

Adopting Doctrinal Statements At Synod Conventions

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At its 1969 convention, our Wisconsin Synod discussed the possibility of officially adopting a doctrinal statement on the roles of men and women. The memorial which encouraged such action was originally submitted by the Mankato Pastoral Conference (Addendum #1).

In the course of the discussion on this topic, a number of WELS pastors have said that it would be wrong for the synod to adopt a doctrinal statement at a synodical convention.

The Cascades Conference of the Pacific Northwest District submitted a memorial to the 1989 synod convention which said: "It should not be the business of the synod to adopt its doctrine by synod resolution" (Addendum#2). A group of 16 Twin Cities pastors submitted a memorial to the 1990 Minnesota District Convention which said the same thing (Addendum #3). At the 1989 synod convention, one pastor delegate in private conversation vigorously chided the author of this paper on the issue.

Reasons for not wanting the synod to adopt a doctrinal statement at a convention which I have heard are the following:

- 1) The Book of Concord contains all the confessional statements we need;
- 2) We could never produce a document perfect enough to be adopted as a formal confessional statement (The ecumenical creeds, for example, were meticulously formulated over hundreds of years);
- 3) The synod convention is the wrong place for such action to take place (Maybe in some other forum it could be possible);
- 4) Since the doctrines of the Bible have absolute authority from the fact that they are revealed in God's Word, it is wrong for us to vote on them (as if we by voting were creating or authenticating them);
- 5) Such a doctrinal statement could be used legalistically as a club to stifle brotherly discussion and to discipline those who disagree;
- 6) We don't want to establish a body of WELS "canon law" which would settle issues for people without the study of Scripture.

The purpose of this paper is to consider the topic of adopting doctrinal statements at synod conventions. Is it appropriate for the synod in convention to vote on a doctrinal statement? If so, when should such action be taken?

This paper will defend the thesis that it is appropriate for our synod in convention to discuss and vote on doctrinal statements.

First we will look at some reasons *why* it is appropriate. Secondly we will consider *when* it is appropriate.

Some Reasons Why It Is Appropriate for a Synod in Convention to Adopt a Doctrinal Statement

1. Adopting a doctrinal statement is one way for a church body to make clear what its doctrine is and thereby to give a united confession to the world as the Lord wants.

This seems to me to be the obvious starting point. The Lord without question wants Christians to confess their faith publicly. Jesus said in Matthew 10:32: “Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.” Paul said in Romans 10:10: “For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” Peter said in 1 Peter 3:15: “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.”

The Lord also wants Christians to be united in their confession to the world. Doctrinal diversity is a sin. Christians should never “agree to disagree” when it comes to Christian doctrine.

Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:10 writes: “I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another (Greek: τὸ αὐτὸ λέγετε – ‘say the same thing’) so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.” Romans 15:5-6 says: “May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” God wants Christians to be “of one mind”(2 Cor 13:11) and to contend “as one man” for the faith of the gospel (Phil 1:27).

By approving a doctrinal statement, a church body is doing nothing more than giving confession to its faith and doing it in a united fashion. By approving a doctrinal statement, a church body gives a united front both to the people outside the fellowship and to the young people in the fellowship who are being taught the faith. Certainly this is God pleasing and beneficial.

Perhaps I can give an example from my experience of how this can be beneficial. In presenting the Fifth Commandment with confirmands both young and old, I regularly talk about why abortion is wrong according to the Bible. Then I almost always in addition distribute a copy of our WELS statement against abortion which was approved at the 1979 convention. Though this statement in no way establishes the doctrine (the Bible passages do that!), this statement does show that my pro-life exposition is not my own personal hobbyhorse. It shows that the pro-life position is the confession of our entire church body. It shows to people that we as a church body are “of one mind,” that we “say the same thing,” and that we are contending “as one man.” The official statement, then, helps us to fulfill the Lord’s command that we be united in our Christian testimony to the world.

Now it is good to point out, however, that a correct official doctrinal statement is not all that is necessary for a church as it seeks to make a united confession to the world. The actual teaching and preaching in the pulpits and classrooms must also be in agreement. Our Synodical Conference forefathers were quick to point this out. Pieper in his *Dogmatics* writes: “A church body is orthodox only if the true doctrine, as we have it in the Augsburg Confession and the other Lutheran Symbols, is actually taught in its pulpits and its publications and not merely ‘officially’ professed as its faith. Not the ‘official’ doctrine, but the actual teaching determines the character of a church body” (Vol. III, p. 423). The *publica doctrina* of a church body is revealed not only in the official statements, but also in what actually is presented in the congregations, schools and publications.

Yet, official doctrinal statements certainly play a part in confessing the *publica doctrina* of a church body. The ideal for a church body is to have clear official statements of doctrine in addition to consistent teaching throughout. In this way the church body’s position will be absolutely clear and unambiguous.

In short, a doctrinal statement can be God-pleasing because it is one way for a church body to give a united confession to the world.

2. Acts 15 gives a Scriptural precedent.

If a person were to tell me that it is wrong for a church convention ever to adopt a doctrinal statement, one of my first questions would be: “What about Acts 15?”

In Acts 15 we have a Scriptural precedent for a church convention agreeing upon a written doctrinal statement in time of controversy.

The issue at this “first Christian synodical convention” (Schaller, *Book of Books*, p. 208), of course, was the matter of Gentile circumcision. Some men had come down from Judea to Antioch who were telling the Gentiles, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.”

The way in which the convention handled the controversy is simple. Speakers were allowed to address the convention. When the will of God became evident through the testimony of Peter, Barnabas, Paul and James based on God’s Word, a joint doctrinal statement was drafted in the form of a letter. This letter was then disseminated throughout the churches and used to clarify and teach on the issue (Acts 15:30; 16:4; 21:25).

Of special note is the fact that the “whole church” is said to have participated in the proceedings and the decision (Acts 15:4, 12, 22). The controversy was not settled secretly by a select group of leaders apart from the involvement and agreement of lay people. The approval of the entire body was obviously received. I agree with Kretzmann in his evaluation of Acts 15. “The manner employed by this assembly serves as an example to this day. If there are differences of opinion in a congregation or in a church body, especially such as concern some Christian doctrine, it is a matter for the Christians to discuss and settle in meetings, in congregational or synodical assemblies. And the Word of God decides all questions. When a point of doctrine has been plainly set forth from Scriptures, then all good Christians will gladly consent to the truth and repudiate error” (*NT-Commentary*, Vol. I, p. 610).

