

but that paragraph only applies *after* an indictment. It begins, “*When the prosecution is instituted by the court . . .*” The first direction also says Presbytery “may counsel TE Leithart that the views set forth above constitute error that is injurious to the peace and purity of the church . . .” But the SJC never rendered such a judgment on any of his views. So the first amends is not coherent and it is unclear what is meant by the seemingly-optional “*may counsel.*” And the second “direction” from the SJC is contingent on the first.

Nineteen years ago, the SJC identified two specific Jenga Sticks in another case – limited atonement and infant baptism (Bowen vs. Eastern Carolina). That clear identification has served the PCA well. Candidates know it. Examining courts know it. Most of our congregants know it. In this case, the SJC was asked to rule on the dispute between the complainants and Presbytery over whether any of a minister’s views were Jenga Sticks. If SJC believed any views were Jenga Sticks, instead of indirectly critiquing them, the court should have:

- (1) clearly identified them,
- (2) clearly explained how and where they differed from the Standards, and
- (3) clearly explained why the court judged them to be hostile to the system or striking at the vitals of religion.

RE Howard Donahoe

<sup>1</sup>At the time of this Objection, Leithart’s 32-page Response from the Record could also be found at <http://www.leithart.com/pdf/Response-to-Presbytery-Committee-Reports.pdf>

## CASE 2009-7 TE JAMES URISH VS. ROCKY MOUNTAIN PRESBYTERY

### I. SUMMARY OF FACTS

1. Rocky Mountain Presbytery examined Mr. Dan Breed for ordination at the January 2009 Stated Meeting. During the candidate’s theological examination, he was questioned about views he had expressed in his written theological examination as to the role a woman may play in the life of the church. Specifically, the candidate wrote:

Women and men in the church are able to teach, mentor, lead, administer, and counsel men and women as is seen

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in the New Testament, under the oversight of the elders (Romans 16:1-12). The office of elder is reserved only for men as having spiritual authority in the New Testament and therefore ruling authority in the Church (Titus 1:5-9, 1 Timothy 2:12-13, 13:1-7)[sic].

2. Presbyters questioned the candidate as to the extent of his view (what is allowed) and the basis for his view (his Biblical exegesis). He stated:
  - a. The role of elder is only for men;
  - b. He would allow a woman to teach the book of Romans to a Sunday school including men, under the authoritative supervision of the church session;
  - c. Women and non-ordained men teach under the authority and supervision of the church session;
  - d. A woman is not allowed to exercise spiritual authority over the church in her teaching; that role is reserved to the elders;
  - e. Preaching is an example of teaching with authority;
  - f. 1 Tim. 2:11-12 does not allow a woman to “teach authoritatively” (i.e. preach); but it does not preclude her from all forms of teaching, so long as she teaches under the supervision and authority of the church session;
  - g. 1 Tim. 2:11-12 precludes one thing, “teaching authoritatively,” not two things “teaching” and “having authority.”
3. Upon motion, Rocky Mountain Presbytery voted to sustain the candidate’s theological exam. There was no motion challenging the view expressed by the candidate as to the permissibility of a woman teaching. Presbytery subsequently voted to approve the candidate for ordination.
4. February 20, 2009, Complainants filed a Complaint against “the action of the Rocky Mountain Presbytery in connection with its sustaining the theological and ordination examination” of the candidate on January 23, 2009. Rocky Mountain Presbytery denied the complaint at its April 2009 Stated Meeting. Complainants then brought this matter to the General Assembly.

## **II. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE**

Did Rocky Mountain Presbytery err in sustaining a candidate for ordination's theological examination when that candidate would in various ministries of the church, exclusive of preaching, allow a woman to teach from Scripture to men and women, all under the authority of the Session?

## **III. JUDGMENT**

No.

