

Eastern Mission

Apostolic Lutheran Church of America

September 2024

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: this is the law and prophets”. Matthew 7: 12.

With the end of Summer upon us, the start of the school year begins. Our thoughts are turned to all the children that are attending school, both academic and Sunday school, etc. A lot has changed in our time especially in the public school system. I can remember during grade school signing hymns, patriotic songs, and a much more evident inclusion of Biblical lessons and values. One common teaching that was both in public school as well as Sunday school was this utmost important “Golden Rule”. There is no better time to share this message than to little children when they are young.

We thank God that He shows to us (thru His Word and by the Holy Spirit), that we by nature do not love our neighbor as ourselves. This understanding and therefore the conscious concern for our neighbor is a fundamental difference between the converted and unconverted. Our teacher and example is Jesus. He shows to us how to love our neighbor and it is the desire of every born again Christian to be more like Him, and it is in Him that we can do these things. “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends”. John 15: 12-13. This instruction of Jesus is the very opposite of what the world teaches. We know the common slogans: “If it feels good do it”, “look out for yourselves”, etc. We know that the end of that way is not what God wants for us and is not blessed. Our Heavenly Father wants to give good gifts to us His children, and the greatest Gift is Jesus Christ our Lord. Shouldn’t our hearts rejoice and in the same manner and want all the best gifts for our neighbor. When we come to see how much we have cost our Lord, doesn’t our heart then have so much love and grace for our neighbor! “Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.” Luke 7: 47.

Every day and many times a day we are faced with the challenges of how to love our neighbor like Christ. It is good to remember this all the more when we as a nation and church are facing such challenges with opposing opinions, convictions, beliefs, etc. Children are watching us to see how we deal with the person who has strong differing political views. They are exposed to the many negative campaign controversies. They are also exposed and involved with the different church and family challenges that can exist and are watching us to see how we handle them. There is no better time to exercise the Golden Rule. May we also like Christ, be focused on the Truth in Love and not degrade our neighbor. May we be encouraged to think twice and ask God for help when we are navigating through the many situations of life.

We give all honor and glory to God and our Savior Jesus Christ, knowing that we many times fail in this matter, but His heart is full of Grace and Forgiveness to the penitent sinner. We are also ever thankful for the grace and forgiveness that our neighbors have for us when we fall short. May this encourage and strengthen us to love one another even more. We pray for all the precious young children as they start another school year. We also pray for all the parents, teachers, preachers, and many, many others that God uses in our lives to teach.

In God’s Peace!

Mark Traffie