I might also add that the synod convention is the natural place among us for doctrinal statements ultimately to be discussed and approved. It is the one gathering where there is a fair representation of all WELS Christians, including lay people. It constitutionally is the official decision - making entity among us. If we want to show our agreement on Bible teaching in a public and official way, the synod convention is the place to do it.

It has been said that synod conventions in the days of Walther and the Synodical Conference forefathers spent up to two-thirds of their time discussing doctrine. (This is an observation shared orally by Prof. Glenn Reichwald). Synod conventions among us as confessional Lutherans should not just be for the discussion of business and practical matters, but also doctrine.

In summary, Acts 15 is the only Scriptural presentation of an inter-congregational doctrinal controversy with its resolution. Acts 15 shows the early Christians formulating and agreeing to a doctrinal statement at a church convention. It is a strong argument for the legitimacy of such a procedure among us today.

3. If a church body formulates and adopts a doctrinal statement, it is in no way establishing or giving authority to the doctrine. Rather it is simply giving clear expression to the doctrine and showing its agreement on the doctrine.

One of the main reasons why some people speak against a synod convention adopting a doctrinal statement is because they feel uncomfortable with the idea of Christians voting on doctrine. “Since God has revealed his doctrines in the Bible, what right do we have to vote on them?” they ask.

It needs to be said, certainly, that it is not up to us as Christians to bring doctrine into being or to establish a doctrine’s truthfulness by our voting. The doctrines of God, finally, are eternal. Their authority rests on the fact that they have been revealed in God’s Word. We cannot create or give authority to doctrines.

But this is not what is intended when Christians adopt a doctrinal statement in a convention such as that in Acts 15 or in one of our synod conventions. Rather, such a convention by adopting a doctrinal statement merely wants to give clear expression to the doctrine and to show its agreement. And these are appropriate and God-pleasing activities for a church convention.

Look at Acts 15. Did the convention create the doctrine that Gentiles are free from circumcision? Does the doctrine of Gentile freedom rest upon the decision of this convention? Certainly not. The doctrine of Gentile freedom from the Law was around long before the convention. Peter had seen the Holy Spirit come to Cornelius. Paul had witnessed God’s work among the Gentiles without circumcision. The Old Testament prophet Amos spoke of the inclusion of the nations into God’s people. The doctrine had been revealed by God in the word of the prophets and apostles. The doctrine was being preached and applied in the church. The convention, therefore, did not establish the doctrine or authenticate it.

What did the convention in Acts 15 do, then, by producing its doctrinal statement? The convention first of all articulated the doctrine clearly in written form. Then the convention gave the Christians from Antioch and

Jerusalem the chance publicly to show their agreement on the doctrine. Confession of faith and assent, then, are the key issues. It is a matter of proclamation and affirmation; and this is why the practice of adopting doctrinal statements is legitimate.

Pieper in his *Dogmatics* writes on this topic:

The only purpose of voting in matters of doctrine is to see whether all now understand the teaching of the divine Word and agree to it; the purpose of the vote is not to decide the correctness of a doctrine by majority vote or even by unanimous vote. The orthodox Christian Church remains aware of the fact that it cannot by resolution make or give birth to Christian doctrines, but must always merely set forth from Scripture and profess over against the prevailing error the doctrines submitted and settled in Scripture. Axiom: "The decretals of a council neither construct or give authority to the articles of faith, but if the councils are orthodox, they profess the articles of faith already delivered in Scripture over against the insurgent errors" (Vol. III, p. 430).

It has been helpful for me to compare voting on a doctrinal statement at a synod convention with confessing the Apostles' Creed at a worship service during a synod convention. We are very willing publicly to raise our voices in the Apostles' Creed together. By doing so we are not creating or authenticating the doctrines of the creed. We are publicly giving assent to them. Is it any different when we raise our voices or hands to vote on a doctrinal statement? We are not creating or authenticating the doctrine. We rather are publicly giving assent to it, which is a God pleasing action.

4. The Lutheran Church from its beginning has been a church which has made use of formal doctrinal statements and has properly understood their relationship to the Scriptures, as is evident in the Book of Concord.

If a Lutheran Christian were to say that it is wrong for a synod convention to adopt a doctrinal statement, another question I would ask is: "What about the Book of Concord? Would you have signed the Book of Concord if you had been alive in 1580?"

The fact is that the early Lutherans eagerly adopted the confessional documents of the Book of Concord. The acceptance of the Book of Concord among Lutherans has shown the Lutheran Church to be a church body which is willing to adopt and hold to doctrinal statements.

When one considers the history of formal doctrinal statements in the church, one realizes that this is nothing to be taken for granted. From its earliest years the church, of course, had the practice of convening councils where doctrinal statements were approved. We think of Nicea in 325 and Chalcedon in 451 as two examples. Gradually, however, the error arose in the Roman Catholic Church of placing the decrees of councils on an equal level of authority with the Bible. When Luther and his associates were reforming the Catholic Church, they were faced with a decision. They could throw out all confessional statements in Baptist fashion with the thought, "I believe the Bible and that's enough." Or they could retain confessional statements and try to purify the process.

Needless to say, when faced with this decision the early Lutherans did not go to the unwholesome extreme of the Baptists. They felt compelled by God's Word to set forth their teachings clearly in confessional documents. In the Formula of Concord they wrote: "For thorough, permanent unity in the Church it is, above all things, necessary that we have a comprehensive, unanimously approved summary and form wherein is brought together from God's Word the common doctrine, reduced to a brief compass, which the churches that are of the true Christian religion confess, just as the ancient Church always had for this use its fixed symbols" (TD, Comprehensive Summary, 1).

In this, the early Lutherans charted the course for the Lutheran Church. Our Lutheran Church from its conception has been a "confessional" church. In other words, if one doesn't like the idea of doctrinal statements, he really doesn't belong in the Lutheran Church.

The Book of Concord also sets forth the Lutheran attitude in regard to the relationship of doctrinal statements with the Scriptures. The Formula of Concord says,

As we lay down God's Word, the eternal truth, as the foundation, so we introduce and quote also these writings (i.e. the Confessions) as a witness of the truth and as the unanimously received correct understanding of our predecessors who have steadfastly held to the pure doctrine. (TD, Comprehensive Summary, 13)

The Bible is the "pure, clear, fountain of Israel, which is the only true standard by which all teachers and doctrines are to be judged" (TD, Comprehensive Summary, 3). In the confessions the true Christian doctrine is "collected from God's Word into brief articles." In other words, Scripture is the *norma normans*; the confessions are the *norma normata*.

