 11:1-16) he actually takes for granted that she in fact appears in the congregation and publicly prays and prophesies. But in doing this she is not to violate her modesty and her subordination under the man by prophesying with an uncovered head. In 1 Cor. 14 the contrast is expressly made, ‘But they are to be in subjection, as also the law says.’ When, therefore, her being in subjection is not contradicted by a woman’s public speaking, praying, and prophesying, it is neither immoral nor a hindrance to the Gospel.”

(3) Cf Pieper on 1 Tm 2:12ff, op cit, p 180ff: “The woman is not to teach publicly when she thereby becomes a lord over the man. It is against this that the whole argumentation also in this passage is directed. When therefore exercising authority over men and modesty do not in any way come into consideration, as e.g., in a school or in an assembly of women, or in an assembly of men or a mixed assembly in which there are no men who are capable of teaching, praying, or prophesying, but a woman has received as special gifts from God both public prayer and prophecy or teaching, there she not only may, as in 1 Cor 11, but she should according to Joel 2; Acts 2:17; 21:9; 1 Cor 12:7; Eph 4:16, pray, prophecy, teach, with the understanding, of course, that she always preserves her chastity.

“The public praying, prophesying, and teaching of a woman is not in itself immoral or unevangelical (much less naturally that done in private). Against both Law and Gospel, however, is the emancipation of the woman from her specially ordained subordination and modesty, which, in addition to other considerations by and large in practice relegate her to silence and exclude as a rule from participation in public life.

“The modern emancipation movement among women is a rebellion against the God-ordained subordination and modesty of the woman by which not only relationships in the state as well as in the home, but above all moral relationships will inevitably be destroyed. And the church also cannot under ordinary circumstances tolerate without harm the placing of women on the same plane as men in its public activity. The woman does not belong in the pulpit as long as there are men who are qualified for the public service of the church.

“To the above mentioned reasons must be added the fact that the woman is not in the same degree apt to teach, capable of ruling, prudent, capable of punishing and fighting, guided by principle, logical, firm, and actually skilled in training as is the man, even though it may be different in exceptional cases. God Himself through His creation and His order of creation made and called the male sex for the rougher, heavier, largely physical and intellectual work in the world as well as in the church. The woman does not participate in the work of the world on an equal basis, but as *eser k’negdo*, as a help at man’s side and corresponding to him. No man will change this order of creation established by God. Only with harm to society will this relationship be overturned. The same goes for the church. The Gospel does not suspend the natural order of God. It does not establish its own forms, but fills the natural ones that exist with its spirit. Much less does it turn a woman into a man, or a man into a woman - physically or mentally. It makes the man a Christian man, and the woman a Christian woman. Therefore also the Lord, as the Head of His church, appointed men - apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers, admonishers, rulers - for the administration, the public edification of the church - not women - female apostles, prophets, etc. And when here and there He on occasion gives His church a prophetess or a woman evangelist, this happens rarely and by way of exception.”

(4) Trig., p 49.

(5) Luther’s Episteln-Auslegung , Chr. G. Eberle, ed., Stuttgart, 1866, p 313.

(6) Lois Snook in “An Interview with the Rev. Barbara Andrews,” Dialog. Vol. 10, Spring 1971, p 128.

(* A change in terminology, extending the use of the term “installation” to include those rites presently designated as “inductions,” is under consideration by the Conference of Presidents of the WELS. To date (November 1979) no final decision has been made.)