

WLC--EXERCISING THE FREEDOM OF FAITHFULNESS?

THE BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE ROLE OF MAN AND WOMAN  
AS APPLIED TO THE TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS AT  
WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE,  
MILWAUKEE, WI

SENIOR CHURCH HISTORY PAPER  
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## THESIS

Because the calling of women as professors, assistant professors, instructors and administrative officers at Wisconsin Lutheran College in Milwaukee has created tension in some areas of the WELS, it is the intent of this paper to provide a brief history of the development of the doctrinal statements of the Synod and the application of the biblical principles at WLC regarding the calling of female professors over the last twelve years.

In an effort to introduce and inform the Senior class of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary about the purpose and benefits of Wisconsin Lutheran College, the college, in the Spring of 1991, invited the Seniors to the Sheraton Hotel in Brown Deer for an evening of discussion, drinks and snacks. Unfortunately, the college's efforts backfired in 1991 and also 1992 when concerned and somewhat angered Seminary students presented questions about the calling of women professors and administrators at the college. The questions unearthed suspicion about the policies of the college and its precarious place in the synod's post high school institutions, since it's purpose is not to prepare men and women for the preaching and/or teaching ministry per se. Add to that the college's challenges to exist as a school open to a broader scope of students (ie. non-WELS), a broader coverage of subjects and range of degrees, Wisconsin Lutheran College has been viewed with suspicion by some members of the synod who are sensitive to the questionable positions it has fallen into. Consequently, the presence of female professors on the faculty roster and female administrators on the staff presented some problems.

However, for the Seminary Seniors, their concern for the situation went much deeper. Their main question had to do with the validity of the position the women are in as professors, instructors, directors of departments and administrative officers when brought into the light of God's role for man and woman as it is set forth in the Scriptures. Has the college properly applied the principles, or have they neglected them, influenced by the strong movements of secular society?

Additional problems occurred both years the Seniors met with college representatives at the Sheraton which intensified the feelings of distrust and uneasiness between some members of the two groups. In 1991, the attitude of the students was apparently so negative and aggressive, one of the College representatives simply decided not to attend the next year--what was meant to foster communication and a "working relationship" broke down to accusations and discord; why bother unless better communication could occur?

However, the next year, in 1992, the opposite occurred when the same concerns were expressed by the Seniors. According to the Seniors, the representatives did not have adequate answers regarding the "role" principles. In a way, this would be understandable, since none of the representatives was a pastor or teacher of theology. And yet, one would think that with the previous year's strong opposition to the women's presence at the college, and since the college has had women instructors on the campus practically since its inception, by now any representatives of the school would have at least a fairly adequate explanation of the College's application of the biblical principles. The WLC representatives' apparent lack of knowledge only served to foster the discontent and suspicion; and once again, an event meant to foster acquaintance and communication got caught in a snag.

Since this paper will focus on the history of the application of the principles regarding men and women and WLC's history of applying that principle, it would only be fair to include here a few observations on the "role of the Seniors" at WLS in the issue

that sparked this paper. It is the writer's opinion that time and circumstance have at least something to do with the grave concerns expressed by his classmates. Soon-to-be pastoral candidates for the ministry have the strong impressions of four-plus years of doctrine and exegesis firmly in their minds. On the one hand, they may have a full and thorough understanding of the doctrine, but may be lacking in a thorough exercise of its application. It also may be true that in the student's mind, the principles and doctrines combed over again and again beg to be "cut and dried" when it comes to their application, when actually, there may be a "gray area" of application. So, the application of a principle that is actually taking place in the synod may--in the student's mind--attempt to defy all that the Seminarian has learned to hold fast to.

