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A REVIEW OF THE COMMISSION ON HIGHER
EDUCATION STATEMENT:

THE ROLE OF MAN AND WOMAN ACCORDING TO HOLY SCRIPTURE

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A Study of the CHE Statement:

THE ROLE OF MAN AND WOMAN ACCORDING TO HOLY SCRIPTURE

In submitting a review of the Commission on Higher Education's statement on The Role of Man and Woman According to Holy Scripture, I ask your indulgence to open with a few personal remarks. Probably they could be taken for granted, but I feel compelled to make them nevertheless, particularly in view of subsequent remarks. The "Statement" under review is now a CHE document, endorsed by the CHE. Nevertheless, it had to have an author. I want it stated publicly that I have the highest respect for that author and his work in the church. Through various meetings I have had the opportunity to discuss this subject with him at great length and there can be no doubt regarding his conviction or his sincerity. Second, I have no axe to grind in this review. I do not serve a congregation which has departed from the traditional WELS practise regarding women in the church, thereby making it necessary to offer an attempted justification for such a departure. Although our position has led to the loss or alienation of a few members, actually our problems have been minimal, probably less than in many areas. Third, I must confess -- apologetically -- that either by nature or by environmental circumstances, I am a rather confirmed male chauvinist. Almost instinctively I am disturbed at the very thought of woman governors, woman congressmen, woman bosses, woman officers in the army and my hackles almost literally rise when I see woman pastors or run into woman chaplains in the hospital. The content of this paper, then, is not dictated by personal inclination. And finally, I share in the conviction that the church dare never change her teachings or her practise simply because of social pressure. The Word must be upheld and the Word must rule. So much for personal remarks.

Regarding pressure, however, social or otherwise, it should be noted that

this can come from many sources. It can come from the past as well as from the present. It can come from within the church as well as from without. It is highly possible that the WELS has been the victim of some of these pressures relative to the issue at hand. Most of the fathers of our church body have come from a thoroughly male dominated society. It was very easy for them to accept a submissive role for women in church and society as "God's will". Such a position would hardly be challenged because it was completely in accord with the society and culture around them. Much of this has also been handed down to us. Add to this a natural antipathy toward change as well as an overriding fear in our circles of ever being branded as a "liberal", and it is rather evident that we suffer not only from the pressures of a past society, but from continuing pressures, not necessarily Scripture based, from within the church today. This brings to mind an incident from my early ministry. A certain woman, after hearing our position regarding the role of women in the church replied rather succinctly: "That's not Lutheran. That's not Catholic. That's German." At the time I passed it off as a totally irrelevant, rebellious and discourteous remark, but I have thought about it many times since then.

The point of the above paragraph is that I truly fear the man/woman relationship in the church and society has not received the objective study within our circles that it deserves. If the Word is to rule as it must, then it must be approached without any preconceived bias. Yet, in the matter under discussion, one sometimes gets the impression that arguments are advanced simply to defend a long standing tradition which has its roots in our cultural and ethnic background.

According to my understanding, the CHE Statement is being recommended to the Synod as an official position statement of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod on "The Role of Man and Woman According to Holy Scripture." It thereby

seeks the official endorsement of the Synod at its 1981 convention. Your essayist is convinced that it would be a grave mistake, possibly having far reaching consequences, to grant that official endorsement at this time. This matter deserves a great deal more study, from broader sources within the Synod, than it has received to date. It is in the interests of such study that this evaluation is offered. This is not a position paper nor does your essayist claim to have all the answers. He does feel it essential, however, that the "other side," so to speak, should be heard more widely than it has at present. No doubt, the role of women, particularly in the church, will be one of thorniest issues the WELS will face as she seeks to expand her Kingdom work in modern society. If our Synod's position is thoroughly Scriptural, we have nothing to fear, despite any problems that may arise. On the other hand, if it be that we are simply clinging to a traditional position devoid of Scriptural support, we have everything to fear. May the Lord bless us with a "Statement" so clearly Scriptural that it precludes all reasonable suspicion of eisegesis and that it serves not only to guard the truth for ourselves but may also be used as an instrument to enlighten and convince the many outside our fellowship who will certainly read and study it. We fear that the present "Statement" does not pass that test.