## **IV. REASONING AND OPINION**

Before reviewing the presbytery's decision in this matter, we must first determine the standard of review by which we are to evaluate a presbytery's decision to grant certain latitude in the interpretation and application of a passage of Scripture that is not authoritatively expounded by our doctrinal standards or our *Book of Church Order*. *BCO* 39 sets forth standards for appellate review, such as:

- (1) the higher court is to give "great deference" to the lower court with regard to "factual matters" and with regard to certain "matters of discretion and judgment" and should disturb the lower court's decision only upon a finding of "clear error" (*BCO* 39-3.2, 3.3); or
- (2) the higher court, in cases involving the interpretation of the Constitution, "has the duty and authority to interpret and apply the Constitution of the Church according to its best abilities and understanding, regardless of the opinion of the lower court." (*BCO* 39-3.4).

The *BCO* authorizes no other applicable standard of review.

The parties to this case concede that neither the Westminster Standards nor the *Book of Church Order* explicitly address the candidate's view in this case. Thus the crucial question in determining if there is clear error that would lead to a reversal of the lower court (*BCO* 39-3.3) is whether the man's views are out of conformity with "the general principles of Biblical polity" embodied in our Constitution (*BCO* 21-5.3). In considering this question, the critical issues for the court of original jurisdiction are (1) whether the candidate's interpretation of Scripture undermines the credibility of his commitment to the first ordination vow and (2) the allowable applications of practice that may flow from that interpretation.

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While many of us have questions about the candidate's exegesis of I Timothy 2:11-15, we do not find sufficient evidence in the record or arguments to require the conclusion that Presbytery erred in not finding the expressed views call into question his ability to affirm the first ordination vow. Further, the candidate in this case expressly rejected the following – that a woman could serve as an elder; that a woman could preach in public worship; and, that a woman could teach the Scriptures in any church ministry context outside of the express oversight and authoritative governance of the church session. With these express limitations of a woman's role in place, the presbytery examined the candidate as to the basis for his exegesis of I Tim. 2:11ff – essentially that Paul forbids "authoritative teaching" (such as preaching), and does not prohibit other forms of teaching that may occur in the ministry life of the church (Sunday school, small groups, breakfast meetings, seminars, etc.). At the conclusion of a discussion of his view, presbytery voted to sustain his theological exam. There was no motion made to find his view as to a woman teaching out of accord with our system of doctrine.

Applying the above standards to the matter before us, we find no basis in the Record of the Case to conclude that the presbytery committed clear error in affirming the theological examination of the candidate at issue. We find, therefore, no constitutional basis to set aside the judgment of the presbytery and so affirm its denial of the Complaint.

This Decision was amended by the full Standing Judicial

Roll call vote on 2009-7:

TE Dominic A. Aquila, Disqualified  
TE Howell A. Burkhalter, Concur  
RE E.C. Burnett, Concur  
TE David F. Coffin Jr., Concur  
RE Marvin C. Culbertson, Concur  
RE J. Howard Donahoe, Concur  
RE Samuel J. Duncan, Concur  
TE Fred Greco, Concur  
TE Grover E. Gunn III, Concur  
RE Terry L. Jones, Concur  
RE Thomas F. Leopard, Concur

TE William R. Lyle, Concur  
RE J. Grant McCabe, Concur  
TE Charles E. McGowan, Concur  
TE D. Steven Meyerhoff, Concur  
TE Timothy G. Muse, Concur  
RE Frederick J. Neikirk, Concur  
RE Jeffrey Owen, Concur  
RE Calvin Poole, Absent  
TE G. Dewey Roberts, Concur  
TE Danny Shuffield, Concur  
RE John B. White Jr., Concur

20 Concur, 1 Disqualified, 1 Absent

**CONCURRING OPINION**  
**CASE 2009-07 – URISH**  
**VS.**  
**ROCKY MOUNTAIN PRESBYTERY**  
**RE HOWARD DONAHOE, JOINED BY TE GRECO AND RE**  
**DUNCAN**

I concur with the Judgment but want to add some qualifying comments to the Reasoning. (All emphasis and underlining is added in this concurrence.)

Issue: Did Rocky Mountain Presbytery err in sustaining a candidate for ordination's theological examination when that candidate would, in various ministries of the church (exclusive of preaching), allow a woman to teach from Scripture to men and women, all under the authority of the Session?

Judgment: No

Most of the discussion in this case, and in the Record, involved the interpretation of Paul's prohibition about teaching in 1 Timothy 2:12 (ESV below):

I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet.