Moreover, society's enticing temptations to slide by principles can cause a seminarian a mild panic attack when he suspects just such an occurrence taking place in his own church body. The unfortunate dismissal of the principle in question in other church bodies (Lutheran, no less!) only spells danger for him. Has the WELS become blind to its own errors because of the lure of secular society? In an article in the Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly (1962), Prof. William Henkel offers some warning signs that would seem to concur with the fears of some present day Seminarrians:

The apostasy from Scripture among us obviously will not begin in this way that one or the other openly attacks its authority. It will most likely come in this manner that one shakes his head in doubt over one or the other passage of Scripture and disregards it. When called to account, one will first hide behind exegetical artistry and take refuge in an exposition which removes from the Scripture passage whatever is offensive to the flesh, but

which does violence to the words themselves. After one has gradually freed himself inwardly more and more from the authority of Scripture, the outward apostasy will follow. Let us beware of beginnings! (Henkel 31)

Has the situation at WLC begun such a situation, not to mention the appearance of female professors at DMLC, as well as other "offices" for women at other synodical related institutions? This is the fear of some Seniors.

Another consideration, though, lies in the "age and development" of this particular doctrine, if you will. The role of man and woman has not been a "contested" doctrine in the sense that it is now in this century. Therefore, historical material to help us find answers may be somewhat limited. Our understanding of this doctrine may not be "cut and dried" as we would like it to be, because it hasn't been thoroughly treated yet. Almost in contrast to his previously quoted statement, Prof. Henkel also writes:

But experience teaches us that a question of doctrine is not thoroughly searched and its full scope considered until a strong practical interest compels such a consideration. Therefore the doubts expressed among us with regard to our former position toward the question of woman in the church cannot simply be dismissed by referring to the position of our fathers; the whole question must rather be considered anew and judged in the light of Scripture. (ibid. 210)

While it is certainly God-pleasing and commanded to "watch your life and doctrine closely" (I Tim. 4:16), in times such as these new applications of principles demand that we wrestle with the problem at hand with faithfulness to the Scriptures, but also with evangelical love and understanding. Suspicion, ignorance and fear, however, can limit the bonds that keep communication strong. It is in an effort to console, inform and strengthen my own understanding that this paper is written.

## WLC HISTORY CONCERNING THE "ROLE" ISSUE

WLC's history of development has much to do with the presence of women on the faculty and staff today. WLC began in 1973 as a two year college on the campus of Wisconsin Lutheran High School. As the college grew, it sought to offer more subjects, but was limited in funds and manpower. So, the college sought men and women from the Milwaukee area to teach on a part-time basis. The women taught subjects like music and communications. Some were paid stipends, others volunteered their services to help get the college going. According to Pastor Joel Gerlach, who served on the college's Board of Regents at that time, the hiring of women as instructors already took place then because they were qualified with the appropriate educational degrees and were available to teach.

At that time, no written concern was manifested by any of the pastors or lay members of the college's Board of Regents or Federation congregations. However, according to Pastors Gerlach, Braun (who now serves on the WLC faculty) and Prof. David Valleskey (currently on the Board of Regents for WLC), the college's intent has always been to remain faithful to the Scriptures and the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. All three pastors have emphasized the college's desire to do all things within the practice of the Synod, to be open and honest with its desires and goals. In fact, Pastor Gerlach emphasized that there was "a real determination not to make mistakes as had been made at other universities, like Valparaiso" (Gerlach Interview). Apparently, in the light of the college's philosophy, the fact that no concern was

raised over the issue indicates that the college was operating within the norm of the Synod's practices and according to its doctrinal confessions.

The College called its first full-time female faculty member in 1980 as the Librarian. Since that time, the college has called a number of women to its faculty and staff, so that, today, the following serve as instructors or officers of certain administrative duties:

Tammy Enevold (1991) Assistant Prof. of Music  
Debra Heermans (1986) Assistant Prof. of Art  
Mary Heins (1986) Assistant Prof. of Communication  
Joyce Natzke (1987) Director of Teacher Education  
Starla Siegmann (1980) Librarian  
Edith Siemers (1990) Instructor of Philosophy  
Deborrah Uecker (1989) Instructor of Communication

Women Administrative Officers:

Joyce S. Natzke, Director of Teacher Education  
Linda Loeffel, Financial Aids Director  
Vicki Hartig, Director of Public Relations

Women on Academic staff:

Carolyn Fons, vocal music  
Suzanne Pajunen, music  
Catherine Peterson, Spanish  
(WLC Manual 1992-1994, p. 97-98)

A number of questions may come to mind concerning the process the college employs when looking for instructors and office personnel and the significance their titles carry. In what is really a thorough process, all positions for the faculty are called just as other synodical teachers are called, although there are some differing circumstances. The academic dean begins the process by searching for potentially qualified WELS/ELS members from the Synod. He may do this independently or by seeking the advice and suggestions of pastors, laymen, or even district presidents.