Now to the "Statement" itself. Two theses are listed, the second of which is expanded into five sub-parts.

The first thesis reads: "Holy Scripture sets forth a role of complete equality for man and woman in their relation to God and in the enjoyment of His saving grace in Christ Jesus." Under this thesis the author quotes Genesis 1:27,28, noting that both man and woman were created in the image of God and that their thoughts were completely in harmony with God's thoughts. He points out that both man and woman lost the divine image through the fall into sin; that the Gospel of Christ applies

with equal force to both; that through faith worked by that Gospel the image of God is restored in both according to their new nature and that both await a complete restoration of that image in heaven. He supports this complete equality of man and woman in Christ by quoting Galatians 3:28,29: "For 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." He also quotes I Peter 3:7 which reminds Christian husbands that their wives are "heirs together of the grace of life."

We have no argument with the exposition of thesis number one, as far as it goes. We do note, however, that it is extremely brief, almost like an aside which had to be taken care of before the real subject is approached. Particularly in respect to Gal. 3:28-29, we could wish that the author would have pointed out what a tremendous impact this must have had upon the Galatians, subjected to the influence of Judaizers, living in a society where slaves were sometimes considered less than human, and where heathenism held women in almost unbelievable subjection. What a revolutionary thought this passage contained! And what a difference Christianity must make already in this life! If there is complete equality in the divine image which shall be ours in heaven shouldn't this also be reflected in the divine image which is restored to us now according to our new nature?

Do Christians have to wait until they are in heaven before they are "in Christ Jesus"? We realize, of course, that there are still God ordained ranks of authority, in this world. We wonder, however, if Paul was not specifically excluding the relationships mentioned in Galatian 3: Jew and Greek, bond and free, male and female. Paul does command slaves to obey their earthly masters (Eph. 6:5) but this is hardly an institution ordained or commanded by God, for Paul also encourages slaves to gain their

freedom again if they can (I Cor. 7:21). On the other hand, he never suggests that Christian citizens should seek to free themselves from the rule of government, or children from the authority of their parents, or, for that matter, wives from submission to their husbands, relationships which truly are a part of God's immutable will.

In summary, then, in an official position paper on the role of men and women we would look for a somewhat fuller treatment of thesis one and specifically Gal. 3:28-29. If for no other reason, this should be done to convince the gainsayer. Many Bible scholars point to this passage in support of their contention that men and women enjoy complete equality, also in this earthly life. If it is the Synod's conviction that this is a false view, our position paper should tell us why.

The remainder of the "Statement" deals with Thesis B and its various sub-parts:

B. Holy Scripture assigns distinctive roles to man and woman in their relation to each other for this life.

1. These distinctive roles for man and woman in their relation to each other for this life were ordained by God at creation. The order of creation, with respect to these distinctive roles, belongs to the immutable holy will of God for this earthly life. This moral law is briefly comprehended in love.
2. Christians, according to the new man, will find no fault with this order of creation.
3. The order of creation in which distinctive roles are assigned to man and woman was established by God in the interest of the institution of marriage and the family, upon which human society in this earthly life is basically structured.

4. The Lord wants His order of creation with respect to the distinctive roles of man and woman to be clearly reflected in the worship life of the church.
5. To understand the apostolic directions properly given in Holy Writ to uphold the order of creation in the work and worship life of the church, we need to remember that, unlike God's Old Testament people, the New Testament church has no binding legal regulations and prescriptions from God beyond that which is imbedded in the moral law, God's immutable holy will for this earthly life.

Since the first four subpoints under the second thesis (Thesis B) are closely related, perhaps we can discuss them in a group. The basic premise throughout is that there is an "order of creation" whereby man was created for leadership and woman was assigned a role subordinate to man. In carrying out this theme the author contends that there is a distinct difference between the creation of Eve and the institution of marriage; that this distinction has great significance; that the subordinate role of woman was assigned by God primarily in the interest of marriage and the family but is not limited to marriage; that the subordinate role of woman is to be reflected in the work and worship of the church, and, perhaps to a somewhat lesser extent, in secular society. This, the author states, is the moral law, the immutable, holy will of God. For Scriptural basis he cites primarily Genesis 2:18-24, I Cor. 11:3-⁸12, I Tim. 2:12-15 and I Cor. 14:33b-35.

