

# What Constitutes A Valid Celebration Of The Lord's Supper?

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**Assignment:** What constitutes a valid celebration of the Lord's Supper?

**Instructions to the Essayist:** Please analyze this question in regard to the celebrant, the elements, the consecration, the professed doctrine, and the reception (self-communion, reception of both kinds, use of the common cup versus use of individual cup, AIDS threat).

**Preliminary Remarks:** Even though I have a Master of Divinity Degree from the Seminary and have had the privilege of serving in the public ministry for two years, I don't feel like a master of the topic assigned to me. Therefore, in reading this paper you will find few of my personal opinions and even fewer original thoughts, I defer to those who know much more than I, and I have resigned myself to being a collector of pieces of wisdom from here, there and almost everywhere. The first two ought to stand as a blazing reminder to all such as I:

For it will not do to frame articles of faith from the works or words of the holy Fathers (whether they are the church fathers who preceded the Reformation or who were orthodox members of the Lutheran church or who are members of our own WELS) ... We have, however, another rule, namely: The Word of God shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel. (Luther, *The Smalcald Articles*)

We must not on the basis of preconceived notions drawn from elsewhere disturb or overturn it [the doctrine of the Lord's Supper], but rather expound these other passages on the basis of this analogy.... because the proof passage and the proper setting for the doctrine of the Lord's Supper are in the words of institution, an opinion must not be drawn in from somewhere else by which the proper and original meaning of the words of institution is later overturned, destroyed, or evaded.<sup>1</sup>

So that no one will be tempted to place the arguments of men over and above the words of Christ, I have included the Scripture passages which most clearly and concisely present to us the doctrine of the Lord's Supper on a separate sheet which then can be used to evaluate the teachings of men.

Before addressing the topic, I would like to share with you the lament of one, A. E. Krause:

In the night when he was betrayed our Lord said: "This do in remembrance of me." The Holy Supper was to be used in accordance with his institution. Here the Master issued a directive. "This do," he said. "This do" is the word of a divine Master and gracious Savior. Who would have thought that this would not be done by many who in the following years and centuries called themselves his own? Seldom has a clear directive been so abused by such as claimed that they were doing as he directed. The history of the visible New Testament church is blackened with violations of the word: "This do in remembrance of me."<sup>ii</sup>

Almost as if in answer to Krause, Melanchthon wrote in the *Apology*: "Carnal men cannot endure that alone to the sacrifice of Christ the honor is ascribed that it is a propitiation, because they do not understand the righteousness of faith, but ascribe equal honor to the rest of the services and sacrifices." And as Hermann Sasse reminds us: "No one can understand the Sacraments and the controversies about them, unless he keeps in mind that the Sacrament is primarily something to be celebrated, not to be speculated on."

## I. The Celebrant

*Does the faith of the celebrant or the question of his ordination have any bearing on the validity of the sacrament?*

A. E. Krause looks at the question this way:

The visible means must in some way be distributed to the communicants. By whom? At the institution Christ “gave” them the bread and the cup. I rather doubt that he went from disciple to disciple. It seems more likely from the accounts that bread and the cup were passed from one to another. It almost seems that in Corinth each communicant took the elements himself. In these New Testament times we have Christian congregations. Placed in these churches by the Holy Ghost as overseers are the pastors or bishops, who are to feed the flock purchased with the blood of Christ. They are stewards of the mysteries of God. God and the congregation entrust to them the administration of the means of grace. As the preaching of the Word and as the administration of Baptism are entrusted to them so also the administration of the Lord’s Supper. They should distribute the elements in the church, publicly and privately. With the explicit or implied consent of the *Ortsgemeinde* (local congregation) they may be assisted by other ordained ministers, or even laymen. Rome specifically limits the distribution to ordained priests.

Krause identifies here the relative silence of Scriptures in respect to the celebrant. Only in the first instance is the celebrant identified, so we are left with the doctrine of the ministry and a matter of “a fitting and orderly way” in deciding the matter.

### The Confessions

*The Apology*: If anyone would thus infer that in the New Testament a priest is needed to make offering for sins, this must be conceded only of Christ. (See canon 16 in Appendix I for Rome’s Tridentine teaching.)

The priest, as a common servant of those who wish to commune, ministers to them the holy sacrament.

*The Large Catechism*: Although a rogue administers the Lord’s Supper or even takes it, it is the true Sacrament, that is, Christ’s body and blood, just as when one uses it most worthily, For it is not based upon human holiness, but upon the divine Word.... This most precious Sacrament remains unimpaired both in essence and quality, regardless of man’s worthiness when he uses it.... It is the Word, I maintain, that constitutes this sacrament, and determines the difference between ordinary bread and wine and a sacrament the name of which expresses what it is: Christ’s body and blood. The Word must make the element a sacrament; otherwise it remains a mere element.

*The Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration*: In the same manner I also speak and confess concerning the Sacrament of the Altar, that there the body and blood of Christ are in truth orally eaten and drunk in the bread and wine, even though the priests (ministers) who administer it, should not believe or otherwise misuse it. For it does not depend upon the faith or unbelief of men, but upon God’s Word and ordinance, unless they first change God’s Word and ordinance and interpret it otherwise, as the enemies of the Sacrament do at the present day, who, of course, have nothing but bread and wine; for they also do not have the words and appointed ordinance of God, but have perverted and changed them according to their own notion.... Not the word or work of any man produces the true presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Supper, whether it be the merit or recitation of the minister, or the eating and drinking or faith of the communicants; but all this should be ascribed alone to the power of Almighty God and the word, institution, and ordination of our Lord Jesus Christ. For the

true and almighty words of Jesus Christ which he spake at the first institution were efficacious not only at the first Supper, but they endure, are valid, operate, and are still efficacious, so that in all places where the Supper is celebrated according to the institution of Christ, and his words are used, the body and blood of Christ are truly present, distributed, and received, because of the power and efficacy of the words which Christ spake at the first Supper.... Now, it is not our faith that makes the sacrament, but only the true word and institution of our almighty God and Savior Jesus Christ, which always is and remains efficacious in the Christian Church and is not invalidated or rendered inefficacious by the worthiness or unworthiness of the minister, nor by the unbelief of the one who receives it.

### The Fathers

Luther, *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper*: Therefore those who administer the Supper do not necessarily have to have faith, just as faith is not necessarily presupposed in those who baptize. Again, we may say the same of those who preach and of all who hold public office. For Christ has established the validity of all these activities upon his Word and not upon the holiness of men, in order that we might be sure of the Word and the sacraments. This I say because the fanatics take the greatest offense if unworthy men baptize, celebrate mass, preach, etc. They do not see that they themselves may be more offensive to God, or that no man can ever know how good they are, but that they must let the sacraments be grounded and administered simply in God's words and commands.

Luther: Not the speaking of men causes Christ's body and blood to be present, but solely Christ's word of promise and command, Christ's word, "This is my body," brought into being the first Lord's Supper, that is, made the bread the bearer of Christ's body. And because Christ has given us the command to do to the end of days what he did, therefore also our Lord's Supper is what the first Supper was.<sup>iii</sup>

Luther attacks violently the Roman teaching that a New Testament priesthood as been established and is to be found in the Roman Catholic Church. He writes in *The Misuse of the Mass*: Now among all these varieties of priesthood not more than two have been instituted by God. One was the outward priesthood in the Old Testament, which is called Levitical, in which Aaron was the high priest. Its laws are the books of Moses. Its sacrifices were irrational animals and physical things. Its sins and righteousness were in external things: holy garments, eating, drinking, days, places, vessels, persons—things which could give neither grace nor life to the soul. The second priesthood is a Christian spiritual priesthood, in which the high priest is Christ alone, blessed, living and eternal; which is why his whole priesthood and everything in it is eternal, holy, and living.... Into this holy, glorious, happy, gracious priesthood the devil's swine, the pope, has fallen snout and all; not only defiling it but completely destroying and suppressing it, and setting up another priesthood, one of his own, stirred together out of all the heathen priesthoods like a stew of abominations. First he divides the priestly people of Christ into clergy and laity. The clergy he calls his religious ones. He intends to be high priest and prince among Them. He makes them religious simply by tonsuring them, anointing their fingers with oil, and having them wear long garments. He claims that he is imprinting on their souls an indelible character; actually it is the mark of the beast in Revelation. (See Appendix II for Luther's chart comparing the priesthood of Christ and the priesthood of the Pope.)