Because the areas of instruction are above and beyond the education level of our DMLC and NWC/WLS graduates, the academic dean must look to the members of the synod who have the necessary educational qualifications needed for instructing secular courses. In the event that a DMLC or WLS graduate has the additional secular training, that person may also be considered.

The academic dean draws up a list of candidates for the call by considering, among other things, the qualifications needed for the specialized major to be taught as well as a letter of recommendation from the candidate's home pastor. The candidate must be in good standing with the local church, and considered an active member capable of being a good role model to other Christians. The Academic Dean then sends the list to the Southeastern Wisconsin District President for approval and suggestions. The list is then turned over to the Academic Affairs Committee of the college's Board of Regents. This committee studies the candidates and makes a recommendation to the Executive Committee of the Board of Regents, who then finally, upon approval, extends the call to the candidate chosen by the Academic Affairs Committee.

In case one is wondering, the Board of Regents is made up of predominantly WELS laymen. Currently, there are four WELS pastors serving the board, as well as three WELS teachers on the twenty three member board. The ratio of pastors to laymen varies from time to time. The pastors' purpose on the board is to provide theological advice and guidance to the board.

When asked what the reasoning was for calling women to serve on the faculty, Prof. Valleskey offered two basic reasons: 1) they

were qualified to fill the position, and 2) the college felt the need to provide Christian role models for the female students in the student body, as well as offering to the student body as a whole role models of both men and women serving the Church together within the framework of the Scriptures (Valleskey Interview). The college's philosophy includes the same thought in the following statement:

It (the college) is also committed to the total development of its students, not just intellectually, but also spiritually, emotionally, physically, and socially. In this Christian college the main source of life and growth is God's Word. As members of the Body of Christ, all serve and are served, all teach and all learn. All recognize that *the freedom of the Christian life lies within the bounds set forth in Holy Scripture* (italics mine) (WLC 1992-94 Catalog, p. 8).

Consequently, with the strong desire to remain faithful to the Scriptures and to the practices and policies of the WELS, WLC has throughout its history sought to provide Christian education on the college level without straying into false doctrine or practice.

It is true, however, that the college has made some mistakes in applying its policies. For example, when one of the woman professors was given the title as "head" of a department, concern was issued over the implications of the title, even though her position was that of a "coordinator" of information needed by her superiors on the Board of Regents and other staff administrators. Prof. Valleskey cautioned the Board to be careful in their wording so that it properly reflected the position in which they placed the female professors. To the best understanding of this writer, no female professor on the faculty has a place "over" a male called worker. More on the college's application of the role principles

will be covered later.

Regarding the position of the administrative officers, the normal process of hiring is used and the titles simply reflect their job descriptions. The women on the academic staff as well, have not been called, but hired for a period of time.

BRIEF EXAMPLES OF MIS-APPLICATION OF THE ROLE PRINCIPLES  
FROM OTHER CHURCH BODIES

The preceding information primarily presented the historical development of the presence of women on WLC's faculty, with a small presentation of WLC's intent to remain faithful to the Scriptures. A comprehensive look at the principles themselves, including statements from essays and Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly articles, as well as WLC's and the synod's application of the principles will be covered later. By comparison, what has been the policy and practice of other church bodies? How similar is the WELS understanding of the whole issue to that of others'? The contrast is staggering! While the WELS has sought to return to the Scriptures for establishing the basis of its doctrine and practice, the evidence from other church bodies defies any such loyalty to the Word of God.