Time and the scope of this paper simply do not permit us to comment on the "Statement" paragraph by paragraph, though this might be very useful before the issue at hand is fully resolved. For the present review we will go directly to the Scripture passages cited above. Prior to this, however, just a brief comment on the expression "order of creation." Your essayist does not know just how or

when this expression originated. Apparently it is of fairly recent origin. At least it is not in the Lutheran confessions, nor to the best of my knowledge, is the concept assigned to "order of creation" in the "Statement" found in our confessions. If the word "order" has only a chronological connotation, of course, we can have no argument. Adam was created first, Eve second. On the other hand, if the word carries with it the thought of rank, specifically of man dominant over woman in the sense of a man over a woman or any or all men over any or all women, simply by reason of their sex without regard to any other relationship, then we have our very serious misgivings. We wonder if a truly objective study of Scripture will support such an "order of creation."

Now to the passages. We agree with the author of the "Statement" that the real answer to the issue lies in Genesis. How we understand the Genesis passages will have a direct and fundamental bearing upon our understanding of the New Testament passages. It must, for the New Testament passages refer back to Genesis.

The author of the "Statement" cites only Genesis 2 in this section. We would like to add references to Genesis 1 and 3. Chapter one teaches us that God created both man and woman in His own image (vss. 26,27). From this passage it might even appear that that was His intention ~~from~~^{from} the very beginning, before Adam was created. Eve was not an afterthought. To both man and woman He gave dominion over all things (26.28). To both He gave the command and the responsibility to replenish the earth and subdue it (28). Both are equally included in God's assessment as being "very good" (31). There is no distinction between the sexes in the so-called "order of creation" in these respects. The only thought of authority introduced is the equal authority of both man and woman over all other creatures. We might add that the institution of marriage is noted already at this point (verse 28) as God blessed Adam and Eve with the gift of procreation and commanded them to "Be fruitful and increase in number." But more about that in

a moment.

In chapter 2:18-24, we have a fuller account of Eve's creation and the institution of marriage. We question particularly two points in the "Statement's" exposition of these verses. In quoting verse 18 "I will make a helper suitable (KJ-"helpmeet") for him", we are happy to note the author does not attribute subordination to the word "helper". In years past this was often done despite the fact that the same word used here (עֲזָרָה) ^{(21 times) 2 times to assist} is used 17 times in the Old Testament in reference to God (e.g. Ex. 18:4; Ps. 33:20; Ps. 146:5). Similarly the word for "suitable" (עֲזָרָה from עָזַר) carries no thought of subordination in itself. Gesenius defines it as "corresponding to" (him) and the Septuagint translates it with the words *κατὰ αὐτόν* (vs.18) and *ὅμοιος αὐτῷ* (vs.20) "like to" him.

Now however the "Statement" turns to the word "make" (עָשָׂה) from עָשָׂה to support its contention of the created subordination of Eve. We must question the objectivity of this kind of exegesis. It is difficult to escape the impression that ~~since~~ ^{after} one support for a preconceived conviction was lost another had to be found. There is nothing at all unusual about the Hebrew verb עָשָׂה. Does it really make a difference whether a helpmeet was made for Adam or given to Adam? Isn't this grasping at rather thin evidence? Shouldn't the emphasis rather be on the grace of God in providing a helper corresponding to Adam?

The other concern your essayist has in the "Statement's" treatment of the Genesis 2 passage is the emphasis placed upon the difference between the creation of Eve as a woman and the institution of marriage or more specifically, the union of Adam and Eve. We would not want to argue whether they were two distinct acts, possibly even with a time lag between them. We may, or may not have our doubts on this point, but we believe this is irrelevant. However, we feel that it is an artificial and labored distinction to disassociate the creation of Eve from the institution of marriage in the sense that first she was created as a subordinate person (subordinate to the masculine gender in general) and then, being subordin-

