Today, there is a push for "ordination without regard to gender." But beyond ordination itself there is a larger concern. It is the question of church governance or gospel order. The authority God has vested in the General Conference must be considered if we would be faithful to Jesus and His relationship to His "remnant church." No individual any level—member, pastor, administrator, conference, union or division—has the right to disregard the decisions made by the General Conference in session. The Lord has given us vital counsel that it would be foolish not to follow:

I have often been instructed by the Lord that no man’s judgment should be surrendered to the judgment of any other one man. Never should the mind of one man or the minds of a few men be regarded as sufficient in wisdom and power to control the work and to say what plans shall be followed. But when, in a General Conference, the judgment of the brethren assembled from all parts of the field is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be stubbornly maintained, but surrendered. Never should a laborer regard as a virtue the persistent maintenance of his position of independence, contrary to the decision of the general body.
At times, when a small group of men entrusted with the general management of the work have, in the name of the General Conference, sought to carry out unwise plans and to restrict God’s work, I have said that I could no longer regard the voice of the General Conference, represented by these few men, as the voice of God. But this is not saying that the decisions of a General Conference composed of an assembly of duly appointed, representative men from all parts of the field should not be respected. God has ordained that the representatives of His church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority. The error that some are in danger of committing is in giving to the mind and judgment of one man, or of a small group of men, the full measure of authority and influence that God has vested in His church in the judgment and voice of the General Conference assembled to plan for the prosperity and advancement of His work” (Testimonies, vol. 9, pp. 260, 261).

Were a conference to disregard the working policies of its union, taking unilateral action opposed to those policies, many would be rightfully concerned and the union would be taking appropriate action to resolve the problem. And yet, that is just what is happening when unions decide to take actions contrary to the policies of the General Conference.

In addition to the counsel given us through the prophetic gift regarding the authority of the world church, unions are bound by their constitutions and bylaws to conform to the General Conference decisions. Were each union within the world church to act unilaterally, apart from the General Conference, God’s church would become fragmented. We are concerned for the unity of the church.

The actions taken by three unions last summer contrary to these principles constitute insubordination. As constituents of the North Pacific Union Conference, we in ministry are respectfully appealing to our union president, Elder Max Torkelsen, with the NPUC Executive Committee to hold the line against those who would have the NPUC take similar actions.
The General Conference has put in place a thorough and well thought out process to again visit the question of the ordination of women. Let us work with that process.

The last verse of the book of Judges recalls a situation in which leadership among God’s people had degenerated until each was doing what in their own eyes they felt right. Those in spiritual leadership within the organization have a responsibility to both the people of God and to the Lord Himself to refuse to follow prevailing winds. They must lead by principle. We urge the leadership of the NPUC to exercise that restraint which is in harmony with the church organization Heaven has given us, and work in unison with it's processes.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Evangelist Jim Reinking is an ordained minister who has pastored churches in Oregon and Upper Columbia Conferences. He presently serves as evangelist with the Voice of Prophecy, traveling internationally preaching the gospel. Reinking lives near Spokane, Washington.