The parties agreed Paul prohibits a woman from preaching, at least. But the specific question was whether a woman is also prohibited from teaching the book of Romans, for example, in a mixed-gender adult Sunday school class. The Westminster Standards do not directly address that specific question and there is some range of opinion in the PCA. In addition, the parties agreed the *BCO* does not explicitly prohibit a woman from such teaching. With regard to preaching, however, the *BCO* was amended in 2002 to add a single word that explicitly prohibits women from preaching:

The Session . . . has power . . . to ensure that the Word of God is preached only by such men as are sufficiently qualified (*BCO* 4-4, 53-2, 1 Timothy 2:11-12). *BCO* 12.5.e

So until and unless the PCA amends the *BCO* to likewise prohibit women from teaching mixed adult classes, the higher court is not likely to overturn a decision of a lower court on this specific question.

But further comment is warranted on an exegetical error made by the candidate in this case. SJC writes: ". . . many of us have questions about the candidate's exegesis of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 . . ." I believe that is a gracious

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understatement. The candidate claimed only one thing is prohibited by 1 Tim 2:12, that is, “authoritative teaching” - not two things: teaching and having authority. He claimed it was a hendiadys (two words connected by a conjunction that convey one idea). While the transcript in the Record indicates he was questioned about how he would apply this understanding, there is little evidence of questioning about the exegesis itself. But this is an exegetical error on a very important passage - and very few scholars hold this view. Personally, if I was a presbyter voting on an ordination exam, this error in exegesis would lead me to either (1) support a motion to postpone the vote until he had studied the matter further, or (2) vote against sustaining his exam on “knowledge of Greek” (*BCO* 21-4.c.1.b, or perhaps for exegesis paper if 1 Tim 2:12 had been assigned, per 21-4.c.2).

The view that Paul is prohibiting only one thing was soundly critiqued by Andreas Kostenberger in his 1995 article “A Complex Sentence: The Syntax of 1 Timothy 2:12” in chapter 3 of *Women in the Church: An Analysis and Application of 1 Timothy 2:9-15* (Baker Academic, 1st edition 1995, 2nd edition 2005). [www.cbmw.org/images/articles\\_pdf/kostenberger\\_andreas/syntactical1tim2\\_12.pdf](http://www.cbmw.org/images/articles_pdf/kostenberger_andreas/syntactical1tim2_12.pdf)

The hendiadys view was argued 22 years ago by Philip Barton Payne in an unpublished paper presented at the 1988 meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society. In 2000, it was argued by Linda Belleville in her book *Women Leaders in the Church: Three Critical Questions* (Baker 2000). But the argument failed to persuade many scholars. (I don’t know if Belleville’s position has changed in her new 1 Timothy commentary in the Cornerstone series, Tyndale House 2009. But see Kostenberger’s review of Belleville at [www.cbmw.org/Resources/Book-Reviews/Teaching-and-Usurping-Authority-by-Linda-L-Belleville-from-Discovering-Biblical-Equality.](http://www.cbmw.org/Resources/Book-Reviews/Teaching-and-Usurping-Authority-by-Linda-L-Belleville-from-Discovering-Biblical-Equality.))

Payne’s arguments appeared again in the April 2008 journal *New Testament Studies*. (Kostenberger’s critique of Payne’s article appeared in the fall 2009 *Journal of Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* - [www.cbmw.org/Journal/Vol-14-No-2/The-Syntax-of-1-Timothy-2-12-A-Rejoinder-to-Philip-BPayne](http://www.cbmw.org/Journal/Vol-14-No-2/The-Syntax-of-1-Timothy-2-12-A-Rejoinder-to-Philip-BPayne)). The view might also be hinted at by Hughes in his 2000 Crossways commentary. And based on an online review of Payne’s new book (*Man and Woman, One in Christ*, Zondervan 2009), Blomberg might now be leaning toward this view.

