

# ***ILLINOIS LUTHERAN CONFERENCE e-Journal***

## ***Spring 2019***

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### **News and Notes**

#### **Illinois Lutheran Conference**

The 2019 ILC delegate convention will be held on Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at Our Savior Lutheran Church in Morris, IL. Eternal Savior Ev. Lutheran Church of Arbor Vitae Wisconsin will host the convention.

#### **Trinity Lutheran Church of Ballwin, MO**

**Meeting place and time change:** Please phone (314) 640-2477 or (696) 795-9511 for further information.

#### **Eternal Savior Ev. Lutheran Church, Arbor Vitae, WI**

**Meeting place:** Worship services are held in the Pastor's home.

#### **Our Savior Lutheran Church, Morris, IL**

**Building** improvements are currently underway.

### **An Easter Sermon**

**Text— 1 Corinthians 5:6-8**

**Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.**

Fellow redeemed sinners, redeemed by the blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

Today is Easter Sunday, the feast of the resurrection of our Lord— certainly a day for us to celebrate since Jesus Christ “was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification.” (Romans 4:25) Indeed, Jesus’ bodily resurrection is proof-positive that God the Father’s divine justice has been fully satisfied by the atoning work of His only begotten Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Furthermore, Jesus’ bodily resurrection is proof-positive that we too will be bodily raised again to life at the end of days, for Jesus promises, “because I live, ye shall live also.” (John 14:19)

Yes, when Jesus visibly comes to earth again it will not be in humility as at the first, but in power and great glory, for Holy Writ reports: “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall

separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. [For] Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” (Matthew 25:31-33; Hebrews 9:28; John 5:28-29) Thus, Christ’s bodily resurrection is assurance to us that we too shall be raised.

However, note well that only those who have “done good” – only those who have been fruitful in the faith of Jesus Christ – will be raised to eternal life, for it is written: “without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. [And] as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.” (Hebrews 11:6; James 2:26)

Therefore, in referring to Christ our Passover being sacrificed for us, our Scripture selection appropriately enjoins:

“CHRISTIANS: KEEP THE FEAST!”

With that as our theme may we, in view of our text and with the help of the Holy Ghost, see—

- 1) What Christians are to avoid to keep the feast, and why
- 2) What Christians are to do to keep the feast, and why

-1-

**1 Corinthians 5:6 reads: “Your glorying *is* not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?”**

The Christian congregation at Corinth had major problems to be sure, for the Apostle Paul admonished them, saying, *Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?*

You see, the Corinthians were glorying, they were boasting and bragging, about behavior that was nothing to be proud of but was rather terribly sinful; and, such sins if condoned and treated as acceptable behavior would lead to other sins being tolerated and accepted. We read in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, “It is reported commonly *that there is* fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father’s wife. And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, *concerning* him that hath so done this deed, In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”

So, observe that an incestuous sexual relationship was being accepted as permissible behavior for a Christian, rather than the impenitent guilty person being seriously admonished and excommunicated for committing such sin. Furthermore, because such sin was not rebuked, it would have the effect of leading

to other sins among the congregation as it would spread like yeast in a batch of dough which causes the whole lump of dough to rise.

Unfortunately, there are professed Christians today who in their congregations likewise tolerate unrepentant heinous sin, and then it leads to more and more sin. For example, there are congregations who first permitted unmarried men and women to live together and fornicate while remaining members in good standing despite their lack of repentance. Subsequently, the same congregations came to view homosexuality and lesbianism as acceptable alternative lifestyles rather than proclaiming that such conduct is sinful and needs to be repented of. Oh, God's Word on these things is clear enough, for 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 states: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." Hence, sin is not to be accepted and boasted about; sin is to be sincerely repented of and ceased.

Genuine faith in Jesus Christ will strive to bring forth the fruit of true good works, works done in full accord with God's Word, since Christians are God's "workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Ephesians 2:10)

My friends, we are NOT to condone our own sin; we are NOT to condone the sin of our brothers and sisters in Christ; we are NOT to condone any sin in anyone! The Lord God says in no uncertain terms: "Ye shall be holy: for I the LORD your God *am* holy. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Leviticus 19:2; Ezekiel 18:4) Hence, we ALL need Jesus Christ's perfect righteousness, "Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Romans 3:22-26)

Take it to heart that a little tolerance of sin will lead to more and more tolerance of sin, *for a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump*. Therefore, 1 Corinthians 15:33 warns: "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." Indeed, if one starts tolerating and approving of sin, pretty soon the one who does so becomes likewise corrupt and deliberately indulges in sin.