ate in general, she was made a wife and subordinate to Adam in particular. There can be absolutely no doubt what God's intention was in creating Eve: "I will make a helper suitable (helpmeet) for him". We might even paraphrase it: "I will make a wife for him." Significantly even the margin of the chain reference Bible has the word "wife" at this point. And immediately after the "operation" God brought her to Adam. Here was the purpose of her creation fulfilled. We note also vs.24: "For this reason will a man leave his father and his mother and be united to his wife". Before this - if there was a before - Eve had no relationship with Adam whatsoever, either subordinate or otherwise. The only relationship she ever had with him was as his wife. Thus, rather than speak of Eve's creation as the creation of womankind leading to the creation of a wife for Adam, it might be more relevant to say that the creation of a wife for Adam was at the same time the creation of womankind, which through this creation fitted womankind for marriage.

Within our circles it seems we have rather instinctively supported this interpretation of Genesis 2 in our normal manner of speaking and thinking. Have we ever referred to the time-honored expression "helpmeet" outside the context of marriage? Do you ever think of someone else's wife being your "helpmeet", or your wife being any other man's "helpmeet"? I'm afraid if I considered another man's wife, or, for that matter, a single woman, to be my "helpmeet" I would need a pretty good insurance policy.

In summary, within the Genesis 2 passages themselves, it is very difficult to find any thought of subordination. It might be inferred from I Tim. 2:13 and I Cor. 11:8,9 (these passages will be treated later). However, if it is there at all, it is only within the context of marriage. We see no evidence of woman automatically or indiscriminately being subordinate to man outside the marriage relationship. It is interesting to note that in his Genesis commentary, Luther found no subordination at all in the Genesis 2 passages, either within or outside marriage. In his exposition of verse 18, he wrote: "Hence it follows that if

woman had not been deceived by the serpent and had not sinned, she would have been the equal of Adam in all respects". (AE Vol.1, pg.115) Later, however, in his commentary on I Tim. 2:11-14, he seems to modify this position (AE Vol. 28, pgs.276-279). There, however, he also makes specific reference to husband and wife and the marriage relationship.

As we turn to Genesis 3, with the fall into sin, there is no question about Eve's subordinate relationship to Adam. "Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you". Gen. 3:16. Now, however, the world had changed. Here was a direct consequence of sin. We can no more refer to Gen. 3:16 as an unaffected repetition of the "order of creation" than we can attribute the pains of child birth, thorns, thistles and the sweat of the brow to the paradise of Eden. Moreover, note again that this subordination is spoken of strictly within the context of marriage: "Thy desire shall be to thy husband". We might add, also, that even before the fall it was when the wife acted independently of the husband, and not the woman acting independently of the man, that Adam and Eve fell into sin (cf. Gen.3:6,17). This needs to be remembered in reference to I Tim. 2:14.

We feel constrained to add one more comment regarding Gen. 3:16. In enunciating the consequence of sin this passage also has a prophetic quality. And how tragically history has shown its fulfillment! How often degenerate man, taking advantage of his position as husband, has not only ruled over his wife, but has dominated her with ruthless cruelty. Particularly in heathen cultures, woman occupied a position of contempt and was made little more than a chattel or a slave, not only in the home but in society in general. Even the enlightened Aristotle wrote: "If she have a will, it is a will without rights, and if she have virtues, they are kindred to those of a slave". (Cited by Lindemann-Theo. Quar., Apr.1920, pg. 103).

Sections in the Jewish Talmud would shock any of us. A favorite benediction of the Jews was: "Blessed be God who has not made me a heathen, a slave, a woman". Even the Apocrypha states: "Any malice is small to a woman's malice". "To have a daughter is a disadvantage". "A man's wickedness is better than a beneficent woman". (Goodspeed, *Wisdom of Sirach*). And Confucius added "Men must have mothers, and so women are a necessary evil". (W. Dallmann, "The Battle of the Bible with the "Bibles"-pg. 36). Such are the excesses to which sin has led in a male dominated society. Wouldn't it be both ironic and tragic, then, if Christianity which has done so much to combat the effects of heathenism and to restore woman to her rightful position, would now nevertheless keep her unnecessarily and unscripturally subordinate because of tradition shaped by heathen societies and cultures? It is a thought worth careful consideration.