What we have just read seems to be perfectly clear that the faith of the celebrant does not effect the validity of the sacrament nor does his ordination or lack thereof. So why discuss the issue further? Because of statements like the following.

Quenstedt writes: The Lord's Supper is always to be distributed only by the minister. The dispenser of this Sacrament is none other than the minister of the Church, so that its administration is not to be entrusted to any private person, even in a case of necessity.... because Christ committed the administration to the apostles;

because he dispensed it, representing the person of the administrant; because he committed the administration of the Sacraments, as well as the preaching of the Word, to the apostles; because ministers are the servants and ambassadors of Christ; because they are stewards of the mysteries of God; because the necessity of the Eucharist is not absolute, or such as that of Baptism; it is evident, therefore, that it should rather not be administered, than be improperly distributed. When, therefore, regular ministers of the Church are not at hand, the saying of Augustine is applicable: “Believe, and thou hast eaten.” It is necessary, also, that the minister be orthodox, or a minister of the true Church; for the Holy Eucharist cannot be lawfully or legitimately asked or received from any other than an orthodox minister.<sup>iv</sup>

In rebuttal I offer the following statements.

Schuetze-Habeck, *Shepherd Under Christ*: Proper consecration is not dependent on the public call or ordination of the one who speaks the words. Christ’s institution and promise stand no matter what Christian speaks them. Nevertheless, since the congregation has called the pastor to administer communion to its members, it would be contrary to good order and disruptive of fellowship for any family or group within the congregation to set up its own communion service. There also is no situation that calls for emergency communion comparable to the emergency baptism of infants, since adults can receive strengthening of faith through the spoken gospel. Emergency communion could easily become in the minds of the people a kind of Lutheran extreme unction. There are few situations where the called pastor cannot satisfy the needs for communion. Should, however, the situation arise, there is no reason why, for example, an unordained vicar cannot conduct the entire communion service, including the consecration of the elements.

Ottomar Krueger concurs: So also there can be exceptional cases in which some vicar is authorized by a congregation and the arrangement is sanctioned and approved of by the seminary authorities, to celebrate Holy Communion, or a case in which a congregation authorizes a layman, probably an officer of the congregation, to assist the pastor in the distribution of the elements, or even to commune the pastor. There are exceptional and unusual cases and should not become the common practice, for the Lord is a God of order and wants everything to be done decently and in order in his church on earth.

When people become unduly concerned about these matters, I think it is time to remind them that “the chief thing in the sacrament is what God has done and continues to do in Christ, not what man does.”<sup>v</sup>

## II. The Elements

*Do the elements—leavened or unleavened bread and wine or grape juice have any bearing on the validity of the sacrament?*

### The Scriptures

The Scriptures identify the “terrestrial elements” as being ἄρτος, bread, and ποτήριον, the cup, with the contents of the latter being τοῦ γενήματος τῆς ἀμπέλου, the fruit of the vine. The dictionaries and theological wordbooks define ἄρτος as simple bread, making no apparent distinction between leavened and unleavened bread. γένημα is the product or fruit of the ἄμπελος, the vine. ποτήριον is simply a drinking vessel.

### The Confessions

The Confessions do not recognize a problem with the visible elements. When the visible elements are mentioned, they are referred to as *bread* and *wine*, with no definitions or limitations attached. A typical reference to the elements can be found in the *Formula of Concord, the Thorough Declaration*:

They confess, according to the words of Irenaeus, that in this Sacrament there are two things, a heavenly and an earthly. The earthly element is bread and wine; but, because the Lord's Supper is an act, only to the extent that they are dispensed and consumed. The heavenly element is the body and blood of Christ. In every instance where the Lord's Supper is celebrated according to the institution of Christ these are united according to their essence or substance with the bread and wine in a supernatural manner, and are received with the bread and wine. All substitutes for this twofold material are to be rejected.... For since Christ gives this command at the table and at supper, there is indeed no doubt that he speaks of real, natural bread and of natural wine, also of oral eating and drinking, so that there can be no metaphor, that is, a change of meaning, in the word bread, as though the body of Christ were a spiritual bread or a spiritual food of souls.

On the point of identifying the visible elements in the Lord's Supper, Johann Brenz advises:

That these words of Christ are to be taken in their native force and intention, and that we are not to pervert them from their proper signification to a figure, appears from the common and natural rule of interpretation, which retains the literal signification, unless urgent necessity compel us to adopt a figurative one; which rule is indeed most solicitously to be observed in regard to supernatural subjects and those which pertain to faith.<sup>vi</sup>

So let's look at each element to see if an "urgent necessity" compels us to adopt a figurative signification over the literal one.

### The Bread

Whether the bread was leavened or unleavened was a bone of contention between Rome and Constantinople between the 8th and 11th centuries, with the East favoring the use of leavened bread on the basis of apostolic tradition and the West favoring the use of unleavened bread on the basis of the historical use of the same by the Jews in the celebration of the Passover. Quenstedt writes of the bread: the quality, quantity, and outward form of the bread did not matter, provided only it was of the substance of bread.<sup>vii</sup> This consensus is shared by many. C. F. W. Walther writes: "It is unessential whether the bread is leavened or unleavened, whether it be baked of rye, wheat corn, barley, or oats, whether it have this or that shape, provided that it is real bread of flour and water."<sup>viii</sup> Koehler adds:

Christ took bread and gave it to his disciples; hence, we also use bread in the Lord's Supper. Because the Supper was instituted during the feast of the unleavened bread (Luke 22:7), Christ used the bread that was at hand; but the disciples continued to celebrate this Supper also after the days of the unleavened bread were past, and they likewise took such bread as they had. It is, therefore, not essential that we use unleavened bread; but we are to use bread. We do use unleavened bread during our celebrations of the Lord's Supper, but we do not regard it wrong to use leavened bread.

Schuetze and Habeck agree with this position:

They Scripture does not define the bread more closely. It is a matter of Christian liberty whether the bread is made of wheat or some other grain, whether it is leavened or not, whether it is shaped in a loaf or a wafer. Although it is a matter of historical knowledge that unleavened bread was used at the time of institution, it is nowhere mentioned directly or made mandatory.

As far as whether the bread, leavened or unleavened, is to be “broken” during the distribution or may be “prebroken,” i.e., e., wafers, we read:

In the institution Jesus broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, likewise he gave them the cup. The breaking of the bread is not essential. It is not a sacramental act, but preparatory. As other ministerial acts are not minutely copied, so this is also not copied. The early church kept up the custom of breaking the bread. The Reformed emphasize the breaking of the bread in the interest of their symbolism (*Dogmatics Notes*, WLS).

Krause explains the symbolism which the Reformed Churches emphasize:

Some insist on “breaking” the bread. This should symbolize the suffering of the Savior.... Such thoughts result from human speculation. The Scriptures do not with one syllable indicate that breaking the bread should symbolize suffering.... Breaking of bread is a general designation in Scripture. It is used in connection with what were admittedly ordinary meals.... Before bread could be eaten, the loaves had to be broken. Today we would not gnaw at a whole loaf of bread; it is first sliced with a knife. So in the days of Jesus and the apostles the loaf was broken. The breaking at the last supper was not an essential part of the sacrament. Jesus broke the bread so that it might be distributed. We cannot say that the sacrament is used improperly if bread is not broken.

