

In recent years there have been growing concerns expressed regarding how we as Christ's servants conduct ourselves at our October conference. The concerns regard our participation in the sessions and the attentive respect we need to give to the presenters. Obviously the concerns have become great enough that we're talking to you about them already before the conference.

Specifically, with justified concern some have noted an increasing number of people leaving keynote presentations in favor of conversations in the hallway or extending the lunch period instead of returning for afternoon sessions. Other concerns revolve around attendees using electronic devices during presentations and at best giving divided attention. This last one has caused even presenters from outside our fellowship to make despairing remarks about the lack of respect and poor level of professionalism displayed. We can all agree that as Lutheran educators this is not the witness we desire to give regarding our Savior and the important work we do.

How shall we address such an issue? The same way we address any issue in life: Repentance where needed, forgiveness freely offered in Christ, and joyful improvement prompted by the Spirit working through His Word. Please don't misunderstand, everything said here is said with the utmost love. The purpose in mentioning this is not to tear down but build up. Confident in Christ and confident in you as His servants, we know all attendees at this year's conference can look forward to the good fruits the Spirit promises.

To benefit us all in our understanding and appreciation of what takes place at the conference, we're asking all faculties to discuss this note as well as the upcoming conference. Again, the goal of this conversation, as well as our conference, is to glorify Christ and the work He has called us to do. To guide you in your faculty discussion we suggest the discussion questions which follow.

May Jesus bless your conversations and our upcoming conference, as well as your ministries and lives!

Your fellow servants in Christ,  
The WLSTC Program Committee

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## Scripture & Discussion

1. **Our WLSTC committee gives a couple goals for our October conference: *"to glorify Christ and the work He has called us to do."* This statement lines up with what God tells us in I Cor. 10:31b: *"Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."***

How do you see this "giving glory to God" taking place at our conference?

How is this not happening at our conference?

How does our conference help us in the "work Christ has called us to do"?

What other God-pleasing purpose(s) do you see our conference fulfilling?

What's your favorite part of the conference? Why?

Is there anything about the conference with which you struggle?

Is it something that we can share with our WLSTC Program Committee for improvement? If yes, please share your comments and suggestions by completing the post-conference survey.

Is it something which each of us needs to wrestle with in our own sanctification?

2. Because participation at the conference is part of our calling, what do the Holy Spirit's words in I Cor. 3:23 add to our discussion?

***"Men ought to regard us as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the secret things of God. <sup>2</sup> Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful."* (I Cor. 3:23).**

What level of participation and attention can we rightly expect of each other at the conference?

In our own classrooms, what level of participation and attention do we expect of our students when we are presenting?

As Christ's disciples and called teachers, how have we been called to be students throughout our entire lives? How does our WLSTC conference assist us in this?

3. Consider the following section from Philippians.

***"If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. <sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!"* (Philippians 2:1-8)**

How do the Spirit's words through Paul speak to our attitude at conference, especially as it relates to our attention and respect toward fellow WELS presenters?

What beautiful Gospel motivation does it give for our attitude and attention?

4. Finally, consider this section from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.

***"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. <sup>14</sup> You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."* (Matthew 5:13-16)**

What does Jesus say to us about how we'll want to conduct ourselves at the conference with an outside speaker?

What's our motivation for doing so?