Before leaving the Old Testament we should also cite the 4th commandment. This commandment demands honor equally for father and mother. In Exodus 20:12 "father" is mentioned first. In Leviticus 19:3 "mother" is mentioned first. Surely the mandate of this commandment does not expire when a son becomes a high school or college student. Could this commandment, a part of the moral law, possibly be in conflict with another part of the moral law in the so-called "order of creation"? We think not.

We now turn to the New Testament. By way of introduction we should be reminded that the meaning of the New Testament passages depends largely upon the understanding of Genesis 1-3. If we assume an "order of creation" with man automatically being dominant over woman regardless of relationship, they tend to support that view. However, if in Genesis we find the submission of woman limited to the marriage relationship, they have an entirely different thrust. In this paper we have tried to contend for the second proposition.

Turning to I Cor.11, the author of the "Statement" quotes verses 3 and 8-12. These passages are cited as Paul's confirmation of the "order of creation" whereby woman, as woman, was created subordinate to man as man. In the NIV verse 3 is translated: "Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God". From your essayist's observations, most translations follow this pattern. Exceptions are the RSV, Beck and Goodspeed which translate the word ἀνὴρ as "husband". The word of course can have either meaning, just as the word γυναῖκα can mean either woman or wife. In our view RSV, Beck, and Goodspeed have the better of the case. Two circumstances lead us to this conclusion. If we turn to Ephesians 5:22,23 we have an almost complete parallel with ἀνὴρ and γυναῖκα translated as "husband" and "wife". In this case, too, there is a reference to the headship of Christ, this time of the church: "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church". (NIV) The second argument in favor of translating ἀνὴρ as husband is the use of the articles in I Cor. 11:3. A literal translation is "of every man the head is the Christ; but head of a woman is the man (husband)". Add to this the fact that the man-woman translation of NIV, KJ and others by no means precludes the understanding of husband and wife.

We believe, then, that Paul was speaking of husbands and wives in I Cor.11:3. This makes the rest of this section more understandable and more applicable to Paul's time as well as our own. Now Paul goes on to ask wives to wear a head covering (when worshipping and prophesying in public) to demonstrate the fact that "the head of a woman is her husband". (vs.3) According to custom and Jewish law this was the significance of the head covering; "authority on her (the wife's) head". Not to wear a covering was a renunciation of a woman's marriage and her

husband's leadership. This was the mark of a harlot or a wife accused of adultery. That's why Paul added, so to speak, "Then you might as well go all the way and have your head shaved too", for some of the lowest class harlots shaved their heads. Consequently, seeking to avoid offense, Paul commanded the covering to be worn. That he had in mind the marriage relationship and its protection is further demonstrated by his words: "For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman (because of the woman), but woman for man (because of the man)". (The brackets indicate the literal Greek which I believe is significant). This, of course, is a reference to Genesis 2:18,21-24 which points to God's creation of Eve as a "helper" or wife for Adam. As mentioned earlier, this passage together with I Tim. 2:13 are the only passages your essayist can find which may infer some thought of subordination into the Genesis 2 section. Even here, however, - if such subordination existed before the fall, it was within the marriage relationship, as previously mentioned. In our society, the head covering no longer denotes the headship of the husband and we no longer demand it. This is certainly significant since the phrase "for this cause" in verse 10 with its reference to Genesis 2 has at least as much force, and possibly more, than "as the Law says" in I Cor. 14:34 which we will be discussing shortly.

We need to go on with I Cor. 11. After pointing out the authority or headship of the husband over the wife Paul now shifts gears, so to speak. He does not want to be misunderstood. πλήν, he says - "nevertheless". πλήν is adversative. In other words, Paul's thought is "Now this is different", or "despite the foregoing", and then he goes on to point out a different relationship between man and woman outside marriage and specifically in the Lord. This is a relationship of complete interdependence between man and woman in full equality with neither sex having an advantage. And this all (τὰ πάντα) by God, by divine arrangement.

NIV translates: "In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God". (verses 11,12) Your essayist feels that the "Statement's" use of these verses to support the "order of creation" obscures their real meaning. To your essayist, they point in the opposite direction.