As far as the use of wafers is concerned, “... wafers have been in use in the church since the 14th century. No one can tell just who is the author of this custom.... The breaking of the bread is non-essential. Christ broke it because of the style of the bread used then. The Lord said, ‘Eat,’ not ‘Break.’”<sup>ix</sup> To which Schuetze and Habeck note, “The communion wafers are convenient, and their use has continued partly as a confessional position against the Reformed to demonstrate the liberty the Lord has given in regard to the bread. In an emergency bread in any form may be used.”<sup>x</sup>

If the command “This do” included the breaking of the bread, then the communicants would have to break the bread; this was not done by the communicants at the first Supper. It is also immaterial whether the elements are directly conveyed to the mouth of the communicants, or whether they are first placed into their hands to be conveyed to the mouth by them.... How the bread is distributed, and how it is taken are adiaphora. The essential part of the sacramental action is that we take and eat.<sup>xi</sup>

## The Wine

While there is little discussion in our circles concerning the breads the same cannot be said about the second visible, terrestrial element. On the one hand, we read in Koehler, “As to the contents of the cup we know that it was the fruit of the vine (Matthew 26:29). From history we know that wine was used at the Passover, and that therefore, Christ also used wine when he instituted the Lord’s Supper; so did also the early Christians (1 Corinthians 11:21). To substitute grape juice would, to say the least, make the validity of the Sacrament uncertain.” And on the other hand, we see in *Shepherd Under Christ*,

The other element is simply called the cup in the various accounts of the institution. That the content of the cup was wine is again a matter of historical knowledge, although no reference in Scripture to this element ever uses the word οἶνος. The Lord does refer to it as the fruit of the vine (Matthew 26:29). The church has therefore very properly insisted on grape wine. Wine made from any other fruit should not be used. Since the term used for the contents of the cup is

fruit of the vine, the use of unfermented grape juice in case of an emergency cannot be considered invalid. Nevertheless the church will avoid all doubt on the part of its members by using fermented fruit of the vine and may at times do so also as a confessional action over against anyone who claims that the use of any alcoholic beverage is sin,

Can these divergent viewpoints be reconciled?

The bulk of Lutheran theologians stand directly or indirectly in the corner of “wine” over against any other “fruit of the vine.” In reading Luther, I found that he uses “wine” as a virtual synonym for “the cup,” (although I must admit that nowhere did I find any exclusion of grape juice in his writings). Chemnitz, however, does address the type of liquid to be found in the cup:

I ask whether the word “cup” (ποτήριον) refers only to the contents or also to the outward form of a container. The etymology certainly comes from the concept of containing a drink (ἀπὸ τὴν πόσιν τηρεῖν), referring to that which serves and contains a drink. And this a certainly the force or thrust of the term at some times. But in the Supper Christ expressly says that he did not take an empty cup, for he says: “Drink of it,” and he himself shows what kind of liquid he had in the cup he took. For he speaks of the fruit of the vine, signifying that it was REAL WINE and not something imaginary or artificial like cider. Therefore the word “cup” is not properly used with reference either to the material or the form, for in his case other terms would be used, but this word is used because it serves a drink and contains a drink, sometimes only potentially and sometimes actually.

Hollaz likewise comments:

The terrestrial matter of the Lord’s Supper is partly bread; in regard to its substance, genuine.... It is partly wine; in regard to its substance, genuine; but it is no account whether it be red or white, pure or somewhat diluted with water. The celestial matter is the true and substantial body of Christ, and also the true and substantial blood of Christ.

Walther writes, “It is likewise unessential whether red or white wine be used, or whether the wine be undiluted or mixed with water, provided that what is used is a potion made from the ‘fruit of the vine.’” To which Pieper comments at length:

The pastor must use every care that nothing but TRUE WINE is used in the Sacrament. He should, therefore, not leave the providing of it to the janitor or someone else, but bear in mind that he before all others is responsible for the use of GENUINE WINE. It is false teaching on the part of the Eastern Catholic Church and the Roman Catholic Church when they insist that “krama” (wine mixed with water) must be used, likewise when Beza and Calvin permit substitution of any element similar to bread and wine, and the Gnostic Encratites of the second to fourth century forbade the use of wine entirely and used water, a thing imitated by certain temperance fanatics in America. In order not to INTRODUCE AN ELEMENT OF UNCERTAINTY into the Sacrament, one should refrain from using GRAPE JUICE, since it is doubtful whether it is still “the fruit of the vine” having undergone the pasteurizing process.... A number of substitutes for wine are found among HERETICAL SECTS.... the Encratites used water, others milk, honey, unfermented grape juice.... But the Church has not failed to declare all this to be improper and insisted on the use of true wine. Since no doubt can arise if we use genuine wine, the dignity of the Sacrament demands that we refrain from experimenting with all fluids of which it is not certain whether they are, or still are, “fruit of the vine.”

Krause further develops the question:

The “cup” is mentioned in all Scriptural accounts referring to the Holy Supper. The container, of course, stands for the contents. And the Lord Himself mentions the contents when he speaks of “THIS fruit of the vine,” Without a doubt the cup on the table at the first Supper contained wine, For centuries thereafter the church used wine. In comparatively recent years the use of grape juice was advocated by some. This question had not disturbed visible Christendom before. In all of church history one finds no record that controversy ever arose concerning the question: “Should grape juice or wine be taken?” It was always taken for granted that wine be used. But in this 20th century we are confronted with the question: “May grape juice be used?” The question need not call forth much discussion in our midst. Why should we change the age-old use of wine? Shall we bow to the demands of temperance groups? Or shall we bow to those who are always seeking something new? The problem of an individual alcoholic might present itself. But such a case need not alter the usage in an entire church. We must continue the use of wine; then no doubts will arise in the minds of the communicants.

Finally, Roland Zimmermann, in an essay entitled “Communion and the Fruit of the Vine,” summarized his study on “the fruit of the vine” this way:

We wish to take note of four things: 1. Jesus specifies as to what the “fruit of the vine” is when he uses “THIS fruit of the vine,” Matthew 26:29. 2. Wine was used by the early Christians in this sacrament, 1 Corinthians 11. 3. Nowhere does Scripture seem to know anything about an unfermented liquid of the grape vine. 4. γένημα τῆς ἀμπέλου is to be equated with פֶּרִי הַיַּיִן which was wine.

Therefore it would appear 1. that Scriptures substantiate the thought that the Lord instituted His Supper with wine (history does so also); that “fruit of the vine” as used by our Savior specifically refers to wine; that there is no evidence to support the possibility that “fruit of the vine” can also refer to grape juice; that without wine the participant can’t receive the assurance that is an essential part of the sacrament; and that on whomever would use grape juice must rest the burden of proof that γένημα τῆς ἀμπέλου can mean grape juice when it is used in the N. T.

Zimmermann closes his essay by quoting the statement listed above from *Shepherd Under Christ* and one from Kremer which says:

“ ... when discussing the question whether a celebration of the sacrament with unfermented grape juice instead of wine is truly a Holy Communion, we should not, other things being equal, ignore the parallel between the bread and the wine. If it is an adiaphora to use either leavened or unleavened bread, then why should it not also be an adiaphoron whether the “fruit of the vine” be fermented or unfermented? Situations may arise in which this question becomes more than just academic.

Then Zimmermann concludes, “The above state or indicate the possibility of using grape juice. I don’t feel that they have given sufficient proof for this possibility. What do you think?”