Accordingly, Christians are to continually keep the feast by avoiding glorying – avoiding bragging and boasting – in regards to condoning any sin, because once Christians condone one sin they will soon condone other sins, and such tolerance of sin shows a lack of appreciation for the great sacrifice Jesus Christ made to pay for our sin.

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As we ponder the remaining verses of our text in the second part of this sermon, let us see what Christians are to do to keep the feast, and why.

**1 Corinthians 5:7 reads: "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."**

Note well that Christians are here commanded to live a sanctified life, a life fruitful in the faith of Jesus Christ, because of what Christ has done for us in redeeming us. Thus, we are instructed: *Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.*

Yes, the old leaven of living life in wilful sin and disobedience to God is to be purged— wickedness is to be cleansed out of our life even as our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has cleansed us of our sin with His holy blood, “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation *received* by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.” (1 Peter 1:18-21) Thus, our motivation for living a life of holiness is the fact that Jesus the Lamb of God has graciously paid for all of our sins in full with His blood that He shed while nailed to the cross of Calvary.

Think about the annual Passover celebration instituted and commanded by God in the Old Testament to the children of Israel in remembrance of His delivering them from bitter bondage in Egypt. We read in Exodus 12:17-20, “And ye shall observe *the feast of unleavened bread*; for in this selfsame day have I brought your armies out of the land of Egypt: therefore shall ye observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. In the first *month*, on the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread.” Hence, every year the Israelites were to partake of unleavened bread for a week.

Now, in New Testament times, we Christians are to continually keep the feast by living a sanctified life because *Christ our passover is sacrificed for us*. Christ has delivered us from the bondage of sin, death, and the devil! Christ’s perfect infinitely valuable sacrifice of Himself has paid for all sin, “For such an high priest became us, *who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself. For the law maketh men high priests which have infirmity; but the word of the oath, which was since the law, maketh the Son, who is consecrated for evermore.*” (Hebrews 7:26-28) Therefore, in gratefulness to Jesus Christ for His paying for all of our sins in full and His keeping of God’s Law perfectly for us, we are to live anew in Christ, we are to be fruitful in the faith by striving to live in full accord with God’s Word rather than indulging in sin.

Fellow Christians, the Holy Bible plainly states: “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness of his* resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” (Romans 6:1-6) Realize Christ has freed us FROM sin, NOT TO sin! Let us therefore endeavor to serve our Savior by living a life of holiness.

**1 Corinthians 5:8 reads: “Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.”**

CHRIST OUR PASSOVER IS SACRIFICED FOR US, and that should certainly motivate us to desire to serve Him by living a life of sanctification, thereby continually keeping the feast, for our text so enjoins us in the following words: *let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

The *old leaven* of sinful living is to have no place in the life of Christians who are to keep the feast. Additionally, the *leaven of malice and wickedness*, the sinful mind-set of evil, ill-will, the desire to injure others, and all depraved deliberate wilful sinning is to be ceased since such sinning is no way to keep the feast. Rather, we Christians are to keep the feast *with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

Think about it. SINCERITY, NOT hypocrisy is to be the Christians' way of life in this world, taking God's Word seriously and striving not to deviate from it in doctrine OR practice. TRUTH, is to be highly valued by us Christians, for Jesus says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) And, Jesus once prayed to His heavenly Father on behalf of His followers, saying, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (John 17:17) Accordingly, Jesus Christ and His Word are to be what guides us Christians in leading a life of sanctification in gratefulness to our Savior who plainly states in John 14:23-24: "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."

Therefore, fellow Christians, let us keep the feast by daily and sincerely repenting of our sins; by clinging to Christ Jesus in heart-deep faith as our personal Savior and Lord; and, by striving to live a sanctified life by holding fast to Jesus and His pure preserved Word, endeavoring to live in full accord with that Holy Word of God, for "All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:16-17) Let us therefore remember that in referring to Christ our Passover being sacrificed for us, our Scripture selection appropriately enjoins— Christians: keep the feast! God grant that we show our appreciation and thankfulness for the grace and mercy He has shown us in our Savior, Jesus Christ, for "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (Acts 4:12; John 3:16) Thanks and praise be to Jesus, now and forever. Amen.

m.e.l.

## **Reminders & Notes**

The 2019 ILC delegate convention will be held on Thursday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at Our Savior, in Morris, IL. Eternal Savior Ev. Lutheran Church of Arbor Vitae Wisconsin will host the convention. Please plan to attend.

**“Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity! *It is* like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, *even* Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, *and as the dew* that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, *even* life for evermore.” (Psalm 133:1-3)**

***Please note that select sermons can be heard on the ILC website “sermons” web-page. See ILC “Journal” web-page for back issues and Topical Bulletins.***

**Jesus says:**

**“If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (John 8:31-32)**

**“...blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” (Luke 11:28)**