This distinction between the Scriptures and confessional writings separated the Lutherans from the Romans who put the two on the same level. This distinction has been part and parcel of Lutheran thinking ever since.

With this understanding of our character as confessional Lutheran Christians, it surprises me to read "Whereas 2" in the Twin Cities memorial (Addendum #3). "Whereas 2" says that the adoption of the COP pamphlet "puts it on a par with Scripture." That this is not the case should be evident to all who hold to the Formula of Concord. In one sense, a newly accepted doctrinal statement can be said to be on a par with the Lutheran Confessions, but never the Scriptures.

It also surprises me to sense among some Lutherans a certain fear or antipathy toward doctrinal statements. There is a concern that a doctrinal statement will be used legalistically like a club. There is the concern that a doctrinal statement will guide people away from the Bible. There is the concern that we might become like the Catholics with their code of "canon law."

My sincere response to such fears is: "Do we view the Book of Concord this way? Has this happened with the Book of Concord?"

I assume that none of us think in such negative terms of the Lutheran Confessions. We recognize that the Lutheran Confessions have been used by God to maintain a remarkable unity of faith among us. They have not steered us away from the Bible or turned into canon law.

Then, if the Lutheran Confessions have provided such blessings, why shouldn't we expect the same blessings from other confessional statements which are in agreement with God's Word? Theodore Schmauk in his classic work, *The Confessional Principle and the Confessions of the Lutheran Church*, has an interesting chapter entitled, "Do confessions constrict, or do they conserve?" Naturally he highlights the positive nature of confessions in conserving the truth. He goes so far as to say, "Of genuine Creeds, confessing the whole truth in Christ, we say, not the less, but the more, the better" (p. 23).

Surely confessional statements do separate a church body from individuals who believe differently. Surely confessional statements can be misused.

But fears about the misuse of confessional statements and fears of division and schism in the church did not deter the early Lutherans from professing their faith in the form of doctrinal statements. Neither should such concerns deter modern-day Lutherans from similar professions of faith.

In short, it is characteristic of the Lutheran Church from early on to appreciate formal doctrinal statements as secondary sources of authority beneath the Bible. For us to adopt a doctrinal statement which is drawn from God's Word fits perfectly with the character of our Lutheran Church.

5. The Lutheran Confessions do not set themselves up as the last word on doctrinal statements for Lutherans. The Lutheran Confessions do not forbid the formulation of additional doctrinal statements in the future.

Also this concern needs to be discussed. Some well-meaning confessional Lutherans have spoken against adopting doctrinal statements on the grounds that the Lutheran Confessions in the Book of Concord contain all that we need. What can be said to this concern?

It must be pointed out that the Lutheran Confessions themselves do not close the door to future confessions.

Dr. Siegbert Becker was aware of this as he wrote his book, *The Scriptures — Inspired by God*. In a chapter in which he hints that a modern-day addendum to the Lutheran Confessions should be seriously considered, he says, “The introduction to the Formula of Concord, the last of the Lutheran Confessions, clearly speaks of ‘subsequent doctrinal statements’ that future controversies might make necessary” (p. 11-12). The quotation he refers to is found in the introduction to the Formula of Concord, paragraph 5; he takes it from the Tappert translation (p. 502).

Also Pastor Robert James Voss (Libertyville, IL) in a paper entitled *Is the Book of Concord the Last Word?* writes: “The confessional writings comprising the Book of Concord do not maintain for themselves a claim of completeness. While insisting repeatedly that their propositions are forever true and binding, they neither negate nor condemn the formulation of additional confessional statements” (p. 8).

It is a fact that the Lutheran Confessions do not cover all the doctrines of the Bible. Dr. Becker points out that the doctrine of verbal inspiration does not receive a separate article in the Confessions. Pastor Voss lists the following as topics which are not treated in the Confessions or which could use an elaboration in view of controversies since 1580: church fellowship, justification, election, charismatic movement, social gospel, lodgery, millennialism, Holy Scripture, creation, ministry, man, sin and open questions.

Because the Confessions do not cover everything and because the church has the continuing obligation to proclaim the truth, it may be necessary for additional statements to be produced as new issues arise. The church must not remain silent as new issues arise.

Really, we see in the early Lutherans themselves a pattern of composing additional doctrinal statements to meet the contemporary needs. In 1530 the Lutheran reformers could have said, “we have the ecumenical creeds. That’s all we need for an official confession. We could never produce a statement of faith perfect enough to supplement the creeds.” Rather, they produced the Augsburg Confession which went beyond the ecumenical creeds and addressed the controversies of the day. In the 1570s they could have said, “We have the Augsburg Confession. That’s all we need.” Rather, they produced the Formula of Concord which went beyond the Augsburg Confession and addressed the controversies of the day. It is natural for this pattern to repeat itself among confessional Lutherans throughout the generations. Being a confessional Lutheran does not mean, “I confess *only* the Lutheran Confessions.” It means, “I confess the Lutheran Confessions, and I will confess in the same fearless way all the doctrines of the Bible whether they are in the Confessions or not.”

Surely we may hesitate and feel inadequate at the task of drafting a doctrinal statement. We may fear that it won’t be “perfect enough.” But that fear did not stop the early Lutherans from drafting the Lutheran Confessions, and it should not stop us. We trust that God will guide us as his believers through his Word, so that we can articulate the truth well for the benefit of others.

6. Our Wisconsin Synod has had the practice in the past of adopting doctrinal statements at synod conventions. Also the ELS regularly adopts doctrinal statements at synod conventions.

Finally, there seems to be the notion with a number of WELS pastors that our synod does not have a history of adopting doctrinal statements at synod conventions. Particularly among some of the younger clergy, I sense this feeling: “we don’t operate that way in the WELS. It is not our practice to adopt doctrine at synod conventions.”

The historical records of our Wisconsin Synod, however, reveal that our synod has officially endorsed doctrinal statements on numerous occasions at conventions over the years.

Koehler in *The History of the Wisconsin Synod*, for example, reports that in 1867 the synod convention passed a statement against lodges (p. 110). In 1869 the convention endorsed a doctrinal report with statements on church and ministry, ordination, inspiration, millennialism, and the antichrist (p. 130). In 1882 the LaCrosse convention passed a statement on election. In 1883 the convention amended the previous year’s statement (p. 160).