### III. Consecration

*What is meant by consecration?*

In reporting the institution the records use the words εὐλογεῖν and εὐχαριστεῖν. In the apostolic age it was customary to consecrate the elements by pronouncing a blessing over them (1 Corinthians 10:16). The DIDACHE: “We give Thee thanks, our Father, for the holy vine of David Thy Son, which Thou has made known to us through Jesus Thy Son; to thee be glory forever.” With the breaking of bread, “We give thanks, our Father, for the life and knowledge which Thou hast revealed to us through Jesus Thy Son; to Thee be glory forever. As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountain tops and after being harvested was made one, so let Thy Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom, for Thine is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever.” Today we consecrate the elements in a liturgical service culminating in the recitation of the words of institution (FC 810:8-9; 1012:121). The purpose of the consecration is not merely historical, to have the narrative of the institution in our celebration. To express our intention of repeating what Jesus instituted; to confess our faith in the reality and efficacy of the sacrament. The effect of the words of institution is not magical. Nowhere is a rigid formula prescribed. Jesus is present with his Spirit operating through the Word. (*Dogmatics Note, WLS*)

Quenstedt:

The consecration consists in the separation of the external elements, the bread and wine, from a common and ordinary use; in the benediction, or setting them apart for sacred use, as appointed in the Holy Supper, by solemn prayers and thanksgiving; in the sacramental union of the bread and wine with the body and blood of Christ, so that the consecrated bread becomes the communion of the body, and the consecrated wine becomes the communion of the blood of Christ.

Gerhardt:

But since Christ, in the institution of the Holy Supper, expressly commanded us to do in its administration what he did, it follows that the minister of the Church, in celebrating the Supper, should repeat the words of the institution, and consecrate the bread and wine in this manner, and distribute it to the communicants.... This consecration of the Eucharist is not a magical incantation, essentially transmuting, by the power of certain words, the bread into the body and the wine into the blood of Christ; nor is it only the historical repetition of the institution; ... but it is an efficacious HAGIASMOS (sanctification) by which, according to the command, ordination, and institution of Christ, sanctification is, as it were, carried over from the first Supper to the Supper at the present day, and the external elements destined to this sacred use, so that with these the body and blood of Christ are distributed.

*How does the consecration of the elements enter the question of the validity of the sacrament?*

Krueger explains:

The Roman Church with its doctrine of transubstantiation teaches that at that instant when the officiating priest speaks the words HOC EST CORPUS MEUM, the change takes place, the bread is no longer bread, but is the Lord's body lying on the altar; the wine is the blood of Christ in the chalice. If we were to accept that interpretation, then we would certainly have to subscribe to the doctrine of transubstantiation. When the apostle Paul, however, by inspiration of the Holy Ghost writes in 1 Corinthians 11: “As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come,” he expressly refers to the elements as bread and wine, using the

figure of speech, CONTINUES PRO CONTENTO, a synecdoche, and does not indicate that the bread has been united with the body and blood of Christ at the words of institution, but rather at the eating, for now he goes on to say that “whosoever eats this bread and drinks this cup unworthily is guilty of the body and blood of our Lord.” So, then, the union is there when we receive the elements, and therein lies the actual presence, not in some change that the ministrant brings about when he pronounces the words of consecration or institution.

Hermann Sasse adds: “As the consecration is at the same time the act of offering, the priest not only acts *EX PERSONA CHRISTI*, but exercises the power, given to him in ordination, ‘to offer sacrifice to God for the living and the dead.’”<sup>xii</sup> Aquinas wrote: “Suffice it to say that the miracle of the Real Presence here become a metaphysical miracle.”<sup>xiii</sup>

### The Scriptures

The Scriptures’ testimony on this point may be a testimony of silence as much as anything else. The Gospel accounts describe the actions of our Lord on the night he was betrayed. The words which he used to “give thanks” are not recorded for us. The Greek words εὐλογήσας and εὐχαριστήσας are used at other meals where Jesus “gives thanks” such as W the feeding of the 5000 and 4000. In his account in the letter to the Corinthians, Paul would seem to indicate that the important words in the consecration are the words “This is my body.... This cup is the new covenant in my blood....” There is nothing to indicate that a change occurs in the elements, neither a transmutation, a consubstantiation or a transubstantiation. There is also no indication when the elements start and stop being united sacramentally to the body and blood of the Lord.

### The Confessions

*The Large Catechism*: If the Word be joined to the element, it becomes a Sacrament.... It is true, indeed, that if you take away the Word or regard it without the words, you have nothing but mere bread and wine.... Even though a knave takes or distributes the Sacrament, he receives the true Sacrament, that is, the true body and blood of Christ, just as truly as he who administers it in the most worthy manner. For it is not founded upon the holiness of men, but upon the Word of God.... For the Word by which it became a Sacrament and was instituted does not become false because of the person or his unbelief.... No matter whether you are worthy or unworthy, you have here his body and blood by virtue of these words which are added to the bread and wine.... While it is you have nothing but bread and wine if you take away the Word or if you fail to take it into consideration, it is assuredly true, likewise, that you have Christ’s body and blood when Word and element remain together, as they shall and must. For as we have it from the mouth of Christ, so it is; he cannot lie nor deceive.

*The Formula of Concord. Epitome, Article VII*: We believe, teach, and confess that in the Holy Supper the body and blood of Christ are truly and essentially present, and are truly distributed and received with the bread and wine. Now, as to the consecration, we believe, teach, and confess that no work of man or recitation of the minister (of the church) produces this presence of the body and blood of Christ, in the Holy Supper, but that this is to be ascribed only and alone to the almighty power of our Lord Jesus Christ. But at the same time we also believe, teach and confess unanimously that in the use of the Holy Supper the words of the institution of Christ should in no way be omitted, but should be publicly recited, as it is written, 1 Corinthians 10:16: The cup of blessing which we bless, etc, This blessing occurs through the recitation of the words of Christ.

*The Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, Article VII*: Now in the administration of the Holy Supper the words of institution are to be publicly spoken or sung, before the congregation distinctly and clearly, and should in no way be omitted in order that obedience may be rendered to the command of Christ: “This do,” and that the faith of the hearers concerning the nature and fruit of this Sacrament may be excited, strengthened, and confirmed by Christ’s Word, and that the elements of bread and wine may be consecrated or blessed for this

holy use, in order that the body and blood of Christ may therewith be administered to us to be eaten and to be drunk, as Paul declares: The cup of blessing which we bless, which indeed occurs in no other way than through the repetition and recitation of the words of institution.... However, this blessing, or the recitation of the words of institution of Christ alone does not make a sacrament, if the entire action of the Supper, as it was instituted by Christ, is not observed. But the command of Christ, "This do," must be observed unseparated and inviolate, as also St. Paul places before our eyes the entire action of the breaking of bread or of distribution and reception, 1 Corinthians 10:16.

### The Fathers

Luther, *Confession Concerning Christ's Supper*: Here, too, if I were to say over all the bread there is, "This is the body of Christ," nothing would happen, but when we follow his institution and command in the Supper and say, "This is my body," then it is his body, not because of our speaking or our declarative word, but because of his command in which he has told us to speak and to do and has attached his own command and deed to our speaking.

Koehler: The sacramental union, therefore, is not effected by the pastor's consecration of the bread and wine, but it obtains only in the bread and the wine we eat and drink, and while we eat and drink them. We have no Biblical ground to assume that the bread is the body of Christ before we eat it, and that it continues to be the body of Christ after we have eaten it. The sacramental union ceases with the sacramental action.... The words Christ used when he gave thanks over the bread and the cup are not recorded but they, no doubt, referred to what he was about to do. Also Paul speaks of the "cup of blessing which we bless" (1 Corinthians 10:16). Thus we likewise bless, consecrate the bread and wine. And as these elements are to be used in the Supper which Christ instituted, it is self-evident that we should use those words by which he instituted this Supper and commanded us to celebrate it. However, these words do not work like a magic formula, whereby the body and blood are instantly and automatically joined with the bread and wine, for Christ did not say that the bread which he blessed was his body, but the bread which he gave to his disciples, and which they ate. By such consecration we merely indicate that we are about to celebrate that Supper which Christ instituted with these words, and thereby we set aside this bread and wine for the sacred use that it should be the carrier of the body and blood of Christ.

Krause: There need be no quibbling about the exact moment when body and blood are in, with and under bread and wine. It is certain that there is a sacramental union when bread and wine are eaten and drunk.