The "Statement" now turns to I Tim. 2:12-15. Since, very properly, the author gives great weight to this passage we submit the full text as we have it in the NIV translation: "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be kept safe through childbirth, if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety". Here the author of the "Statement" points out that Paul bases his command that woman is not to exercise authority over man on two facts: "Adam was formed first, then Eve"; and second, "Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner". This, the author contends, is a reference to the "order of creation" (woman's general subordinate position) and the sad consequences when that order was violated.

Here your essayist feels compelled to state publicly that this Timothy passage, more than any other, has given him some pause in carrying out the general contention of this paper, that is that the subordination of woman is limited basically to the marriage relationship. This passage too, is God's word, and it dare not be glossed over lightly in the interests of a "theory". Moreover, it is not difficult to understand the "Statement's" view of this passage, particularly in the light of past practise.

But let us look at this Word of God very closely. To begin with, we certainly object to the "Statement's" sweeping contention that it is "impossible" to restrict this passage and its mandate "only to a wife in her relation to her husband".

Apparently Luther didn't think so. In his commentary on I Tim. 2, starting with verse 11, he states (after mentioning women like Hulda, Deborah and Jael): "Why, then does Paul say here that he deprives them of the administration of the Word as well as of work? You should solve that argument in this way. Here we properly take 'woman' to mean wife, as he reveals from his ~~correlative~~ phrase (vs. 12) 'to have authority over man', that is, over her husband. As he calls the husband 'man' so he calls the wife 'woman'. Where men and women have been joined together, there the men, not the women, ought to have authority. An exceptional example is the case where they are without husbands, like Hulda and Deborah who had no authority over husbands". (AE Vol.28.pg.276) Also, we do not feel that we can pass over verse 15 with its reference to "childbirth" as lightly as the "Statement" does.

The real crux of the matter is in our understanding of Genesis 2 and 3. If we assume, as the "Statement" does, that Genesis 2 teaches a general created subordination of woman per se to man per se, then it is difficult to argue against the "Statement's" conclusion. However, if we see in Genesis 2 the creation of a wife or "helpmeet" for Adam, and the relationship between Adam and Eve the relationship between husband and wife, then the two reasons for Paul's injunction mentioned above take on an entirely different meaning. Then the fact that Adam was formed first (cf. my reference to I Tim. 2:13 in the comments under Genesis 2) simply points to the priority of the husband over the wife, a priority which should be reflected in their relationship toward one another. And the fall resulted not because the woman took on a "leadership role" and violated the "subordinate position assigned to her in creation" but because the wife acted independently of her husband. Isn't that what God says: "Because you listened to your wife". (Gen.3:17). Note also: "She gave some to her husband". (Gen. 3:6)

Attention should also be given to the word $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\gamma\epsilon\upsilon\tau\epsilon\iota\upsilon\upsilon$, translated in the NIV "to have authority". Here I am dependent upon the reprint of an article from The Reformed Journal which recently was given to me. The name of the article is "Ancient Heresies and a Strange Greek Verb". The author is a woman (Catherine C. Kroeger) and she may be subjective. But I wonder if she is any more subjective than the men who have been doing all the rest of the writing on the "position of women" etc.

The verb $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\gamma\epsilon\upsilon\tau\epsilon\iota\upsilon\upsilon$ is found only once in the Bible, which apparently gives some uncertainty to its precise meaning. According to the article cited above, it did not have this meaning until the third or fourth century A.D., long after the New Testament was written. Through considerable detail and copious references (which we have neither time nor space to include here) the article contends that in New Testament times the word had a definite sexual connotation. Consequently in I Tim. 2:12 Paul was condemning a practise very common in his day and one which also endangered the Christian church. In Ephesus a great multitude of sacred courtesans were attached to the shrine of Diana. Fertility rites were part of worship. People were taught that fornication brought the worshiper into direct communication with the deity. Among the Greeks almost all female teachers were courtesans who made it clear in their lectures that they were also available for a second occupation. This was a serious problem for the New Testament church. There are references to love-feasts turned into sex orgies, and false teachers who "led captive silly women laden with sins". (II Tim. 3:6f.) There was also the false prophetess at Thyatira who "by her teaching...misleads my servants into sexual immorality". Rev. 2:20. Thus Paul could have been saying "I forbid a woman to teach or to engage in fertility practises with a man". This, as the article contends, would fit in with the admonition for women to dress modestly (vss. 9.10);

the warning about how Eve was seduced or deceived, (vs.14) and the blessing of proper child-birth (in marriage "with propriety") rather than fornication and the possible birth of illegitimate children (vs.15).