In more recent years, the 1959 convention adopted statements on Scripture and the antichrist. In 1967 the convention officially endorsed the doctrinal pamphlet *This We Believe* and also some clarifications and

expansions to the synod's statement on church and ministry (Addendum #4). In 1973 the convention officially endorsed the position of the CICR on the term "state of confession" (Addendum #5). In 1979 the convention adopted statements both about abortion (Addendum #6) and also about grants from outside sources (Addendum #7).

The way it went with the topic of grants in the late 1970s is typical and instructive. At the 1977 convention there was some confusion about grants from outside sources. The 1977 convention commissioned a committee to study it and bring a statement to the districts. In 1978 the districts considered the statement prepared by the Committee on Grants. In 1979 the synod convention officially endorsed the statement of the Committee.

It is also interesting to note that various phrases have been used over the years in the official resolutions. According to the 1959 *Proceedings*, the statements on Scripture and antichrist were "adopted without a dissenting voice and with the full consent of those present in the convention." The resolution on grants in 1979 says, "We endorse in substance the Report of the Committee on Grants." With *This We Believe* in 1967, the resolution reads, "We acknowledge that it sets forth the Scriptural truths that are being taught..." With church and ministry in 1967 the resolution reads, "The Synod expresses its agreement with these clarifications and expansions."

Whatever the precise expression, however, it is obvious that our synod has felt free to discuss and vote on doctrinal statements at synod conventions in the past. If we at this point were to consider the process inappropriate, we would be losing part of our heritage as WELS Christians and we would be parting company with our past practice.

It is also worth noting that our sister synod, the ELS, has the practice regularly of discussing and voting on doctrinal statements at its synod conventions. Just in the past eleven years, five such statements have been officially adopted. Here are the years with the topics:

1988 – *The Church*

1985 – *Apologetics*

Natural Knowledge of God

1989 - *Moment of the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper*

1990 - *Roles of Men and Women* (Addendum #8).

Some Thoughts on When It Is Appropriate for a Synod in Convention to Adopt a Doctrinal Statement

What has been said so far is that it is possible for a synod convention to adopt a formal doctrinal statement. What that means is that at any time a church body could adopt a doctrinal statement on any Bible doctrine if it felt the need to do so.

That brings up the next question: "When is it fitting for a church body officially to adopt a doctrinal statement? Who determines what doctrine or doctrines? What should be the basis for using this procedure?"

Certainly there are no fixed answers to these questions. But let us consider some thoughts, taking into consideration what has commonly been done in the past.

1. Historically church bodies have adopted formal doctrinal statements especially in time of controversy when the doctrinal position of the church body has been in doubt in some way.

In the previous section, there was reference to ten times in WELS history when synod conventions have endorsed a doctrinal statement. In each case one could say the action was precipitated by some sort of controversy which led the synod to feel the need to proclaim its doctrine publicly.

In the 1860's lodge membership was a controversial topic among Lutherans; hence the 1867 resolution. The 1882/83 resolutions on election were in the heat of the election controversy which led the Ohio Synod out of the Synodical Conference. The 1959 resolutions on Scripture and antichrist were in the waning moments of the Synodical Conference when there was a last ditch effort to clarify positions and reestablish unity. The pamphlet *This We Believe* was commissioned by the 1955 convention when a need was felt for such a document in the controversies of the 1950s. The 1979 statement on abortion reflects a raging controversy in our country,

while the 1979 statement on grants reflects a practice which was questioned in our own midst. In each case controversy created the need for clear confession.

It was no different, of course, for the Lutheran reformers. The Formula of Concord does not include all of Bible doctrine. It includes articles on those doctrines which were contested in the mid-1500s. The Augsburg Confession and Smalcald Articles by and large deal with contested doctrines.

This still can serve as the best guideline today. In time of controversy when there is the danger that a church body's doctrinal position may be in doubt, then it may be beneficial for the church body officially to confess its doctrine by adopting a formal doctrinal statement in a convention.

There is, of course, another way for the doctrinal position of a church body to be publicly established. A church body may get along fine in many cases with doctrinal statements prepared by church leaders which are distributed and quietly agreed upon without the formal vote of the church convention. Schaff in his *History of the Creeds of Christendom* says that doctrinal statements can receive authoritative character in either of two ways. "What gives them symbolical or authoritative character is the *formal sanction* or *tacit acquiescence* of the church or sect which they represent" (p. 7).

"Tacit acquiescence" has happened often in our church body. In our synod the Conference of Presidents is constitutionally charged with the oversight of doctrine and practice. Periodically they have distributed doctrinal statements which have been received and used by our church body without challenge. Examples would be the 1953-54 series of eleven tracts on doctrinal topics and the 1981 statement on the moment of the real presence in the Lord's Supper.

Because statements like this have been issued by the men who oversee doctrine and the statements have been received and used, one can take them to represent the doctrinal position of the synod although they were never formally approved at a convention. The fellowship ramifications for these documents would be the same as for a formally approved statement.

But in some cases it seems wise to go beyond that. If, for example, a statement distributed by the doctrinal overseers is challenged, then a formal vote may be necessary to establish the synod's position. If for some other reason the synod's position is in doubt, then a formal vote may be necessary.

It is natural in my mind to compare this situation with what might take place in a local congregation. Imagine that a pastor writes an article about close communion for the congregation's newsletter. If no one challenges the article, one could assume that the article presents the doctrinal position of the congregation, because it comes from the doctrinal overseer and it receives tacit agreement on the part of the members. But if the article is challenged publicly in the congregation, then the congregation's position is suddenly in doubt. If the pastor's article is still challenged even after adequate time has been given for study and brotherly discussion, then the congregation may have to vote at a voters' meeting to determine what the doctrinal position of the congregation will be.

The members of the COP on the larger scale function as the pastors of the synod. As they distribute a doctrinal statement, one can assume that it is the doctrinal position of the synod, unless of course it is challenged. Then the position of the synod may be in doubt and a vote may be called for. But all of this still leads to the next thought.

2. It remains a matter of sanctified Christian judgment to determine when the need is present for a formally adopted doctrinal statement and when the time is ripe for such a vote.

A glance at our synod's history reveals some puzzling facts with regard to doctrinal statements approved at synod conventions. Some doctrines which one might have expected the synod to discuss and embrace at synod conventions were not. Other doctrines quite unexpectedly have been endorsed at conventions over the years.