*Shepherd Under Christ*: Such a use of the words of institution in consecrating the visible elements is an ancient custom (1 Corinthians 10:16), but the words are not to be considered a magic formula that effects a change in the elements. The presence of the body and blood does not depend on the simple repeating of the words but comes about through the gracious working of the Lord, whose promise is connected with the words. The real presence is therefore also not dependent on the faith of the man who speaks the words.... Not being a magic formula, incidental changes or omissions in the wording do not invalidate the consecration and its purpose.... Should the supply of either element be exhausted and replenishment be provided, consecrating the new supply will avoid any doubts about the continuing validity of the sacrament.

Becker: If we now look at the Communion liturgy and compare what we do there with what Jesus and his disciples did in the night in which he was betrayed, we must realize that much of what we say and do when we celebrate the Lord's Supper is not an essential part of this sacred meal.... Whether it becomes the body and blood of Christ in that moment, no one can say for sure. What the Lord will do in his wisdom and power and when he will do it we can only decide by listening to his words. The words clearly indicate that what is distributed and received is the true body and blood of Christ. Beyond that we cannot go and dare not go in our

teaching. How long before and how long after the distribution and reception the bread and wine are the body and blood of Christ belong to those presumptuous questions which are condemned in the Formula of Concord (VII, 127). They are questions neither raised nor answered in the Scriptures nor the Confessions.... when we eat bread and drink wine in the Holy Supper in which we have heard the words of Christ read to us loudly and distinctly, or, to put it another way, when we, in connection with these words, do what Christ commands his disciples to do, then he gives us in that Supper his true body and blood to eat and to drink.... We do not wish to be drawn into controversy over the question of when the presence begins. This is a dead-end street that can only lead to confusion among God's people. The words of institution and all the other passages of Scripture dealing with the Holy Supper give us no warrant for the conclusion that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ in the very moment that the words are spoken. We only know that the words of Christ spoken at the first Supper will be true and efficacious until the end of time. To say therefore that the body of Christ lies on the altar is to say more than the Scriptures say. And we will be mindful of the prophet's words, "Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Proverbs 30:6).

#### **IV. The Professed Teaching**

##### The Scriptures

The words of institution say, "Do this in remembrance of me." Paul also writes in 1 Corinthians 11:29: "For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body and blood of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself." In the first case, we have a clear command to do what Christ did; in the second, we have a warning against those who do not.

##### The Confessions

*The Large Catechism:* The only way in which it is conveyed and appropriated to us is in the words.... The body of Christ can never be an unfruitful, vain thing, that effects or profits nothing.... Whoever believes it has what the words declare and bring.... because he offers and promises forgiveness of sins, it cannot be received otherwise than by faith.... Now it is true, as we have said, that no one should by any means be coerced or compelled, lest we institute a new murdering of souls. Nevertheless, it must be known that such people as deprive themselves of, and withdraw from, the Sacrament so long a time are not to be considered Christians. For Christ has not instituted it to be treated as a show, but has commanded his Christians to eat and drink it, and thereby remember him.... Our Sacrament does not depend upon our worthiness. For we are not baptized because we are worthy and holy, nor do we go to confession because we are pure and without sin, but the contrary, because we are poor miserable men, and just because we are unworthy; unless it be some one who desires no grace and absolution nor intends to reform.... We are not disposed to sanction the admission to and the partaking of the Sacrament on the part of people who do not know what they are to receive and what they come for.

*The Apology:* The Sacraments are signs of God's will.... because in a sacrament there are two things, a sign and the Word' the Word in the New Testament, is the promise of grace added.... the Word offers the remission of sins. And a ceremony is, as it were, a picture or seal, as Paul, Romans 4:11, calls it, of the Word making known the promise. Therefore, just as the promise is useless unless it is received by faith, so a ceremony is useless unless such faith is added as is truly confident that the remission of sins is here offered.... The will and mercy of God should be discerned in the ceremony. But that faith which apprehends mercy quickens. And this is the principal use of the Sacrament, in which it is apparent who are fit for the Sacrament, namely, terrified consciences, and how they ought to use it.... After conscience encouraged by faith has perceived from what terrors it is freed, then indeed it fervently gives thanks for the benefit and passion of Christ, and uses the

ceremony itself to the praise of God, in order by this ordinance to show its gratitude and testifies that it holds in high esteem the gifts of God. Thus the ceremony becomes a sacrifice of praise.

*The Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, Article VII:* (Quoting Luther) For it does not depend upon the faith or unbelief of men, but upon God's Word and ordinance, unless they FIRST CHANGE GOD'S WORD AND ORDINANCE AND INTERPRET IT OTHERWISE, as the enemies of the Sacrament do at the present day, who, of course, have nothing but bread and wine; for they also do not have the words and appointed ordinance of God, but have perverted and changed them according to their own notion.... NIHIL HABET RATIONEM SACRAMENTI EXTRA USUM A CHRISTO INSTITUTUM. Nothing has the nature of a sacrament apart from the use instituted by Christ. If the institution of Christ be not observed as he appointed it, there is no sacrament. This is by no means to be rejected, but can and should be urged and maintained with profit in the church of God. And the use or action here does not mean chiefly faith, neither the oral participation only, but the entire external, visible action of the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ, the consecration, or words of institution, the distribution and reception, or oral partaking of the consecrated bread and wine, of the body and blood of Christ.

### The Fathers

Luther: Anyone who ventures to interpret words in the Scriptures any other way than what they say, is under obligation to prove this contention.... We too would like to show for good measure why it is necessary for Christ's body to be present in the bread. Briefly, the first need is on God's side. For if it were not so, Christ would be a liar in his words, "Take, eat, this is my body, given for you." Here, you handsome devil, is the need! God is truthful; what he says he can do, and does. Since he says here, "This is my body," and refers with the word "this" to the bread, as the fanatics admit, his body must of necessity be present. The need for God to maintain his glory is an important matter, for he boasts that he is truthful and faithful.... The second need is on the side of our faith. Faith in God's Word is necessary for us, because it has been spoken in order that we should believe it, and God wills and demands of us to have faith here his Word is.... Therefore as the Word and faith are necessary, so also is the body comprehended in the Word necessary for us, in order that our faith may be correct and consistent with the Words because the two, Word and body, are not to be separated.<sup>xiv</sup>

Sasse: The Presence of Christ is different in the two sacraments. It is also a mistake to argue: If the Sacrament of Baptism performed by a heretic is valid, provided it has been performed with the proper element and the proper baptismal formula, then the Sacrament of the Altar must also be valid in heretical communities, provided the proper elements are used and the Words of Institution are spoken. Though Luther and the Lutheran Church have always rejected the doctrine that the validity of the sacrament depends on the minister's intention (at least, to do what the church does), Luther bluntly denied that the body and the blood of Christ are given and received in churches where the minister does not wish to give, and the communicants do not wish to receive, the true body and blood. Such a celebration he could not regard as the Sacrament as Christ instituted it. The Lutheran Church has never decided the question—because it cannot be decided—as to what God may give to pious Reformed Christians who in a bona fide manner celebrate the Lord's Supper according to their convictions. We would not deny that in such a case at least a spiritual communion may take place. But we cannot regard the *verba testamenti* as being on the same level with the formula of Baptism in which the minister says what he does at the command of Christ. For in those words Christ himself speaks, and the minister would not speak *ex persona Christi* if he did not speak the Words of Institution as Christ understood them and wanted them to be understood. This is the reason why the Lutheran Church, like all other churches except the Baptists, recognizes a baptism performed in another church, but has never recognized the Sacrament of the Altar in those communities which deny the Real Presence, and, consequently, does not allow anyone, even in a case of emergency or in *articulo mortis*, to receive Holy Communion in such churches.