Your essayist honestly does not know how much credence may be attached to the above word study. Possibly none at all. He does know, however, that if our position depends to such a large extent upon the meaning of the word ἀνεβτεῖν, it better be researched very carefully. In general, it is particularly in connection with I Tim. 2, that he pleads for a great deal more study on the whole subject of man-woman relationship before an official position paper is adopted.

The next passage to come under consideration is I Cor. 14:33b-35: "As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says, If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church". In view of the words τοὺς ἰδίους (their own, - vs. 35) it is difficult to understand how this passage could be applied to anyone outside the marriage or family relationship. If you wish to include fathers in ἄνδρας, fine. We have no quarrel with the fourth commandment.

We need to recognize that I Cor. is a very practical letter, a letter in which Paul deals with many practical problems within the congregation. One of them had to do with the position or role of women in the church, particularly as to the effect which it had upon the unchurched around them. Paul had just finished telling the congregation to restrict its speaking in tongues for "If the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and some who do not understand or some unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind"? (vs.23) Now he tackles another problem. As noted before, women, and particularly wives, were held in almost unreal subjection and seclusion. Greek custom held that a

married woman who would address a mixed group and join in a discussion in an open meeting was actually forfeiting her right to be a wife. This was a "shame". And, though Christian wives, in their new-found freedom (Gal. 3:27.28) knew this was not true and consequently were inclined to speak, Paul did not want the Corinthians to offer an opportunity for the heathen to claim that the Christians were undermining marriage, and developing a batch of loose women. In view of their own customs and their mistrust of Christianity, this was a charge they were much inclined to make. We could say that Paul was following his own rule: "All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient". I Cor. 6:12

Much is made of the clause, "As the Law says" (vs.34). The author of the "Statement" writes "There is general agreement that the Word of God which he especially has in mind is the account of the creation of woman in Genesis 2". This does not agree with your essayist's findings. In his check of commentators, he has found some referring the word, "law" to Genesis 2, more (including Luther) to Genesis 3:16, and he has also found reference to Numbers 30:3-12. If Genesis 2 is to be considered, we have already stated our contention that this refers to the marriage relationship. In Genesis 3, there can be no doubt. The reference to "law" then only serves to strengthen the argument that Paul in I Cor. 14:34.35 is applying his admonition to wives and is protecting the proper marriage relationship. Outside of these passages your essayist has, as yet, found nothing in the Old Testament which commands the subordination of women to men outside of wife to husband and daughter to father. In this respect the Numbers passage is interesting. I hope you will read it all at home. In effect it says if a wife or a daughter obligate themselves to something and their husband or father respectively say nothing, the obligation stands. However, if the husband or father nullifies the obligation it does not stand. On the other hand, an obligation taken by a widow or divorced woman is binding. We see no subordination in the latter case. Perhaps this also

helps to answer the question "What about the single women in the congregation at Corinth"?

We add just one further comment regarding the I Cor. 14 passage: ("let them be subject", translated "must be in submission in the NIV-vs.34) is the same verb that is used in Eph. 5:21,22; I Pet. 3:1,5; and Col. 3:18; all of which speak of wives being subject to their husbands. Significantly, this is also the verb used in I Tim. 2:11.