During the 1950's, for example, one might have expected the synod officially to adopt a statement on church fellowship, since that was in the end the key issue in the split with Missouri. In 1981 one might have expected the convention formally to adopt the statement on the Lord's Supper, since there was intersynodical controversy on this issue. In both of these cases, the convention delegates obviously were content to rely on COP statements without affirming them by a vote at the convention.

On the other hand, a doctrinal statement on the antichrist was officially adopted in 1959. Someone might wonder why this doctrine was singled out. In 1979 the convention officially endorsed a statement on abortion. Why this issue? Why in 1979 and not earlier or later?

I believe this simply shows that there is an element of personal judgment involved when it comes to adopting doctrinal statements at conventions. We know that a doctrinal statement does not need to be adopted formally to serve as a position statement of the synod. We know that there can be benefit in having a statement adopted formally. Mature Christian judgment then comes in.

In the cases when the synod did officially adopt a doctrinal statement, it was because someone — perhaps an individual, or a congregation or a conference — according to his judgment felt the need for such action. In 1979, for example, the synod acted on the topic of abortion because a memorial was received from an individual who felt the need for such official action.

The timing also is a matter of careful judgment. When is it time to bring a statement to a vote? When is it best to delay for continued study?

Certainly with an issue that is controversial, enough time should be allowed for thorough study to go on. Time should be given so that a consensus hopefully will surface through the study of God's word.

Yet one must not delay indefinitely when there is controversy and study. As a confessional church body, unity in doctrine is always our common goal. One must not let doctrinal pluralism arise by postponing action indefinitely in favor of "further study."

E. C. Fredrich in a 1981 *Quarterly* article made this interesting observation about the dissolution of the Synodical Conference: "Some of us are old enough to remember that it was just this request for 'further study' that eventually and actually did the Synodical Conference in. While all the 'further study' was going on — actually, not going on — erroneous positions and practices were being solidified and finally correction became impossible. That kind of 'further study' none of us wants" (Vol. 78, p. 5).

Without a doubt, balanced Christian judgment is needed to determine what should be formally adopted at synod conventions and when.

Permit me now in closing to share some thoughts pertinent to the current discussion in our synod about the roles of men and women.

3. There are good reasons for our synod in convention officially to clarify and affirm its doctrine on the roles of men and women.

There are a number of reasons why I suggest this. First of all, the debate in our synod on the roles of men and women is a matter of public record. In the opening paragraphs of his 1981 *Quarterly* article, Prof. Fredrich admits, "It is no secret that there is disagreement within synodical ranks over the Scripture teaching regarding the role of women" (p. 3). Because of the public nature of the controversy, it would be good for the synod at some point publicly to confirm what its common doctrine is in order to present a common front to the world as the Lord would like.

Secondly, synod conventions in the past years have been very much involved with the issue. Here is a summary of the involvement of recent conventions with this topic according to the published records:

1979 BORAM — CHE theses were published
Proceedings — theses should be studied by districts (Addendum #9)

1981 Proceedings — committee to be appointed to prepare a pamphlet (Addendum #9)

(April, 1985 -- COP releases *Man and Woman in God's World*)

1985 Proceedings - synod should study the pamphlet and the additional tract yet to come (Addendum #10)

(1987 - the expanded version of *Man and Woman* is released)

1989 Proceedings - COP document is received as a correct exposition of Scripture; a brief, formal doctrinal statement is to be prepared for 1991 (Addendum #10).

A number of memorials over the years also have been submitted to synod conventions on the topic. The point is this: since the synod conventions have been so much involved with the issue over the years, it is natural for the synod convention officially to react to the issue and to clarify the synod's position. In other cases when a convention authorized a study (cf. grants in the 1970s), a later convention also formally approved the work when it found it to be done satisfactorily.

Finally, in this case it is honest to say that the COP pamphlet has not received "tacit acquiescence" throughout the synod (Cf. Addendum #3). This seems to be a case somewhat like the pastor's newsletter article which is challenged. Our public doctrine, therefore, has been put into a degree of doubt. And, if a COP doctrinal statement is challenged, then it must fall to the synod in convention to clarify the synod's position and confess what its doctrine is.

About the timetable for this action I will say nothing other than what has been said before. One hesitates to be hasty in a matter of such great and lasting importance. One also cannot delay indefinitely, and it has already been 12 years since the study began.

In conclusion, I say in all sincerity that if I am misguided in any of the thoughts of this paper, I stand to be corrected. Please admonish in a brotherly way.

However, it seems apparent to me that it is appropriate for a synod in convention to adopt a doctrinal statement. It is appropriate when a need is felt for the synod to clarify its position and to confess its doctrine publicly. The question among us should never be *whether it is right* for a synod convention to adopt a doctrinal statement. The only question is *when* and *on what* doctrine.

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1989 WELS BORAM (Book of Reports and Memorials), p. 252

Subject: The Roles of Man and Woman

- WHEREAS 1) there has been considerable discussion in our synod during the past ten years on the roles of man and woman; and
- WHEREAS 2) it is important for us as a synod to maintain and confess a unity of faith on this issue as on all issues; and
- WHEREAS 3) a scriptural presentation entitled *Man and Woman in God's World* (1985) has been produced and disseminated by the Conference of Presidents (COP); therefore, be it
- Resolved, a) That this convention officially adopt the doctrinal content of the pamphlet *Man and Woman in God's World* as the doctrine of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod; and be it further
- Resolved, b) That the COP maintain a practice in the congregations of our synod which is consistent with the scriptural principles presented in this pamphlet.

Mankato Pastoral Conference
Minnesota District
Wernor Wagner, Secretary

1989 WELS Proceedings, p. 51

Memorial (89-18)

Subject: Memorial 89-7 – The Roles of Man and Woman

WHEREAS 1) the roles of man and woman are already established by God in the inspired word, and presented well by the Conference of Presidents in the pamphlet entitled *Man and Woman in God's World*, and currently monitored by district officers; and

WHEREAS 2) It should not be the business of the synod to adopt its doctrine by synod resolution; therefore, be it

Resolved, WELS convention refrain from adopting a Wisconsin Synod doctrine on the roles of man and woman.

