

Lutheran Identity – What does this mean?

June 24, 2012

- I. Review: WRT conscience. Paul treats this in **Romans 14 and I Cor. 8**; about eating meat offered to idols.

Strong Conscience = Conforming, backed up by God's Word = There are no false gods, you are free to eat.

Weak Conscience = **Not sure if it's OK**. The strong must forego his right to eat lest he **destroy his brother** by leading him to do something he's not sure of. (Romans 14.23 whatever is not from faith - surety in God's Word - is sin.

Erring Conscience = Asserting a lie (legalism or antinomianism); Must be opposed directly and contradicted for the sake of God's truth and the repentance of the rebel. If they are tolerated, the freedom of the Gospel (FROM GUILT and TO WORSHIP/SERVE according to God's Word) will eventually be lost. Legalism creates sin out of what God has not called sin; antinomianism is false freedom to worship God or do what God has forgiven. Both destroy faith and lead to spiritual death.

- II. The Criticism of Old Lutheranism's ties to Rome:

- A. The Laundry lists. P. 1 col. 2 top; p. 2 col. 1; p. 9 col. 2 near bottom.
- B. The difference between the Catholic Teaching on Rites and the Lutheran: Bound vs. free consciences.
 - 1. Top down - Catholicism. Legalism (Mt. 15.1-9).
Catholic Doctrine – Practice P. 4 column 2 f.
 - 2. Christ at the bottom: Freedom of the Congregation to institute/abolish rites. (Mt. 23.8-12; 1 Cor. 1.10; 3.21-23)
Lutheran Doctrine – Practice P. 5 column 2f.

NEW!

- 3. Where freedom must give way to love for the weak and the brethren.
Being a part of a Congregation. What does this mean? P. 6 col. 2f. (Collation problem pp. 7/8).
 - A. Orders adapted by the Majority of the Congregation are binding on all (6).
 - B. If through the use or discontinuation of the same the weak would be offended (7). (What if liturgy offends new believers? What should be done for them before becoming members? How must the "weak" be warning of there "being offended" makes them demand change?)
 - C. If ceremonies are demanded of us as necessary, that is, made a matter of conscience; its being demanded takes it out of the area of adiophora and becomes a violation of the doctrine of Christian Freedom (8)
 - D. If acceptance of an otherwise innocuous rite would give the appearance of agreement in doctrine with a heterodox body (that is, their distinctive false doctrines).

Application: 1. That acceptance of rites that appear in our context to be "Roman Catholic".
(Universal p. 10)

- 2. The intentional avoidance of any ceremonies attached to the "Reformed" attempt to destroy the mysteries of the Sacraments or any of their other false doctrines.

vis a vis Roman Catholicism and the Reformed

p. 10 (Prove all things; hold fast to that which is good. - 1 Thess. 5.1)

"Making the sign of the cross" p. 11; Nothing to do with papacy; found in the earliest tradition; catholic not C.

Erecting a Crucifix/images : Is it a sin to erect an image of Christ? Is it idolatry. Is it a sin against the so called "Second commandment? pp. 12ff.

The way communion is distributed: Hosts; In the mouth not in the hand. Catholics do it that way; Reformed call it a sin and insist the bread be broken; also to remove the doctrine that the bread is the body of Christ (symbolic act for a symbolic sacrament).