For example, some may discredit a particular text of the Bible. If one can claim a certain portion was not written by the inspired writer but added later, it need not be accepted as true and binding. Such a view, however, throws the whole Bible into subjectivity, thus fracturing the foundation of the Christian faith. In The Ministry of Women in the Early Church, Roger Gryson attempts just such a feat. Regarding Paul's instruction that a woman should be silent in the church, Gryson states:

Although eliminating a text to eliminate a difficulty is always bad, in the present instance both the external and the internal evidence suggest that the verses cited above (I Corinthians 14:34,35) are an interpolation which has nothing to do with the genuine text of chapter 14 or Paul's true thought. In some important manuscripts these verses are given at the end of chapter 14 after verse 40...Finally, some of the ideas of this text disagree with what Paul says elsewhere about women...The reference made to "the Law," without further distinction, and the anti-feminist tendency manifested in the formation of this rule point to late Judaism rather than to Hellenistic society. The addition is certainly very ancient, not only because it is found in all manuscripts, although not always in the same place, but also because First Timothy plagiarizes it, warning women to "learn in silence" and forbidding them not only to speak but also to teach..." (Gryson 6-7).

You won't find any explanation like that in a WELS exegesis! Gryson's whole approach to Paul's writings seeks to dissect and dismember God's Word in order to amputate what Henkel called "offensive to the flesh"--God's moral law.

Another example is found in the abundance of books written by women who have "come of age" as pastors in their respective churches. With a total neglect for a proper interpretation of history and a loyal submission to the Scriptures long since forgotten, these women humbly confess their thankfulness that their church bodies have finally matured to a fuller Christian experience. Whatever Scripture they do use, they mis-apply, as Gracia Grindal, a seminary teacher, does:

As a teacher of preaching at a Lutheran Seminary, I believe, as the leaders of my particular branch of Lutheranism, and Luther, taught, that all Christians have the ministry of the Word and do proclaim the Word to each other in their daily ministries as Christians. If they want to become full-time pastors, they should go to the seminary to train for the calling which will entrust them with the gospel...We have reason to rejoice that the church bodies which merged to form the ELCA were led by the Spirit to ordain women (Preus 32-33).

Gracia Grindal believes that Luther supported the public ministry of women in his theology since he emphasized the priesthood of all believers, although faithfulness to history testifies that Luther's emphasis here was against the papist hierarchy and philosophy of the priesthood which cut off the laity from the Word of God! And contrary to Grindal's view, what God's Word says in I Peter 2:9 is most compatible with I Cor. 14:34,35 and I Timothy 2:11-15, etc. when the role of man and woman is properly applied. I Peter 2 does not speak about the public ministry, but of the "practical" ministry given to all Christians to proclaim and share the gospel message in their every day lives.

To get a little closer to home, one need only peruse a few volumes of Christian News to find examples of the Missouri Synod's struggles with moderates (liberals?) who support the ordination of women in the LC-MS. Women's suffrage has also existed within the LC-MS for a number of years.

Has the WELS followed suit? Rather than publishing books praising the feminist flowering of female clergy within the synod, Northwestern Publishing House has produced three excellent publications proclaiming the scriptural principles of the role of man and woman: Man and Woman in God's World (1985), Women: Prodigal Equals by Betty Kloha (1989), and A Bible Study on Man and Woman in God's World by Prof. John Brug (1992). In addition, the synod devoted a decade of study to this very issue to produce a statement as the synod's confession. This can be found in Brug's Bible Study mentioned above.

## HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

When looking for how the church has applied the biblical principles throughout history to a situation similar to WLC's, we are left without much information. Women's suffrage, the whole liberation movement, and the advancing education of women on the college and post-graduate level are all new phenomena occurring only within the last 100 years. Certainly, there is much to say about the conflicts aroused by women seeking to serve as public ministers in the church. The first incident apparently occurred in Corinth! And certainly women served as instructors of the young and other women, even given the position of "deaconess" as is found in many ancient texts. In *Didascalia Apostolorum*, a third century Syrian Church order, much mention is made of the deaconess and her duties: to baptize women (to prevent impropriety between a male deacon and the woman who was baptized), to minister to the needs of Christian women in pagan and Christian homes, and to see to the needs of the widows and orphans. Included there is the clear statement, "But let a woman rather be devoted to the ministry of women, and a male deacon to the ministry of men" (Laporte 113). From the practice of women in this form of ministry ultimately came the Catholic institution of nuns and conventicles.