Cascade Conference
Pacific Northwest District
David C. Linn, Secretary

**Memorial for Presentation to the District Convention of the Minnesota District
of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod**

- WHEREAS 1) the WELS in its 1989 Convention at Prairie du Chien passed Resolution No. 9 identifying the document *Man and Woman in God's World* as "a correct exposition of the scriptural teachings in this matter," even though many of the delegates who voted on that resolution had not thoroughly studied that document prior to voting on Resolution No. 9, and
- WHEREAS 2) There is a danger in adopting what was intended to be a study document as "a correct exposition of Scriptural teaching," in that it puts it on a par with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, and
- WHEREAS 3) It should not be the business of the Synod to adopt its doctrine by synod resolution, therefore, be it
- Resolved, a) That the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Convention in 1991 rescind its resolution No. 9; b) "that we receive the document, *Man and Woman in God's World* "as a correct exposition of the scriptural teachings in this matter" and be it finally
- Resolved, b) That the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Convention in 1991 not adopt ANY STATEMENT on the Role of Man and Woman.

Marcus Birkholz. Pastor, Stillwater, MN
 Carl Henkel, Pastor, St Paul, MN
 Donald Hochmuth, Pastor, Woodbury, MN
 David Koeplin, Pastor, Eagan, MN
 Frederick Kogler, Pastor. St Paul, MN
 Terry Laabs, Pastor, Minneapolis, MN
 Gregory Lenz. Pastor, Eden Prairie, Ma.
 Mark Liesener, Pastor, Bloomington. MN
 Norbert Meier, Pastor, St Paul, MN
 David Ponath, Pastor, N. St Paul, MN
 William Schaefer II. Pastor, Minneapolis, MN
 Martin Schwartz, Pastor, St Paul Park, MN
 Carroll Sengbusch. Pastor. S. St Paul, MN
 Scott Spaulding, Pastor, Bloomington. MN
 Richard Stadler, Pastor, W. St Paul, MN
 Verne Voss, Pastor, Minneapolis, MN

1967 WELS Proceedings, p. 294-295

Reference: BORAM – p. 184

Resolution No. 3

Subject: This We Believe

WHEREAS, The Commission on Doctrinal Matters in recent years received requests from within and outside our fellowship for a clear and concise statement of the confessional position of our Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and

WHEREAS, These requests have been met in the 24 page booklet: *This We Believe*, published by the Commission on Doctrinal Matters; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, a) That we express our appreciation to the Commission on Doctrinal Matters and also to the Advisory Committee on Doctrinal Matters for their careful labors in presenting this booklet to fill evident needs, and be it further

RESOLVED, b) That we acknowledge that this doctrinal presentation concisely sets forth both positively and negatively the Scriptural truths that are being taught from our pulpits and in our classrooms; and be it further

RESOLVED, c) That we express our joy over its favorable reception both within and outside our circles, and that we join in the prayer that it may also in the future under God's blessings serve as testimony to the saving truths of God's Holy Word to the glory of His name and the promotion of His Kingdom, and be it finally

RESOLVED, d) That we encourage the Commission on Doctrinal Matters in its plans to have this booklet translated into other languages which come into consideration in our confessional contacts and in our mission endeavors.

Reference: BORAM - pp. 185-191

Resolution No. 4

Subject: Church and Ministry

WHEREAS, Our Commission on Doctrinal Matters issued statements on Church and Ministry during the final discussions in the Synodical Conference Forum, prior to our termination of Church Fellowship with the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (statements which were published in part in our 1959 *Proceedings* and in part in our official periodical, *The Northwestern Lutheran*). and

WHEREAS, In subsequent discussions on Church and Ministry with other church bodies, such as The Lutheran Churches of the Reformation and various Lutheran churches in Europe and Australia, our Commission on Doctrinal Matters felt the desirability of a clarification and expansion of certain statements and expressions in these theses which have been prepared in the interest of providing fuller understanding of our position: therefore. be it

RESOLVED, That our Synod express its agreement with these clarifications and expansions (Boram 186-191) and its concurrence with the assertion of our Commission on Doctrinal Matters that these expansions and clarifications have in no wise changed or modified the substance of the original wording.

1973 WELS Proceedings, p. 95-96

Reference: BORAM - pp. 98-100

Subject: Scriptural Warrant for State of Confession

Resolution No. 11 (Supplement to Resolution No. 5 (Revised))

- WHEREAS, at the joint meeting of our Commission on Inter-Church Relations with the Board of Doctrine of the Church of the Lutheran Confession the matter of dealings between church bodies when error or false doctrine has arisen was discussed; and
- WHEREAS, the Church of the Lutheran Confession representatives saw no Scriptural warrant for a state of confession in dealing with such situations; and
- WHEREAS, our Commission held that a state of confession is frequently called for before terminating fellowship with a group that has become infected with error for the following reasons:
- a) 'In order to offer opportunity for determining what the confessional position of the group for which it must be held responsible really is (this may become necessary because of mutually exclusive statements, pronouncements, resolutions made in such a group; because of conflicting positions contending for mastery in this group, one or the other of which may for good reasons be considered to be only temporarily in control);
 - b) "to offer opportunity to bring Scriptural testimony against the error infecting the group to those brethren who are not themselves advocating and propagandizing the errors - before treating such brethren as responsible partakers of the error or false practice infecting their group"; and
- WHEREAS, the Commission holds that, in dealing with situations where error or false doctrine has infected a larger group of confessional brethren, there is Scriptural warrant for use of the term, "state of confession," in view of the many Scriptural injunctions quoted in the Synod's Church Fellowship Statement, bidding us to exercise and make earnest effort to preserve the bond of confessional fellowship, to help the weak and the confused; therefore be it
- Resolved, a) That we endorse the Commission's position as presented to the CLC Board of Doctrine on the definition. of the term, "state of confession," at the July 18-19, 1972 meeting with the CLC Board of Doctrine: and be it finally
- Resolved, b) That we also endorse the Commissions' subsequent clarification of this position relative to such dealings as stated in its report: "It needs to be borne in mind, of course, that when this report, quoted in full, uses the term 'state of confession,' it is not referring to a concept defined in Scripture itself, so that it always will and must mean one and the same thing. When the term 'state of confession' was used during the period before 1961 to designate the fellowship relation of our Synod over against the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the synodical resolutions in effect during that period should make it quite evident that the term 'state of confession' was not yet meant to express a judgment tantamount to that of Romans 16:17."