This paper has gotten long-perhaps too long. Yet a few more observations must be added. We feel the "Statement" simply does not satisfy questions about women serving in prominent positions in the church, society and government. We think of Deborah, Judges 4:4,5; Hulda, the prophetess, II Kings 22:14; Anna, Luke 2:36-38; Prisca or Priscilla, Acts 18:26 and Romans 16:13; the four unmarried daughters of Philip who had the gift of prophesy, Acts 21:9; the "women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel", Phil. 4:3; Phoebe, a deacon (not deaconess), Rom. 16:1; Junia, an apostle, Rom. 16:7. Incidentally, it is interesting to see how Lenski solves the textual problem of Junia (feminine) versus Junias (masculine), He opts for Junias, a man, rather than Junia, a woman, for "such an apostle would be strange indeed". How's that for objective exegesis! We also think of the "sons and daughters (who) will prophesy" mentioned in Joel 2:28.29 and quoted in Acts 2:17; or the women prophesying in I Cor. 11:5. Is it really exegetically safe to say that all of these were cases in which God made a divinely decreed exception to His moral law? Or can we believe that all of them dealt only with women and children? In your essayist's view, this would be forcing the Scriptures to support a practise, rather than to draw our practise objectively from Scripture. We recognize that the "Statement" makes no reference to the above mentioned women, but nevertheless we feel some explanation is in order.

We should also recognize the full ramification of the "Statement's" "order of creation" contention in our church practise. Let it be stated immediately, that we do not draw our teachings from examples nor can they be dependent upon worldly mores. Our teachings are drawn from the Word of God. We are also mindful of Thesis B,5 in the "Statement": "The New Testament church has no legal regulations and prescriptions from God beyond that which is embedded in the moral law". We appreciate those words. But according to the "Statement" the "order of creation" is the moral law. Aren't we compelled to ask, then, how this is to be applied in our congregations? Does the "order of creation" permit us to have women organists (particularly when men organists also serve); may we have women directors of mixed choirs; may we have women teachers in our Lutheran high schools; may we place womens' names on the list of candidates for a professorship at OMLC? If the answer to the above is "yes", then may women vote in our voters' assemblies? Is this more of a violation of the "order of creation" than the above? Is it possible that we actually have developed a "ceremonial law" in our church in this respect despite Thesis B5? Are we really ready to practise what we preach in all areas? Is it really "legalism" to cite such examples or to seek some answers? Remember, we are told that we are dealing with the moral law, the same law that says "Thou shalt not kill" etc. We go to quite some lengths to point out the full application of such statements.

The "Statement" also maintains that the "order of creation" with its subordination of women applies to the secular world. Here, however, an appeal is made to "the regulations of human government which is also an institution of God". If your essayist understands this correctly, it means that the subordination may be modified somewhat - or at least, that exceptions may be made - if government law permits or demands it. We feel this in conflict with Acts 5:29: "We must obey God rather than men!" If government law is in conflict with moral law, the Christian

is bound by the moral law. For example, government law may permit abortion, but it's still murder for the Christian. Government law permits unscriptural divorce, but it's not permissible for the Christian. Applying this now to the "order of creation" we might say: Non-Christian women can be bosses or executives, but Christian women can not; non-Christian women can be judges but Christian women can not; non-Christian women can be high school teachers or college professors, but Christian women can not; non-Christian women can vote in an election or referendum, but Christian women can not. In respect to the last point, this was maintained by those who held to the "order of Creation" contention before women's suffrage was effected. We quote Franz Pieper in a 1913 Essay What is Christianity: "With regard to woman's suffrage, let me make this statement: Since woman's suffrage in the State implies participation in the rule over men, it is contrary to the natural order which God established to govern the relation between man and woman." Do we still contend this (or the examples above)? If so, are we willing to live it? If not, has the moral law, the "order of creation" changed?

We could also wish for a clearer explanation of the words: "when circumstances place her in a leadership position, she will carry it out in a spirit of service" or "in a spirit that does not violate God's order of creation." We assume this means a spirit of subordination. Can this really be done by a woman judge passing sentence, or a woman employer giving directions (orders) to employees; or a woman professor giving assignments to her students?

Obviously, these are some very honest questions. We repeat our former admission: Your essayist certainly does not claim that he has either the last word or all the answers. He does believe, however, that there are some real difficulties with the CHE statement. This is an attempt to present "the other side" so to speak. Your essayist feels it has a great deal of validity. But above all, he hopes that it will help lead to much more study, truly objective study that will look at every side of the issue in the light of God's holy Word, before the Synod commits itself to an official position paper on The Role of Man and Woman According to Holy Scripture.