

# **ILLINOIS LUTHERAN CONFERENCE**

## **Topical Bulletin, November 2017**

This past October 31<sup>st</sup> marked the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation which began in earnest when Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg Germany. The reforms that followed restored the Holy Bible into the hands of the common people which resulted in many folks coming to clearly see Jesus Christ as the loving Lord and Savior that He most certainly is, rather than a new law-giver, “For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” (John 1:17 KJV)

Let us pray for another reformation since many people have forsaken the true Jesus Christ and His true Word as a result of the proliferation of many per-versions of the Holy Scriptures— false bibles which attack and compromise the deity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in passage after passage as they portray Him in certain verses as a mere man, or a created being, or a savior who is just one among others, rather than the eternal sinless only begotten Son of God who was born in time of the Virgin Mary and made man: the God/man who is the ONLY SAVIOR of sinners. (If the reader desires proof regarding the dangerous per-versions of Holy Scripture, a number of examples can easily be had by simply considering the passages given in the following lengthy paragraph and the additional comments found bracketed in italics “[ ]”, for if the reader especially compares the underlined words and phrases as printed below from the KJV with the wording found in a copy of the NIV, ESV, or CSB, it will be quite clear how the modern versions attack and compromise the deity of Christ; indeed, the modern per-versions blaspheme the Lord Jesus).

Rest assured though, that despite the attacks of the higher-critics, liberals, and those duped by them, the full truth remains as proclaimed in the King James Version of the Holy Bible and its underlying God-given and preserved Hebrew and Greek texts— vital truths, such as: “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, *saying*, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give *thee* the heathen *for* thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth *for* thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.” (Psalm 2:1-12 KJV) [In Psalm 2:7 note the important term **begotten**; Hebrew root word יָלַד *yalad* {yaw-lad'} **Meaning**: 1) to bear, bring forth, beget, gender, travail 1a) **(Qal)** 1a1) to bear, bring forth 1a1a) of child birth 1a1b) of distress (simile) 1a1c) of wicked (behaviour) 1a2) **to beget** ... {information taken from the abridged BDB Hebrew/English Lexicon}] “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” (Jeremiah 23:5-6 KJV) “God so loved the world,

that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16 KJV) [Note the important term **only begotten**; Greek root word μονογενης monogenes {mon-og-en-ace'} **Meaning:** 1) single of its kind, only 1a) used of only sons or daughters (viewed in relation to their parents) **1b) used of Christ, denotes the only begotten son of God ...** {information taken from the abridged Thayer's Greek/English lexicon}] “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” (Colossians 2:8-9 KJV) “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” (1 Timothy 3:16 KJV) “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.” (Hebrews 13:8 KJV) “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: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 3:23-24; 6:23 KJV) Yes, it is as Jesus Himself declares: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” (John 6:47 KJV) [Note that CHRIST IS the OBJECT of SAVING FAITH; any other “faith” CANNOT SAVE!] Let us, with the help of God, cling to the true Jesus Christ in heart-deep faith, and hold fast to His true holy Word.

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The remainder of this month's ILC Topical Bulletin will address some very practical matters concerning our conduct as Christians in this world in our dealings with other people. For example, whether one lives in an apartment, a condo, a home, or some other setting, the following question (or similar) often arises {as was brought to my attention by some readers of the monthly ILC topical bulletin}: ***How am I supposed to deal in a Christian manner with a neighbor who does things that irritate me and/or my family? I've spoken to the person and he (or she) persists in unloving irritating behavior; and, the person even claims to be a Christian.***

*It is important to note that each neighbor-trouble case is different and attended by various circumstances. However, the following basic Biblical principals apply to all of us as Christians:*

**“Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others*? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.” (Matthew 5:43-48 KJV)**

*Comment: The foregoing words of the Lord Jesus Christ are quite rich, for note well that Jesus desires that we love ALL our fellow human beings, even our enemies! Indeed, no matter how spitefully and ill-treated we are by other people, we Christians are still to love them, bless them, and do good to them. Oh, God has been and is so richly loving and good to all of us— and we are ALL undeserving sinners. Let us never forget: “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved*

God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.” (1 John 4:9-11 KJV)

**“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I *am* the LORD.” (Leviticus 19:18 KJV) “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.” (Romans 13:10 KJV)**

*Comment: We Christians are not to be hurtful, vengeful, or hold grudges against our fellow human beings; rather, we are to be loving and forgiving. We are to do good to others even when they do us wrong. We need to remember that Holy Scripture instructs: “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:19-21 KJV) “For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.” (1 Peter 2:19-24 KJV) Think about how much our perfect Lord Jesus patiently suffered at the hands and tongues of sinful human beings! We, on the other hand, are ALL sinners who actually deserve to suffer because of our sins; yet, Jesus has graciously rescued us from eternal ruin.*

**“And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these *are things* that I hate, saith the LORD.” (Zechariah 8:17 KJV) “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.” (Ephesians 4:31-32 KJV)**

*Comment: Observe that we are not even to entertain thoughts in our hearts of planning to do evil to our neighbor, let alone lie under oath; for, the Lord hates such things. We had best remember the following words of Holy Writ: “Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7 KJV) Charity is Christian love which is certainly to be a chief fruit of our faith in Christ, “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.” (Galatians 5:6 KJV) Let us strive to be kind and forgiving to all our fellow human beings.*

**“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” (Galatians 5:13-14 KJV)**

*Comment: Note that we Christians are not to do things we are at liberty to do if such actions will hurt or harm our neighbor. Instead, we are to serve one another by love— real charity and not merely a hypocritical show.*

**“If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.” (James 2:8-9 KJV) “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: *but* in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour. Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure.” (Leviticus 19:15, 35 KJV)**

*Comment: If we show discrimination we are sinning, and if we lie or cheat we are sinning, for the Lord God desires that we love all of our fellow human beings, regardless of their social standing or appearance, and that we be fair in our business practices and so forth.*

**“Pray without ceasing.” (1 Thessalonians 5:17 KJV)**

*Comment: We need to pray for ALL our neighbors, even those who despise us and spitefully use us. Let us take the following words of Holy Writ to heart and act upon them: “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” (1 Timothy 2:1-6 KJV)*

Therefore, no matter how irritating some neighbors may be toward us, we must continue to pray for them that they would come to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord. Hearts must be changed before behavior will change for the better; and, only the Lord can change the human heart.

If we are honest we must all admit that we have not shown love as the Lord desires that we show love, “For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.” (Ecclesiastes 7:20 KJV) Let us all, with the Lord’s help, strive to be more fruitful in the faith of Jesus Christ, for He says: “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.” (John 15:12 KJV)

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Dear readers, this month we in the United States celebrate the national Thanksgiving holiday. However, let us never forget to thank the true God every day for the numerous temporal and spiritual blessings He showers upon us undeserving sinners. Yes: “Praise ye the LORD. O give thanks unto the LORD; for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever.” (Psalm 106:1 KJV)

God’s richest blessings to you all!

m.e.l.