Koehler: To make sure that we are celebrating that Sacrament which Christ instituted, it is not sufficient to eat bread and to drink wine, and to recite on such occasion the words *of* institution. A person may do all this in sheer mockery or play. There must be the purpose and sincere intention of celebrating the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:20-22). But the sincere intention does not make the Sacrament valid; it must confessedly also be administered in the sense and meaning, in which it was instituted. If therefore a church according to its public confession puts a different interpretation on the words of institution than the words warrant, and celebrates the Supper in that sense, as the Catholic and Reformed churches do, then these churches have a supper of their own invention, but not the Supper which Christ instituted.

Sasse: The sacramental words are not only the expression of a doctrine, a dogmatical statement that has to be accepted; they are the Gospel itself. You cannot accept the words, "This is my body" without believing also "which is given for you."

*How does the professed teaching of other church bodies invalidate the sacrament?*

The Roman Catholic Church: By the consecration of bread and wine a conversion is brought about of the entire substance of the bread into the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the entire substance of the wine into his blood. This conversion is conveniently and properly called by the Holy Catholic Church "Transubstantiation." As Sasse rightly identifies: "Not Holy Communion, but elevation, was now becoming the climax of the Catholic Mass;"<sup>xv</sup> and "the idea that a priest could sacrifice the body and blood of Christ was for him (Luther) the great blasphemy, a real manifestation of the Antichrist, who had taken his seat in the temple of God, the Church."<sup>xvi</sup>

The Reformed Church: Pieper writes:

In their opinion of the Reformed Lord's Supper the Lutheran teachers are not entirely of one mind. Fecht, Dannhauer, and others hold that the Reformed have the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ, are therefore distributing and receiving Christ's body and blood. They base their opinion on the fact that the Reformed bodies adhere to the words of institution, though they give these words another meaning than Christ does. Most of our old Lutheran teachers hold that the Reformed Supper is a rite alien to the ordinance of Christ and for that reason is not the Lord's Supper. We feel constrained to agree with this verdict. Because the Reformed publicly declare that they do not have the intention of celebrating the Supper with the Real Presence of Christ's body and blood, but pronounce such a Sacrament an abomination, they are in fact not celebrating the Supper Christ gave to his church. The Reformed doctrine is an actual disavowal and renunciation of Christ's words of institution. Hence they have no word of God for their Supper; he did not institute a Supper in which bread and wine are distributed and received as symbols of the absent body and blood of Christ.

Krueger further defines the Reformed position:

There are two views current among the Reformed concerning the benefits of the Lord's Supper. One is that the Lord's Supper is to be looked upon as a memorial meal, reminding the believing communicant of what Christ through his suffering and death has accomplished for him. The other is that in the Lord's Supper a spiritual eating and drinking, performed by faith, takes place and unites the believer with Christ. Zwingli was the chief exponent of the former view and Calvin of the latter.... If we wish, therefore, to summarize what the Reformed Church says the Lord's Supper is, we may say that it is not the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, but only symbols and signs or representations of these heavenly elements.

And Krause reminds us once more:

These words of institution must be understood as Christ used them. A church that publicly interprets the words of Christ as having symbolical meaning is not using the Supper properly, in fact, is not celebrating the Lord's Supper. Any recitation of the words of institution is invalidated by the church's wrong public profession.

Sasse warns us to look a little closer to home:

The influence exerted on the Lutheran church by the modern Liturgical Movement seems to point more to a strengthening of romanizing tendencies than to a new understanding of Luther's profound perception of the inseparable connection between the Sacrament and the Gospel.... The final decision on the question whether the Lutheran church today can, and must, stand by the doctrine of Luther as it was accepted by the Lutheran confessions must fall in the field of exegesis.... Unprejudiced scholarship cannot but admit that, according to 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, not our faith, not the celebration as an act, but the bread and the wine (as the contents of the cup) constitute the communion or participation of the body and blood of Christ: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?"

## V. The Reception

The part of the paper is subdivided into a consideration of self-communion, the reception of both kinds, the common cup as opposed to the individual cup, and even though it has nothing to do with the validity of the sacrament, does AIDS threaten our practice of the Lord's Supper?

We would do well to remind ourselves that "the essential things, beside besides the words of consecration, is the eating and drinking which the Lord commanded."<sup>xvii</sup> For as Quenstedt reminds a, "No sacramental union takes place if there is no distribution."<sup>xviii</sup> To which Hutter adds, "If the words of the institution were recited a thousand times, and this use, i.e., the eating and drinking, were not added, there would still be no sacramental union of the bread with the body or of the wine with the blood of Christ."<sup>xix</sup>

### *SELF COMMUNION*

#### The Confessions

*The Smalcald Articles*: If any one should advance the pretext that as an act of devotion he wishes to administer the Sacrament, or Communion, to himself, he is not in earnest. For if he wishes to commune in sincerity, the surest and best way for him is in the Sacrament administered according to Christ's institution. But that one administer communion to himself is a human notion, uncertain, unnecessary, yea, even prohibited.... So, too, it is not right for one to use the common Sacrament of the Church according to his own private devotion, and without God's Word and apart from the communion of the Church to trifle therewith.

We must remember that Luther is speaking out against the abuse of the mass in the Roman Catholic Church, specifically against the private masses which were prescribed by the Church. He is not here speaking of the celebrant joining the Christian congregation in the Lord's Supper. Therefore the 20th century position as stated in Habeck's essay, "Who May Officiate ... " and Alliet's "The Pastor's Self-Communion" do not contradict the Confessions.

Habeck (quoting John Schaller): Self communion of the preacher is in itself not unallowable, but ought to be used only in an emergency since the preacher cannot really speak comfort to himself.

Alliet: There is nothing in Holy Scripture to prevent the pastor from communing with his congregation; on the contrary, it is most reasonable to assume that the elders and bishops in apostolic times joined in Holy Communion with their flock. There seems to be a desire in our circles for more frequent communion on the part of the pastor than on the few occasions provided by pastoral conferences and synodical meetings. There are many good reasons why this should be recommended, and there is no sound reason why it should be discouraged.... This would be a question which need not be asked, if the question about the celebrant were clear in everyone's mind and in our teaching: that another minister, a vicar, a male teacher or a layman may assist the pastor in the distribution of the Lord's Supper and may, therefore, distribute the sacrament to the pastor, thus making self-communion a mute point.

### *RECEPTION OF BOTH KINDS*

#### The Confessions

*The Augsburg Confession*: To the laity are given BOTH KINDS IN THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, because this usage has the commandment of the Lord in Matthew 26:27: "Drink ye all of it," where Christ has manifestly commanded concerning the cup that all should drink.... It is evident that any custom introduced against the commandments of God is not to be allowed.

*The Smalcald Articles*: We hold that bread and wine in the Supper are the true body and blood of Christ, and are given and received not only by the godly, but also by wicked Christians. And that not only one form is to be given.... For even if it were true that there is as much under one as under both, yet the one form only is not the entire ordinance and institution ordained and commanded by Christ,

*The Formula of Concord, Epitome, Article VII*: We unanimously reject and condemn all the following erroneous articles, which are opposed and contrary to the doctrine presented above, the simple faith, and the (pure) confession concerning the Lord's Supper: that to laymen one form only of the Sacrament is given, and, contrary to the plain words of the testament of Christ, the cup is withheld from them, and they are deprived of his blood.

#### Problems Found in Luther's Writings

There are many historians who will contend for an evolutionary development of Luther's theology. If they dig into Luther's position on the use of both kinds in the Lords Supper, they will surely find ammunition to support their argument. In Luther's early writings, there is no demand for the use of both kinds; but as the Reformation continues toward Augsburg his position becomes more like the one we see expressed above in the *Smalcald Articles*. We read in the *Babylonian Captivity of the Church*:

The first captivity of this sacrament, therefore, concerns its substance or completeness, which the tyranny of Rome has wrested from us. Not that those who use only one kind sin against Christ, for Christ did not command the use of either kind, but left it to the choice of each individual, when he said: "As often as you do this, do it in remembrance of me" (1 Corinthians 11:25). But, they are the sinners, who forbid the giving of both kinds to those who wish to exercise this choice.