From time to time in the later years of Christian history women instructors at schools were the exception rather than the rule. Apparently an Italian Lutheran named Olympia Morata almost became an instructor of Greek at the University of Heidelberg during the Reformation, but never began her service due to illness (Preus 27).

But in this century, the amount of material at hand is more prevalent, although the focus is primarily on the error of women in the public ministry. In all of the essays and articles read for this paper, very little was ever mentioned about the feasibility of women as professors on college campuses. What is interesting to note is the widening of the boarders of application between the years 1960 and 1990. Basically, the understanding of the doctrine has not changed at all, even the wording is surprisingly constant, but its application has. In 1962, Prof. Henkel wrote with a note of concern:

As I see it, we are threatened with still greater danger by the tendency which is closely connected with the education and appointment of women and which in the last years has come to full flower. I refer to the joint teachers' conference attended by both sexes...Not the joint conference but the spirit in which it is conducted is the deciding factor (Henkel 222-223).

#### THE PRINCIPLES

The principles concerning the role of man and woman find their foundation in the Scriptures, specifically three Pauline passages: I Cor. 11:3-16, I Cor. 14:33b-40 and I Tim. 2:11-15. A thorough study of these passages and the principles derived from them can be found in Brug's Bible study mentioned earlier. A summary of these principles may be listed as follows:

- The Christian man and woman have equal status before God (Gal. 3:28).
- God has given distinct roles to man and woman, established at Creation (the Order of Creation) to be carried out in their lives.
- The New Testament Church has no "binding legal regulations and prescriptions from God beyond that which is embedded in the moral law, God's immutable holy will for this earthly life" (Lawrenz Thesis).

In the synod's statement, "Scriptural Principles of Man and

Woman Roles," I believe the following statements are most applicable to the situation at WLC (all the other statements apply, but need not be presented here; please see Prof. Brug's Bible study, p. 52ff. for the complete listing):

#12. Scripture teaches that headship involves the exercise of authority (I Corinthians 11:3,10; Colossians 1:18, 2:10; Ephesians 1:22, I Timothy 2:11,12).

#13. Authority in its common meaning is the right to make decisions that bind the will of others (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:22,23; 5:24).

#15. In applying the principle of role relationship, the church will give emphasis to the duties and responsibilities of men. God holds Christian men accountable for the use of the authority he has given them and will let his blessings rest on many when men exercise this authority out of love for Christ. (I Peter 3:7; Colossians 3:19).

#20. The role relationship principle governing the ministry of women is restrictive only in regard to authority over men. Women are encouraged to participate in any office or work of ministry where this principle is not applicable.

#21. Christians also accept the biblical role relationship principle for their life and work in the world (Ephesians 5:6-17). Christians, however, do not force their morality on the world (I Corinthians 5:12,13) but seek to influence the world by their obedience to the will of God (I Peter 3:6, 13-17).

#22. Scripture leaves a great deal to our conscientious Christian judgment in applying the role relationship principle in the world. Christian love will restrain us from unduly judging brothers and sisters as they apply this principle to their lives in the world.

In the "negativa," so to speak, the following statements also are pertinent:

#9. We reject the opinion that the principle of role relationship applies only to some people, only for some periods of history, or only to certain aspects of Christian life. The role principle is not ceremonial law.

#13. We reject the opinion that the principle of role relationship means that all women are always subject to



all men. Since other biblical principles may also govern relationships, we consider this opinion an exaggeration of the biblical role principle. One of those other principles is, "We must obey God rather than men!" (Acts 5:29).

A number of WELS theologians have written on the role relationship in the past, even before the above statements were written. In essence, they all agree that God has set down a prescribed set of roles for man and woman in the order of creation; the principle that man is to have headship and the woman is to submit to his authority is certain, although not in every case--see #13 ("negativa") above. Misunderstandings have often occurred, however, when the passages in question were not interpreted correctly.