But almost all commentators on 1 Timothy, complementarian and egalitarian alike, agree with the “two activities prohibited” exegesis. Here is a representative dozen:

Guthrie, Tyndale NT 1957&96	Fee, NIBC 1984 & 88
Knight, NIGTC 1992	IH Marshall, ICC 1999&2004
Liefeld, NIV Applic 1999	LT Johnson, Anchor 2001
Mounce, WORD 2000	R. Collins, NT Library 2002
Towner, NICNT 2006	Quinn+Whacker, Eerdman's 2006
Fiore, Sacra Pagina 2007	Ryken, Reformed Expos 2007

Here's an excerpt from one complementarian:

For the grammatical structure that is used in this verse, the Greek language insists on having either two words in positive connotation or two words with negative connotation. (Ryken)

But even egalitarian scholars agree Paul is prohibiting two things, not just one. (See Giles, Hartenstein, Keener, Marshall, Pagett, and Webb.) While egalitarian scholars come to different conclusions about what is being prohibited, few believe it is only one thing. Consider this excerpt from Marshall:

Kostenberger has argued convincingly on the basis of a wide range of Gk. usage that the construction employed in this verse is one in which the writer expresses the same attitude (whether positive or negative) to both of the items joined together by *oude* [or]. It follows that if 'teaching' is regarded positively, so also is 'having authority', and that if 'teaching' is regarded negatively, so also is 'having authority'. Since, in Kostenberger's view, 'teaching' is a positive activity, it follows that 'having authority' is also a positive activity, and therefore the writer is denying two positive activities to women. (Marshall goes on to argue for the 'negative activity' interpretation.)

And even though egalitarians have various reasons for disregarding Paul's prohibitions today (below), most still agree with Kostenberger that Paul was clearly prohibiting two things:

Paul is simply wrong – PK Jewett  
 Prohibition is temporally restricted – Fee  
 Applies only to some of the Ephesian women – Bassler, Kroeger, Marshall, Towner  
 Applies only to uneducated Ephesian women – AB Spencer  
 Applies only to wives – R. Collins  
 Galatians 3:28 overrides whatever 1 Tim 2:12 says – Hove

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In conclusion, I believe it would be a mistake to believe SJC was “allowing” or affirming the hendiadys exegesis of 1 Tim 2:12. That specific question was not under review. While there is reasonable debate about what “type” of teaching is being prohibited and how it should be applied in local PCA churches (the issue in this case), there is little scholarly debate on the question: “Is only one thing being prohibited?” The answer to that question, from scholars in every camp of the gender debate, is a resounding “No.”

### **STANDING JUDICIAL COMMISSION CASE 2009-11 TE LARRY EDISON, ET AL VS. SOUTHWEST FLORIDA PRESBYTERY**

#### **I. SUMMARY OF FACTS**

1. At the stated meeting of SWFP on February 14, 2009 TE Bryan Gregory was examined for admission to SWFP (*BCO* 13-6), which examination was approved, he was received as a member of SWFP, his call as Senior Pastor of Cypress Ridge Presbyterian Church was approved, and a commission was appointed to install TE Gregory as pastor of Cypress Ridge on May 3, 2009.
2. On February 26 a complaint signed by 22 members of Presbytery was filed against SWFP “in connection with the sustaining of the theological examination of minister Bryan Gregory. . . . We . . . believe that the presbytery erred in sustaining the theological examination and in approving the ministerial call of a man whose theological views . . . are ‘out of accord’ with the fundamentals of our church’s doctrinal standards, are ‘hostile to’ the system of doctrine contained in said standards and ‘strike at the vitals of religion’ . . . .”
3. This complaint was heard at a special meeting of SWFP held on March 14. After hearing the complaint Presbytery went into closed session and adopted a motion “to sustain the Complaint filed against the actions of Presbytery in sustaining the theological exam of Mr. Gregory. . . . (32 in favor and 22 opposed)” In addition Presbytery adopted a motion “that because the SWFP erred in sustaining the theological examination of T.E. Bryan Gregory, that T.E. Gregory be sent back to Presbytery as a whole in order to undergo a theological reexamination.” In further motions Presbytery appointed a special meeting on March 24 for the reexamination, requested TE Gregory to appear, at Presbytery’s expense, and indefinitely delayed TE Gregory’s installation.