When Luther was at the Wartburg and Carlstadt introduced the use of both kinds in Wittenberg, Luther wrote *Receiving Both Kinds in the Sacrament*, condemning both the Roman refusal to give both kinds and the use of both kinds as advocated by Carlstadt without first educating the people; we read:

In this matter the text of the gospel is so clear that even the papists cannot deny that Christ instituted the sacrament in both kinds and gave them to all of the disciples. Therefore, it is your duty, on pain of forfeiting your salvation, to let nobody deny or disfigure it. For that would be the same as if you were to say that Christ himself had done wrong in this matter and was a heretic because he acted differently from the pope and the raging papists ...

We must always firmly insist upon it that the use of both kinds in the sacrament is right and Christian and evangelical; and whoever says otherwise denies and blasphemes God, whether it be pope, emperor, princes, or even the devil....

Yes, I say further, away with the proponents of only one element—and OF THE SACRAMENT AS A WHOLE! Because when they come to die the devil will torment with the gospel those who use only one element; for the gospel ordains both elements. If they don't know how to cope with it they will have to perish. And it will not help for them to plead the papal law and ancient custom. The gospel does not care about pope or custom. That is why I said it is not a question of what is right but of having the right people. It is contrary to the gospel to partake of only one element, and the pope's ordinance cannot be so very generally observed everywhere without terrible destruction of human souls. At the same time, it would do just as much harm suddenly to impose on the whole church the reception of both elements, in accordance with the gospel, when the church consists of such weak, captive consciences....

So what are we to do? We must first become coopers and make new vessels before the wine harvest begins and the wine is stored away. The old vessels must be discarded. That is to say, we must preach repeatedly and vigorously against the pope's law of only one element, and hammer home Christ's institution of both elements as set forth in the gospel. But in the meantime we should turn the people away from the sacrament as a whole, whether in one or both kinds ... one must first preach everywhere among the people and keep the weak consciences away from it until they are fully instructed in the gospel and humbly come of their own accord, announce themselves to the priest, and out of spiritual hunger ask him for the sacrament.

Sasse informs us that

as late as 1528, the *Instruction For Visitors* provided that people who for conscience's sake did not want to receive the cup could take the bread only. The rule that Luther followed here, as in his entire work as a practical reformer, was to take into account the weak brother's conscience. In this particular case, it was a great concession to those who had not yet heard the Gospel. To those who after careful indoctrination on the Sacrament still refused to take the Lord's Supper under both kinds, Luther recommended as early as 1523 to abstain from the Sacrament. This later became the rule of the Lutheran church also for those who for various reasons could not drink wine.<sup>xx</sup>

But as we can see, Luther must have sensed that enough indoctrination and instruction in the Lord's Supper had occurred by 1530 and his position is one of all-or-nothing.

#### Other Church Fathers

Chemnitz: When Christ says, "Eat, drink" he is prescribing the mode and manner of taking, namely, that we are to eat with the mouth what is present and given in the Lord's Supper. That the words "eat" and "drink" are to be

understood of such an eating, no one can deny, unless he is also ready to abolish and subvert the entire external act of the Lord's Supper.

Quenstedt: As eating is an essential part of the Sacrament, so also is drinking; he who receives it in one kind only does not partake of the whole Sacrament, but only a part.... The laity in the papacy do not on this account sustain injury to their souls, because they are deprived of the cup of the Lord; for the sin belongs to the priests, and only the suffering of injury to the people; and although the laity do not derive the benefit of the cup by partaking of the cup, because it is denied to them, yet God will make amends for this in some other way, and relieve their misery.

Krause: Both visible elements should be distributed to all communicants. Withholding the wine is contrary to the directive of Christ, "This do" ... According to Christ's "This do," the bread is to be distributed first; thereafter the wine. The administrant may give the elements into the hand or into the mouth of the communicants. But BOTH MUST BE GIVEN SEPARATELY, first the bread and then the cup.

### *THE USE OF THE INDIVIDUAL CUP AS OPPOSED TO COMMON CUP*

As Paul Kelm points out in his answer to this question in the *Northwestern Lutheran*, November 1, 1984, Jesus passed a common cup and he broke a loaf of unleavened bread, but

celebrating the Lord's Supper is not reconstructing the Last Supper. Rather we faithfully heed the Savior's will that we take and eat, drink from it, all, and do this in remembrance of him. Faithfully we repeat the words of Jesus and distribute the elements he used—bread and grape wine. Pointedly we urge penitent faith in the promise of Jesus that with these elements we receive the very basis for our forgiveness—his body and blood. This is the essence of the sacrament.... Preserving the essence of the Lord's Supper is essential. Reconstructing the setting is not.

The question of the sanitary distribution by means of the common cup was addressed in an article written by Armin Schuetze in the *Northwestern Lutheran* in January of 1961. He quotes extensively from a 1943 article in the *Journal of Infectious Diseases*. In this article the bactericidal properties of silver and the alcohol content of the wine is credited with reducing the bacterial count by 90% or more with even further reduction in numbers taking place with the wiping and the drying on the silver surface.

Professor Schuetze's stance was not alone; the *Concordia Theological Monthly* of May, 1946, takes the same posture stating that partaking of the common cup exposed the people to no more risk than handshaking, conversation, singing, laughter, passing hymn books back and forth and using money.

In spite of what is stated above, there has been a continued troubling of consciences that when they are partaking of the Lord's Supper, the people are also exposing themselves to disease needlessly. A letter written to the *Northwestern Lutheran* in February of 1985 expressed concern about the saliva washing back into the cup from the mouths of communicants and from bacterial deposits left on the cup. Tappert gives us some history on the move to individual cups:

First an esthetic objection to the use of a common chalice made itself felt. Sensitive people were offended when dirty or diseased persons drank from the same cup from which they were about to drink. A farmer's wife declared, "I no longer go to large communions where there are many men. All of our men chew tobacco, and since the women commune after them, the latter receive an evil smelling mixture of wine and tobacco to drink." Such an esthetic objection was then followed by a hygienic one. What had before been vague intimations about the way in which diseases may be communicated received support from newer knowledge of germs. Physicians

and health officers campaigned against the use of common drinking vessels in public places, in schools and in homes. In time fountains and individual paper cups replaced common tin cups wherever water was dispensed, and rigid regulations were introduced for the effective cleaning of glasses and cups in which other beverages were publicly served. Even members of a family ceased to use the same drinking vessel. . . .

It was inevitable that such esthetic and hygienic considerations should be applied to the continued use of a common cup in the administration of the Lord's Supper. As a matter of fact, some precautions had long been observed. It had been customary since the 16th century to have one or more additional chalices and to use these for administration to persons who had discernible facial diseases. It had also become common by the 18th century to turn and wipe the chalice so that no two communicants would put their lips to the same part of the rim. It was later pointed out, however, that wiping with a linen napkin was not an effective way of dealing with germs and that turning the chalice helped little since infection could be carried by the wine which the lips had touched as well as by the edge of the chalice. When it was argued that one should trust God and continue to use a common cup, the reply was given that not to observe intelligent precautions would be to tempt God. When it was argued that the common cup has important symbolical meaning it was pointed out that the symbol of the common loaf (1 Corinthians 10:17) had long since been abandoned by the use either of wafers or of cubes of bread. A common cup, it was said, had been customary for ordinary drinking purposes in the first century but was no longer customary.

Krause advises us:

The size and shape of the vessels used in distributing the Supper is of no importance. When we refer to the original Supper, we note that Christ used a cup. Nothing else is mentioned. What shape cup and of what material is not mentioned. . . . The kind of communion ware to be used is a matter of good Christian judgment. Churches should be guided by the means at their disposal. . . . In some instances individual cups have replaced the one cup. The matter has caused some bitterness in our own circles. The use of individual cups cannot be condemned as wrong; but that it is an innovation cannot be denied.