To simplify matters, let's consider the role principles and Paul's application of the principles in a woman's speaking and teaching. In I Corinthians 14, for example, Paul is not saying that all speaking is forbidden by women, but only that speaking "which violates the order of creation" (Gawrisch Essay 12). Throughout his essay delivered in September of 1975, Prof. Gawrisch repeatedly stated the need for seeing Paul's passages in the light of the context and all of Scripture. He stated that Paul made a contrast between "speaking" and "obedience." Only speaking that conflicts with the principle of headship is forbidden (ibid. 11). To the surprise of some, Gawrisch even went so far as to say:

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 I Cor. 11, which we discussed a few moments ago, actually assumed such a situation and instructed 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 at the request of the men. Humbly they will put their 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 this 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" (ibid. 11).

In an essay by Carl Lawrenz, the same approach was voiced when he wrote, "She will not seek to dominate men with her will and delight in exercising authority over them. When circumstances place her in a leadership position, she will carry it out in a spirit of service" (Lawrenz 10).

While the references above give support to the freedom women have in their role, Prof. Fredrich III reminds us of the limitations that role also carries with it. He writes:

But speaking out on a matter of the Church's doctrine, initiating discussion, interpreting Scripture in the presence of others, raising questions about interpretation--these all are activities which by their nature presuppose authority. Women who do this in church are, by those very actions, claiming equality with men (Fredrich 6,7).

From which we may safely gather that God does not want stone silence from women in church, but the avoidance of such speaking as would challenge his created order. It would be strange indeed if Paul were trying to bar women in the New Testament church from a role they possessed under the Old Covenant. There they were urged to participate in the singing, praising and confessing of the congregations (ibid 9).

Finally, in an exegesis of I Corinthians 11:3-16 by Prof. Kuske the same point is made. When a woman prayed or prophesied in the presence of men, she was not automatically guilty of sin! If she was not supposed to speak at all, then Paul's encouragement for her to cover her head would be "pointless" (Kuske 91).

The same "principle" applies to the question of a woman being able to teach. While some may think that "teaching" does not carry with it a position of authority, there is strong evidence that it does. Prof. Henkel confuses the matter a bit by forbidding a woman to "teach publicly." But by that he means "a teaching by the commission of the congregation, to which every church member has access and which is meant for all. Teaching in school is meant only for one class of church members, for the children" (Henkel 221). In an article appearing in the 1969 Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly, Prof. Gawrisch cited Hebrews 13:17 saying that "those who 'have the rule' are those who teach" (Gawrisch WLQ 35). But he goes on to say that women are not altogether prohibited from any type of teaching, but only that which would place them in a position where they would dominate over men.

The Bible itself offers us numerous examples of the application of this principle, seen in the lives of various women. We understand that these women served the church in the capacity that God gave them, and were still able to do so in the role God had ordained for womankind. It is understood that the following examples do not establish doctrine, but only offer evidence of how the ancient church employed the principles. Consider the deaconess Phoebe in Romans 16:1, Dorcas in Acts 9, Eunice in Acts 16:1 and II Timothy 1:5, Lydia in Acts 16:11-15, Priscilla (who taught Apollos!) in Acts 18, and Philip's four daughters in Acts 21:9. For us to set down a new set of laws concerning the speaking and/or teaching of women in the church is to violate Scripture and to neglect the evidence God's Word itself offers.

### WLC'S APPLICATION OF THE PRINCIPLES

Now that the principles have been stated, have they been observed at WLC? It is apparent that the college endeavors to remain faithful to the Scriptures, as will be shown again shortly, but it has placed itself in a gray area that could pose problems in the future. So the plot thickens as we observe the relationship the female professors are in compared to the male professors and male students.

First of all, do the female professors, even as directors of various departments, have a position over male professors? At this time they don't because the college has sought to apply the biblical principle faithfully. Fortunately, at this time it is able to do this because the college is so small that each professor is the only instructor for her department. The situation may change when a male professor is called to the same department. For the moment, no error appears in this area of her position as a professor or instructor at WLC. The administrative positions also fit into this category.