1979 WELS Proceedings, pp. 64-65

Reference: BORAM pp. 192-194, Committee on Grants Addendum

Subject: Report of the Committee on Grants

Resolution No. 4

- WHEREAS 1) a portion of the constituency of Synod has expressed concern over ‘the expediency of the current practice of WELS requesting and applying for gifts, grants, matching funds from any source outside the WELS’”(BORAM 1977, p. 174); and
- WHEREAS 2) the Synod in convention in 1977 elected a committee to study this question; and
- WHEREAS 3) the committee has made a thorough study of the scriptural and practical aspects of this question and submitted its report to the districts (RTTD, 1978, p.183-197; BORAM, 1979, p. 192-194); and
- WHEREAS 4) your floor committee has made a thorough study of the Report of the Committee on Grants; and
- WHEREAS 5) the report clearly shows that the requesting and receiving of such gifts and grants are a matter of Christian liberty; and
- WHEREAS 6) the report emphasizes that constant watchfulness and self-discipline are necessary and God-pleasing in exercising our Christian liberty; and
- WHEREAS 7) your committee has thoroughly studied Memorial 79-6 relating to the Report of the Committee on Grants; therefore be it
- Resolved, a) that we endorse in substance the Report of the Committee on Grants; and be it further
- Resolved, b) that we thank the Committee on Grants for its report.

1979 WELS Proceedings, p. 48

Reference: BORAM - p. 209 Memorial (75-7)

Subject: Abortion

Resolution No. 2

- WHEREAS 1) the Holy Scriptures clearly teach that the living yet unborn are persons in the sight of God and are under the protection of His commandment against murder, (Job 10:9-11; Ex. 20:13; Matt. 5:21; Gen. 9:6; Ps.39:13; Ps. 51:5; Jer. 1:5; Luke 1:41-44); and
- WHEREAS 2) our hearts are grieved over the millions of unborn who are being murdered each year through the sin of willful abortion; and
- WHEREAS 3) our Synod has historically testified against abortion, except when it is medically necessary to save the life of the mother; therefore be it
- Resolved, a) that we encourage the editors of our synodical periodicals as well as our pastors and teachers to continue fervently and faithfully to testify against abortion; and be it further
- Resolved, b) that we continue to urge our membership to make God's will in this matter known to our fellowmen whenever the opportunity presents. itself; and be it further
- Resolved, c) that we encourage our membership to express their concern and compassion for distressed pregnant women by supporting the development of alternatives to abortion programs which are consistent with God's Word; and be it finally
- Resolved, d) that we more zealously preach the Gospel of Christ which alone can change the wicked hearts of men and turn them from sin to righteousness.

Roles of Men and Women

The 1988 convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod resolved that the statement on the Roles of Men and Women in the church “be used as a document for study in our congregations and pastoral conferences” (1988 SR. p. 70, Res. No. 9A). The convention also resolved (in B of resolution No. 9) “that these theses be considered at the next synodical convention for adoption.” During the intervening year members of the synod have availed themselves of the opportunity to study this document. The Doctrine Committee recommends that the convention adopt this statement as expressing the scriptural guidelines under which we desire to live and work together as Christ’s men and women in the church. The statement follows:

ON THE BASIS OF SUCH SCRIPTURE PASSAGES AS GENESIS 1-3; I CORINTHIANS 11:3-16; I CORINTHIANS 14:33b-36; EPHESIANS 5:22-26; GALATIANS 3:28; 1 TIMOTHY 2:11-15; 1 PETER 3:1-7; ROMANS 16 AND PHILIPPIANS 4:3 WE LEARN:

1. God created man and woman in His own image, that is, he created them with a true knowledge of Him and with perfect righteousness and holiness. Even though our first parents lost this image in the fall into sin, yet God in His grace promised the Savior and in Him restored this image.
2. This spiritual equality of man and woman is a blessed reality, as St. Paul writes in Galatians 3:28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free. *there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*”
3. Through faith in Christ all Christians are members of the universal priesthood of believers and as such are in full possession of all its rights and privileges and are exhorted to exercise them.
4. At the creation of man and woman God established an order, or structure, by assigning individual identities to each sex. According to Genesis 2, Eve was created to be a helper to Adam and as such was subordinate to him. Subordination, however, does not mean inferiority or slavery; rather it implies order (structure) and differences in responsibility.
5. The headship/subordination principle is clearly taught in Scripture. In Genesis 3:16 the Lord says to the woman: “Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.” The original structure at creation remained in effect after the fall into sin.
6. The headship/subordination principle is clearly set forth also in the New Testament. In I Corinthians 11:3 Paul says “the head of the woman is man,” and in Ephesians 5 the apostle tells wives to submit to their husbands “for the husband is the head of the wife” (Eph 5:22-23). The apostle Peter exhorts wives to be in subjection to their husbands singling out Sarah as an example, who obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord (cf. I Peter 3:1-7).
7. The headship of man does not in any way mean that he is to demand demeaning submission; rather it is an arrangement for good order.
8. The prime example of the goodness and necessity of the headship/subordination relationship is found in the relationship between God the Father and God the Son. Biblical Christianity has always taught that the Father and the Son are equally God; there is no difference in their degree of divinity. And yet in I Corinthians 15:28 the Son himself is said to be subject to the Father. It is interesting to note that here the same verb is used for the Son’s subjection to the Father as is used for the woman’s subjection to the man in Ephesians 5 and 1 Timothy 2. The purpose of the Son’s submitting to the Father is not to put the Son in an inferior position, but to bring about a beautiful plan. The purpose of the wife submitting to her husband and of the woman being submissive within the Christian congregation is not “to put her in her place,” but to carry out a beautiful plan viz.,- the establishment of a marriage that not only lasts but is also a wonderful harmony, and the establishment of an orderly and harmonious fellowship with the congregation. Scriptural submission is good. not an affliction.

