

ILLINOIS LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

Topical Bulletin, October 2023

This month's subject for consideration is the Lord God's directive: **HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!** The Holy Scriptures will supply us with the necessary proof that the topic put forth is indeed the Lord God's directive.

"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3:15-17)

Comment: Note well that Holy Scripture itself – given by inspiration of God – tells us ALL SCRIPTURE IS PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE. Therefore, we need to HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!

There are many false teachers with false doctrines being pedaled, which we are to reject; for, the apostle Paul, by inspiration of God, wrote to the young pastor Timothy, **"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." (2 Timothy 4:2-4)**

Comment: The lack of sound Biblical doctrine being held to, taught and preached in many churches, is plainly evident by the fact that many per-versions of the Bible are being used and promoted. For example, Psalm 2:2 speaks of the reign of God's "anointed" – the Christ – who is identified as the "Son" in the seventh verse. In Psalm 2:7 the KJV (King James Version) reads: "I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." But, the same verse in the NIV (New International Version) says: "I will proclaim the decree of the Lord: He said to me, You are my Son; today I have become your Father." And, the TEV (Today's English Version – Good News Bible) says: "I will announce, says the king, what the Lord has declared. He said to me: You are my Son; today I have become your Father." Thus, the King James Version rightly speaks of Jesus being BEGOTTEN [ETERNALLY GENERATED] by God the Father; while both the per-versions use a phrase which falsely teaches that Jesus was simply ADOPTED by God the Father at some point in time!

"That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us." (Isaiah 30:9-11)

Comment: Sadly, it happened also in Old Testament times that people rebelled against the true God and His true Word, desiring "smooth things" and "deceits" to be spoken to them. HENCE, HISTORY IS REPEATING!

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." (Romans 16:17-18)

“For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.” (2 Corinthians 2:17)

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, w hereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.” (1 John 4:1-3)

Comment: Take it to heart that we are to mark and avoid all false prophets with their false bible translations and their false doctrines. We are to mark and avoid ALL who corrupt the Word of God. We are to try the spirits by measuring what is being taught against the true, pure, preserved Word of God, thereby making sure that Jesus Christ is rightly confessed. Therefore, let us beware of all false doctrines and those who promote them! We need to HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!

“Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge.” (Proverbs 19:27)

“For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.” (Isaiah 32:6)

“Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.” (Jeremiah 23:32)

Comment: Observe that the Old Testament passages quoted above warn against listening to those who teach and preach falsehoods, for such are liars who are not sent forth by the Lord! The Lord is against ALL false prophets! Therefore, we need to HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!

“And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread. Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread. Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.” (Matthew 16:5-12)

Comment: Notice that the Lord Jesus Christ warned His disciples to beware of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees. And what was their main doctrine? Works righteousness and hypocrisy! Indeed, for Jesus once said to the scribes and Pharisees, “Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by

whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matthew 15:3-9) *Thus, we are not to accept doctrines which are mere commandments of sinful men! Therefore, we need to HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!*

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." (Acts 20:28-31)

Comment: The apostle Paul instructed the elders of the church at Ephesus to rightly feed the church and to be on guard against those who would arise and speak perverted words. The Christians then – as Christians today – needed to cling to the one true Savior and the genuine Gospel of Christ! Therefore, we need to HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!

"Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me. For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him." (2 Corinthians 11:1-4)

Comment: We again note the apostle Paul's concern for fellow Christians, as he warns them against false preachers. The Christians then, as Christians today, needed to cling to the true Word of God and all the doctrines drawn from it! Therefore, we need to HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:6-8)

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." (Galatians 5:4-9)

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." (Galatians 5:19-21)

Comment: Notice that the churches of Galatia had been infiltrated by false preachers and teachers who perverted the Gospel of Christ. The false preachers pushed the false doctrine of justification by the works of the Law, thereby throwing away the true doctrine of justification by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul also warned the people against following their own sinful flesh in faith-destroying sins. The same warnings apply today! The Christians then, as Christians today, needed to cling to the true Word of God and the doctrines drawn from it! Therefore, we need to HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!

“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. 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. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them.” (Ephesians 5:1-7)

“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)

“O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen.” (1 Timothy 6:20-21)

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (2 Timothy 2:15-19)

Comment: In the foregoing Scripture passages, the warnings against false doctrines and false practices are very evident. Observe that “philosophy” and all sorts of “vain” talk and “oppositions of science falsely so called” are also mentioned— which are certainly evident to this very day. Therefore, we need to HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!

“A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.” (Titus 3:10-11)

Comment: A heretic is one who holds and avows religious opinions and convictions contrary to the doctrines of the Holy Scriptures. Heretics are to be admonished but two times; and then, if they fail to repent and amend their sinful ways, they are to be rejected— excommunicated (if they are in a believing congregation). Therefore, we need to HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!

“Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.” (Hebrews 13:9)

“But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.” (2 Peter 2:1-3)

“Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.” (2 Peter 3:17-18)

Comment: Note well the repeated warnings against false doctrines and false preachers and teachers. We Christians are encouraged to grow in God’s grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and 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.” (Acts 4:12) Therefore, we need to HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!

“But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may 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. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.” (Titus 2:1-15)

Comment: Observe the instructions the apostle Paul gave to Titus, by inspiration of God. SOUND DOCTRINE was to be preached and is to be preached; NOT one’s own thoughts and opinions. Folks are encouraged to adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in ALL things. Thus, there is no room for compromising God’s truth and accepting errors. Christians are to continue in the truth, looking forward to the visible return of the great God, who is our Savior, Jesus Christ! Therefore, we need to HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!

“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect

man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” (Ephesians 4:11-16)

“And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.” (2 John 6-11)

Comment: We are all to take the warnings found in the above quoted Scripture passages to heart. We are to be on guard against false teachers and their false doctrines. We are to cling to God’s truth as we have it in His pure, preserved Holy Word— which in English is the Holy Bible, King James Version. We are to remain alert to the fact that many deceivers and antichrists are in the world, as well as the one great antichrist, the pope, “Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” (2 Thessalonians 2:4) Indeed, “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.” (1 John 2:18) Therefore, we need to HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!

Fellow Christians, the temptation is always around us to compromise God’s truth in order to gain membership numbers in our churches. However, such a gain – at the expense of the truth – is actually a great loss; for where one will spend eternity is on-the-line! Therefore, it is vital that we HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!

We Lutheran Christians celebrate Reformation Day each year in the month of October, because Martin Luther came to know true Bible doctrine; then, Martin Luther professed God’s truth far and wide. God used Luther to promote the truth which had become widely obscured and unknown. We should be ever grateful to God for the restoring of His truth to a world which had been widely engulfed in false doctrines and practices. Accordingly, it remains vital that we **HAVE AND HOLD TO TRUE BIBLE DOCTRINE!**

m.e.l.