A more difficult question concerns the female professor's position "over" the students in her class. She is in a position of authority as a teacher. But are her male students "men"? In a telephone conversation, Pastor Wayne Mueller brought up that question, and stated that the age when a boy becomes a man is, obviously, not something the Bible has set down in writing. He also said the question "hasn't been answered" yet in our Synod (Mueller interview). It is the opinion of some that males who are entering college are still preparing for manhood, and so are not

considered men until a later age. On the other hand, many consider the voting age or the 21 year old "drinking age" as signs of manhood. Unfortunately, it's still a matter for debate. But this concern has not been neglected by the college, nor by the other synodical schools, including high schools. It has been the usual custom to place the female teachers in our colleges, prep schools and high schools as teachers in the freshmen and sophomore classes.

In one of the few places where any article touches on this subject, Prof. Gawrisch expressed caution in his Quarterly article from 1969:

"The Bible does not, of course, define precisely the time when a child becomes a man. But here Christian judgment as well as a sensitivity to and an appreciation for the basic issue that the woman is not to usurp authority over the man will be our guide. That we as a Synod have been sensitive to this principle in the past is evident from the fact that we have been very cautious about calling women teachers on the high school or college level. They are the exception rather than the rule. We have generally considered it advisable even to have men as teachers on the upper elementary level, though perhaps not exclusively for this reason.

"On the high school level, women teachers, for the most part, are serving in our Christian schools in the commercial, home economics, or physical education departments, areas in which they deal principally with girls. In our colleges we employ them in the capacity of deans of women, library assistants, or music teachers. It is our conviction, of course, that in our Christian schools all those who teach, whether it be history, English, science, mathematics, or other branches of learning, are also ministers of the Gospel....That we have been hesitant and cautious about calling women to teach English or history, for example, on the high school level and beyond where they would be teaching both boys and girls is wise. In this area we will want above all else to be conscious of the will of God. While we will not, therefore, on the one hand, arbitrarily prescribe limits or impose restrictions in a mechanical, legalistic way where none have been set down by the Word of God, we will also, on the other hand, ever bear in mind the basic principle that the woman is not to exercise authority over the man. Acting according to this principle, we will then exercise Christian discretion, consideration

for the brethren, and an earnest concern for the over-all welfare of the church" (Gawrisch WLQ 38).

As mentioned before, WLC's intent to remain faithful to the Word of God and the confessions of the Lutheran Church is amply evident. To further state its intentions, Pastor Mark Braun presented a "Philosophy of Ministry" for WLC in the spring of 1991. In the third section, Pastor Braun focuses on the "active participation of both men and women" (Braun 3). He later affirms, "WLC fully agrees with the WELS understanding of the roles of men and women, and wants to apply those roles faithfully among students and staff. At the same time, WLC recognizes the variety of gifts God gives to both men and women, and wants to develop all those gifts for service to others. WLC faculty members will seek to provide a biblical model of Christlike headship and service in the home, the church, and the work place" (ibid. 4).

WLC's stated intentions are good. But the college is still part of a sinful world. Its intentions may not be followed out by everyone on the campus--faculty, staff, or student body. No synodical institution is free from fault. Consequently, Prof. Valleskey and the Board of Regents are encouraging the faculty and staff to continue in its spiritual growth and development through Bible study. There is also consideration for calling a campus pastor in addition to the position Pastor Braun already holds.

WLC's application of the role of man and woman is really only representative of what is taking place in many other areas of the synod. It has sought to uphold and defend the scriptural basis for these roles and yet has also made efforts to be on the "cutting edge" as far as its application goes. It has made mistakes--in

designating "titles," for example--but it has been corrected so as to cause no offense. The college has brought the issue to the forefront for many--how far does the freedom of faithfulness go until error has occurred through legalism or laxity? What a sorrowful question! Has the college crossed beyond the bounds of the gray area it has placed itself in? This writer doesn't think so, but also recognizes the difficulties the college and the synod still face, because not all the answers are clear, nor are all the answers we do have clearly known.

What an excellent opportunity for our synod to dig into the Word of God and beg our Savior's attention to equip us with humility, patience, faithfulness and wisdom to serve him and one another in the roles he has placed us so that his message of grace may continue to be proclaimed by word and deed.

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