9. Our Lord has revealed that he wants the headship (leadership) principle to be upheld in the church. It is his will that men hold the position of leadership. I Timothy 2:11-14 and I Corinthians 14:34ff. forbid women to hold the pastoral office.
10. The same principle applies to women suffrage. Scripture forbids the woman “to have authority over a man.” (I Timothy 2:12) The Evangelical Lutheran Synod throughout its history has held that the vote is an exercise of such authority.)
11. However, this position does not forbid consultation between men and women in the church. To that end, informal meetings may be held at which women may have opportunity to seek information and express their views. But the final decisions are to be made by the men. The Lord himself has placed this responsibility upon the men and they are to carry this out, not in a dictatorial fashion, but in a manner that is sensitive to the feelings and wishes also of the women.
12. While Scripture forbids the woman from usurping authority over the man, it does not forbid her from using her talents in areas of church work which do not conflict with the public administration of the means of grace.
13. As members of the priesthood of believers there is much for women to do in the church. In Romans chapter 16, the apostle Paul sends greetings to women who had been of assistance to him. He mentions Priscilla and her husband Aquila as “fellow workers in Christ Jesus” (v. 31 and a certain Mary “who labored much for us” (v. 6). And in his letter to the Philippians he urges the congregation to “help these women who labored with me in the gospel” (4:2). Nor should we forget the many women who ministered to our Lord during his earthly ministry whose names are recorded in the Gospels.
14. From the above passages it is evident that women used their talents in the Lord’s service and they were commended for it. The church today can learn from the early church to do the same, but always within the parameters which God himself has established. In the past there has perhaps been too much emphasis on what women cannot do rather than on what they can do thus giving some women the impression that they are second class members and that their talents are neither needed nor appreciated.
15. While we must continue to uphold the Scriptural principles so far as ordination of women and their exercising authority over the man is concerned, it is clear from the passages under study that women’s participation in the work of the Gospel is a blessing to the church. God has given the ministry of the Gospel to all believers; it is the office of the pastoral ministry that he has restricted to men. As ministers of the Gospel (members of the priesthood of believers) women may, for example, lend their counsel in open congregational forums, teach parochial school, Sunday school, vacation Bible school, direct choirs, serve on committees, assist the pastor and elders in calling on the sick, shut-ins and singles, and also assist in works of charity in the congregation and community.
16. Finally, Christian women also have the responsibility of encouraging men to fulfill their obligation of leadership in this God-ordained order.
17. When men and women labor together in the Gospel, taking heed to the Word and working within the scriptural limits, then truly God is glorified and the church is edified.

1989 ELS Proceedings, p. 80

Resolution No. 2: The Role of Men and Women in the Church

BE IT RESOLVED, That the document on *The Role of Men and Women in the Church* be recommitted to the synod’s Doctrine Committee for further consideration as to wording.

ELS Proceedings, p. 76

Resolution No. 10: Role of Men and Women in the Church

WHEREAS, The Synod's Doctrine Committee has reconsidered the document for the purpose for which it was recommitted last year, and has resubmitted it to the convention for approval, and

WHEREAS, The floor committee has considered it carefully,

BE IT RESOLVED, That the synod adopt this document as the synod's position on the role of men and women in the church, with the following changes: in paragraph 8, line 2, at the end of the first sentence add (cf. I Corinthians 11:3), in paragraph 8, line 7, after I Timothy 2 and beginning the next sentence add in 1 Corinthians 15:28, in paragraph 11, line 2, after Informal meetings, add: or forums.

1979 WELS Proceedings, p. 87

Reference: BORAM pp. 5-16

Subject: The Role of Man and Woman According to Holy Scripture

Resolution No. 19

- WHEREAS 1) the theses listed in *The Role of Man and Woman According to Holy Scriptures* address a subject of great concern in our times; and
- WHEREAS 2) the subject matter of the theses is too weighty to be studied in depth by this convention; therefore, be it
- Resolved, a) that the theses be thoroughly studied by congregations and conferences of our districts as opportunities present themselves; and be it further
- Resolved, b) that the 1980 district conventions officially study the theses and submit summary reports to the Commission on Higher Education; and be it finally
- Resolved, c) that the CHE report the results of the districts' studies to the 1981 convention of the Synod.

1981 WELS Proceedings, p. 59

Reference: BORAM, pp. 15-18 and Memorials (81-6), (91-9) and Unprinted Memorial (81-21)

Subject: The Role of Man and Woman According to Holy Scriptures

Resolution No. 5 (amended)

- WHEREAS 1) the 1979 convention of the Synod resolved that the CITE report to this convention the results of the districts' studies regarding the statement on *The Role of Man and Woman According to Holy Scripture*; and
- WHEREAS 2) a number of districts called for additional study of the relevant scriptural principles regarding the role of man and woman; and
- WHEREAS 3) the role of man should be clearly defined according to scriptural principles regarding his responsibilities toward church, wife, family and society; and
- WHEREAS 4) the role of woman should be clearly defined according to scriptural principles regarding her responsibilities toward church, husband, family and society; and
- WHEREAS 5) it was recommended that a pamphlet on this subject be prepared in simple language so that it can be placed into the hands of our people; therefore, be it
- Resolved, a) that this matter be referred to the Conference of Presidents (COP) to appoint an appropriate committee for further extensive study; and be it further
- Resolved, b) that this appointed committee report to the districts of the WELS in convention in 1987; and be it finally
- Resolved, c) that a pamphlet or other exposition of the subject matter in readily understood language be offered to the members of the Synod as soon as authorized by the COP.

1985 WELS Proceedings, p. 50-51

Reference: BORAM p. 216; Memorials 85-13, 85-14

Subject: The Role of Man and Woman

Resolution No. 6

WHEREAS 1) The Conference of Presidents (COP) has released the report of the *ad hoc* committee appointed to study the role of man and woman in God's world and so fulfilled the directive of the 1981 convention; and

WHEREAS 2) A further tract on this subject which will be of special interest to those who wish to do more intensive study in this area is nearing completion; and

WHEREAS 3) Two memorials have been addressed to this convention asking for further study and review of some aspects of the role of women in the church; therefore, be it

Resolved, a) That the Synod thank the COP and the committee for their work on the report which has been released; and be it further

Resolved, b) That we urge the members of the Synod to continue the study and discussion of this report and the additional tract when it is released.

1989 WELS Proceedings, p. 65-66

Reference: BORAM p. 252; Memorials (89-7), (89-18)

Subject: The Role Of Man And Woman

Resolution No. 9

WHEREAS 1) The 1981 synod convention requested that the Conference of Presidents produce a pamphlet on the scriptural roles of man and woman; and

WHEREAS 2) The Conference of Presidents has presented to the synod the document, *Man and Woman in God's World*; and

WHEREAS 3) The document *Man and Woman in God's World* was not intended to be a formal doctrinal statement; therefore, be it

Resolved, a) That we thank the Conference of Presidents for its work; and be it further

Resolved, b) That we receive the document, *Man and Woman in God's World*, in fulfillment of the study assigned the Conference of Presidents by the 1981 synod convention and as a correct exposition of the scriptural teachings in this matter; and be it finally

Resolved, c) That we also urge the COP to prepare a brief, formal doctrinal statement for consideration by the 1991 convention.