

**Worship At One Altar Only**

*“Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods ...”* (Deut 12:2).

There is no compromise when it comes to faith. When a person enters into faith, which is often depicted by the children of Israel entering into the Promised Land, God gives to us, as He did to them, statutes to follow. According to our text, we are not to allow false doctrine to enter into our worship of Him. Expressly we are to “utterly destroy” all false teachings or anything that will hinder our faith which is to be founded only on the teachings of Christ. This is in keeping with the first and great commandment, *“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind”* (Matthew 22:37). Notice, this statute does not direct us to eradicate false doctrine wherever it is; rather it directs us to keep our temple worship pure. The temple is both the building that we worship in, *“But unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come”* (Deut 12:5) as well as that of our own heart, *“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?”* (1 Corinthians 3:16). In other words, we are not to give mixed or uncertain messages when preaching the word to others nor are we to individually entertain teachings that do not embrace the entire Bible. Further, we are directed to *“try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world”* (1 John 4:1), and to depart from the false prophets and their teachings if they will not hear the truth, *“And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them”* (Luke 9:5).

All people are directed by the Word to come into faith through the door which is none other than Jesus. Again, we see this action depicted in the Old Testament where a penitent soul is directed to bring his sin-sacrifice to the door of the tabernacle, *“...he shall offer it of his own voluntary will at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the LORD”* (Leviticus 1:3). It is there that he places his hands on the head of the animal and confesses his sins against God in front of a priest

sanctioned of God. The atoning blood is then shed and sprinkled by the priest for the forgiveness of the individual's sins.

Obviously this requirement of confessing sins to another person was and still is not always well received by some but God knows our ways and takes special care to warn us about the consequences of finding other ways to satisfy His righteous demands concerning sin, *“What man soever there be of the house of Israel, that killeth an ox, or lamb, or goat, in the camp, or that killeth it out of the camp, And bringeth it not unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, to offer an offering unto the LORD before the tabernacle of the LORD; blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood; and that man shall be cut off from among his people”* (Leviticus 17:3-4). In the Old Testament, those who were convicted of sin by the Word and who laid their hands on the head of the sacrificial animal and killed it followed the first part of His statute, but if they refused to bring it to the door of the tabernacle then they compromised their faith and remained bound in their sins. On the other hand, those who gladly (*“of his own voluntary will”*, Lev 1:3) brought their sacrifice to the priest at the door of the tabernacle, allowing him to sprinkle the blood, were loosed from past sins.

In like manner, Jesus has given to all believers today the *“keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven”* (Matt 16:19). Clearly those who repent and receive the gospel of reconciliation proclaimed to them, like those who brought their sacrifice to the door of the tabernacle, are loosed from their sins. However, those who find other ways to vainly reach out to God, like those who chose to shed the blood elsewhere other than at the door of the tabernacle, are bound to their sin and are outside of the kingdom of heaven.

May we never compromise our faith but remain fully engaged with His entire Word found only in the Bible and let us always worship at the only one true altar.

God's peace, Charles Korhonen

Mar 1	Ken Storm	Holy Communion
Mar 8	Mark Sunnaborg	
Mar 15	Ken Storm	Medical Care 2pm
Mar 22	Jim Johnson/Chad Kuivanen	<b>Potluck meal following service</b>
Mar 29	Herb Jarvi	Palm Sunday

**Fall/Winter Schedule**

Sunday School and Adult Bible Study 9:45am

Sunday Service 11:00am.

TAPIOLA APOSTOLIC LUTHERAN CHURCH  
P.O. Box 531  
Houghton, MI 49931

**Looking Ahead**

April 8<sup>th</sup> 7pm special service with the visiting Finland minister.

**Online Broadcasts**

From our webpage: <http://www.tapiolachurch.org/> you will see the mixlr live audio – we will be 'on the air' during our church services. Previous sermons will be published to as well. Use the chat feature if there are problems listening to the service.