

ILLINOIS LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

Topical Bulletin, October 2019

This month's topic for consideration will be the 6th Commandment: **"Thou shalt not commit adultery."** (**Exodus 20:14 KJV**) {Related subject-matter has been dealt with in the October 2017 and September 2018 ILC Topical Bulletins, which can be read on the Journal page on the ILC website.}

In our modern world it seems that most of society views the 6th Commandment as an Old Testament dictate that people are completely free to ignore. Nevertheless, the Lord Jesus Christ certainly considers the 6th Commandment valid for New Testament times, for we read in Matthew 19:16-19, "And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God*: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and *thy* mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Hence, realize God's Commandments still stand regardless of what modern society may hold, for the Lord Jesus says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matthew 24:35 KJV)

Therefore, in accord with Holy Scripture, Luther's Small Catechism states:

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

MARRIAGE AND PURITY

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God that we may lead a chaste and decent life in word and deed, and each love and honor his spouse.

The correct meaning of the terms *marriage, husband, and wife* must be gathered from the Holy Bible, God's Word, because God Himself instituted marriage.

"And the LORD God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him*. And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living." (Genesis 2:18-24; 3:20 KJV)

"But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." (Mark 10:6-9 KJV)

“A virtuous woman *is* a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed *is* as rottenness in his bones.” (Proverbs 12:4 KJV)

“*Whoso* findeth a wife findeth a good *thing*, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.” (Proverbs 18:22 KJV)

“I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn.” (1 Corinthians 7:8-9 KJV)

Comment: Observe in the foregoing Scripture passages that marriage was instituted by God and is the lifelong union of one man and one woman unto one flesh. Having multiple spouses is NOT God’s will. So-called “marriages” of same-sex couples is NOT God’s will, for the first marriage was the joining of ADAM and EVE, NOT Adam and Steve or Madam and Eve! {For more information on homosexuality, lesbianism, and marriage, see the August 2017 and October 2017 Topical Bulletins.}

“If a damsel *that is* a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, *being* in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: so thou shalt put away evil from among you.” (Deuteronomy 22:23-24 KJV)

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.” (Matthew 1:18-20 KJV)

Comment: Note that betrothal, espousal, (i.e. engagement, being promised in marriage by mutual consent) is binding in God’s sight since Mary and Joseph are called wife and husband before the nuptials and any physical joining had taken place. The promise to marry is a vow before God. Hence, marriage is entered into by rightful betrothal, engagement. Accordingly, engagements rightfully entered into are not to be broken.

God forbids the breaking of the marriage vow by unfaithfulness or desertion. God’s rule is NO DIVORCE, but God’s exception to that rule permits (but does not command) the innocent party to procure a divorce in cases of fornication or malicious desertion.

“The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it*

be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.” (Matthew 19:3-9 KJV)

“For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy. But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases: but God hath called us to peace.” (1 Corinthians 7:14-15 KJV)

“Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.” (Hebrews 13:4 KJV)

Comment: In the above Scripture passages we see that fornication and malicious desertion are the only Biblical reasons given for the innocent party to procure a divorce. Furthermore, the marriage bed is the only place sexual relations are to take place.

God forbids all unchaste and unclean sexual thoughts, words, and deeds such as: filthy sexual jokes, pornographic books and movies, and lusting after persons or animals.

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27-28 KJV)

“And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.” (Mark 7:20-23 KJV)

“But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.” (Ephesians 5:3-5, 12 KJV)

“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. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 Corinthians 6:9-11 KJV)

Comment: God’s Word is clear concerning all sorts of sexual sins to be avoided, and to be sincerely repented of when committed.

God requires that we all lead a chaste and decent life in thoughts, desires, words, and deeds. God requires that married people love and honor each other— the husband his wife as his God-given helpmeet and the wife her husband as her God-given head.

“Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by *your* good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.”
(1 Peter 2:11-12 KJV)

“Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.” (Romans 13:13 KJV)

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” (Ephesians 4:29 KJV)

“But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth.” (Colossians 3:8 KJV)

“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.” (Philippians 4:8 KJV)

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.”
(Ephesians 5:22-28 KJV)

“Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation *coupled* with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward *adorning* of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But *let it be* the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, *even the ornament* of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”
(1 Peter 3:1-7 KJV)

“...teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.” (Titus 2:4-5 KJV)

Comment: The foregoing Bible verses make it obvious that unbelieving societies' practices (such as using foul language, uttering filthy jokes, wearing immodest apparel, taking part in drunken orgies, women

exercising rule over their husbands, men being self-centered and treating their wives like slaves, and so forth) are NOT God's directives for us in living a chaste and decent life.

The Holy Bible informs us as to how we can lead a chaste and decent life.

“But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.”
(Romans 13:14 KJV)

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. But 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.” (Hebrews 11:1, 6 KJV)

Comment: Heart-deep living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is required if one would lead a chaste and decent life.

“See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*.”
(Ephesians 5:15-17 KJV)

“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 KJV)

Comment: To know the will of God one must read and study Holy Scripture which reveals God's will. Indeed, God's Word supplies us with the 100% correct information concerning what it means to lead a chaste and decent life.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.” (Psalm 51:10-11 KJV)

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

Comment: One must pray regularly to God for His gracious help if one would lead a chaste and decent life; we cannot go-it-alone and succeed.

“Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, *when* it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things.” (Proverbs 23:29-33 KJV)

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.” (Ephesians 5:18 KJV)

Comment: One must avoid overindulgence in alcoholic beverages if one would lead a chaste and decent life, for one's ability to fight against temptation to sin is compromised when one is inebriated.

“My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not.” (Proverbs 1:10 KJV)

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in *them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”
(2 Corinthians 6:14-18 KJV)

Comment: If one does not continually hang-out with unbelievers, one can avoid many temptations and enticements that lead to sexual sins. Hence, to live a chaste and decent life, don't keep bad company.

“Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2 Timothy 2:22 KJV)

“Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?* For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.” (1 Corinthians 6:18-20 KJV)

“And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what *is* with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; *There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*” (Genesis 39:7-9 KJV)

Comment: To lead a chaste and decent life one must flee lusts and fornication rather than running toward such sins. Keep company with fellow Christians. And, be like Joseph who split-the-scene when tempted by his master's wife.

In conclusion, we must all admit that even if we do not sin in actual deed against the 6th Commandment by committing fornication or adultery, we still, at the very least, sin in thoughts and words against the 6th Commandment, “For *there is* not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.” (Ecclesiastes 7:20 KJV) Thankfully, Jesus has paid for our sins in full with His holy and precious blood that He shed while nailed to the cross of Calvary; and so, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9 KJV) Let us go forward in gratefulness to God and in the faith of Jesus Christ, striving with the Lord's help to live a chaste and decent life as we keep in mind the Scripture passages we've considered in this bulletin in regards to the 6th Commandment: “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

m.e.l.