J.T. Mueller informs us that some defend the use of the common cup on the basis of the Greek expression *EX AUTOU*. He answers this reasoning:

Some would say that the Greek phrase *EX AUTOU* means of the same cup, implying that in these words our Savior commands the use of one and the same cup, so that the use of the individual cup at the celebration of the Lord's Supper is directly anti-Scriptural. To these Dean Fritz answered in *PASTORAL THEOLOGY*: "There is no dogmatical reason why the individual cup should not be used. In many churches two cups are used; why not more? But there is also no good reason why the old practice of using the common Communion cup should be discontinued. Sanitary reasons do not absolutely forbid it; the danger of infection is very remote." The meaning of the *EX AUTOU* is not: Drink ye out of the same cup, but, as our Authorized Version, and every other correct translation for all that, reads, of it. In other words, there is no special emphasis on the *EX AUTOU*, as if the expression meant to say: Drink ye all of this one and the same cup. Those who interpret the words thus commit the offense of eisegesis, or of misused explanation, which forces upon the text what the text itself does not say. The fact that Christ here speaks in the singular does not argue for the use of one common communion cup, since, as the context shows, the singular pronoun is required by the singular noun, immediately preceding. If the *EX AUTOU* must be taken in a bare, literal sense, then our Lutheran churches erred in using

two or more larger communion cups at the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Yet this custom has been quite generally observed and acknowledged as correct in our Church. If the EX AUTOU is demonstrative and exclusive, then we are compelled to go back to the same cup which Christ had in his hand when he spoke the words of institution. If bare literalness in this case is to apply, then further, we have no assurance that we are right in using Communion wafers, since Christ says: This TOUTO is my body. The TOUTO is as singular as the EX AUTOU, and if the latter compels us to use but one cup, then the former must equally force us to use but one bread.

Schuetze reminds us that "although this is a matter of Christian liberty, it is true that the wine has been distributed for centuries by means of the common cup. That also is the most common method today." Therefore we should heed the advice of Mueller:

Whether a congregation wishes to do so or not depends on its own decision; for also with regard to this adiaphoron it may exercise its Christian liberty, provided no offense is given. Personally, for many reasons, we prefer the common Communion cup. However, as we must attack every attempt to say less than Holy Scripture does, so also we must combat every attempt to say more than Holy Scriptures does. In other words, it is offensive and unchristian to make that a wrong which Scriptures itself does not declare to be wrong. The principle of Christian liberty must never be violated.

#### *DOES AIDS THREATEN OUR PRACTICE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER?*

This question is posed intentionally after the discussion of the common cup. Many who object to the use of the common cup refer to the possibility of contracting some dreaded disease such as AIDS through the common cup. From the information which is currently available such a possibility seems remote. I offer the following data:

Researchers at Harvard University's School of Public Health have isolated HTLV-III/ LAV antibodies in saliva, shedding new light on the question of saliva infectivity. The study also indicates a home test for HTLV-III/LAV may be possible in the next few years. David Archibalk, DMD, told AIDS ALERT the study may explain why saliva does not seem to be infectious. The antibodies may be reacting with the virus to neutralize it.

From the *American Journal of Nursing*, October 1985: Although HTLV-III has been isolated in T-cells from saliva and tears, there is no evidence that it can be transmitted by airborne spread or by other than sexual contact with exchange of significant amount of blood or body fluids.

While this may ease our troubled minds, the Infection Control Nurse from St. Agnes Hospital warns that there are many viruses that can be transmitted by saliva, i.e., measles, infectious mononucleosis, chicken pox, oral herpes and influenza, to mention just a few.

## Appendix I

### CANONS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, From the Council of Trent (Numbering system mine)

1. If anyone denies that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore the whole Christ, are truly, really and substantially contained, but says that he is in it only as a sign or figure or power, let him be anathema.
2. If anyone says, either that the foremost fruit of the most holy Eucharist is the forgiveness of sins, or that no other effects result from it, *lhb*.
3. If anyone denies that in the venerable sacrament of the Eucharist the whole Christ is contained under each form, and, when a separation is made, under every part of each form, *lhb*.
4. If anyone says that, when the consecration has been performed, there is not in the wonderful sacrament of the Eucharist the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, but only in its use, when it is received, not however before or after, and that in the wafers or consecrated particles which are reserved or remain over after Communion the true body of the Lord does not remain, *lhb*.
5. If anyone says that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist the substance of bread and wine remain, together with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and denies the wonderful and unique conversion of the total substance of the bread into the body and of the total substance of the wine into the blood, so that only the appearance of bread and wine remain, which conversion the Catholic Church very fittingly calls transubstantiation, *lhb*.
6. If anyone says that in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is not to be adored with the cult of *latría* also in external worship, and that it is therefore not to be venerated with a special festive celebration, nor solemnly carried about in processions according to the laudable and universal rite and custom of the holy church, or that it should not be publicly set before the people in order that it may be adored, and that those who adore it are idolaters, *lhb*,
7. If anyone says that it is not permitted to reserve the holy Eucharist in a sacred place, but that it must of necessity be distributed immediately after the consecration to those who are present, or that it is not permitted that it be carried to the sick in an honorable manner, *lhb*.
8. If anyone says that faith alone is sufficient preparation for receiving the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist, *lhb*. And lest so great a sacrament be received unworthily, and therefore for death and condemnation, this holy synod decrees and declares that, in the case of those whose conscience is burdened with mortal sin, sacramental confession must of necessity go before, no matter how contrite they consider themselves, provided a confessor can be had. But if anyone shall presume to teach, preach, or stubbornly assert, or even in a public disputation to defend the contrary, he is by that very act excommunicated.
9. If anyone says that Christ, offered in the Eucharist, is eaten only spiritually, and not also sacramentally and in reality, *lhb*.
10. If anyone says that it is not lawful for the celebrating priest to communicate himself, *lhb*.

11. If anyone denies that each and all believers in Christ of either sex, when they have reached the age of discretion, are held to commune every year, at least at Easter, according to the precept of Holy Mother Church, lhba.
12. If anyone says that by God's command, or because it is necessary for salvation, each and every believer in Christ ought to receive both kinds of the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, lhba.
13. If anyone says that the Holy Catholic Church was not moved by just causes and reasons to commune the laity, and also clergy who are not consecrating, under the kind of the bread only, or that she erred in this, lhba.
14. If anyone denies that the whole and entire Christ, the Fount and Author of all graces, is received under the one kind of bread, because (as some falsely assert) it is not taken according to the institution of Christ under both kinds, lhba.
15. If anyone says that in the Mass there is not offered to God a true and proper sacrifice, or that to be offered is nothing but that Christ is given to us to eat, lhba.
16. If anyone says that with these words, "Do this in remembrance of me," Christ did not constitute the apostles priests, or did not ordain that they and other priests should offer his body and blood, lhba.
17. If anyone says that the Mass is merely a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, or a bare commemoration of the sacrifice performed on the cross, not however a propitiatory sacrifice, or that it benefits him only who eats and that it ought not to be offered for the living and the dead for sins, punishments, satisfactions, and other necessities, lhba.
18. If anyone says that through the sacrifice of the Mass a blasphemy is imposed on the most holy sacrifice of Christ accomplished on the cross, or that the former takes something away from the latter, lhba.
19. If anyone says that it is a fraud to celebrate masses in honor of saints and to obtain their intercession with God, as the Church intends, lhba.
20. If anyone says that the canon of the Mass contains errors and should therefore be abrogated, lhba.
21. If anyone says that the ceremonies, vestments, and outward signs which the Catholic Church uses in the celebration of Masses are incentives to impiety rather than matters of piety, lhba.
22. If anyone says that Masses in which only the priest communicates sacramentally are illicit and should therefore be abolished, lhba.
23. If anyone says that water is not to be mixed in the cup with the wine which is to be offered, because this is contrary to the institution of Christ, lhba.
24. If anyone says that the custom of the Roman Church, according to which a part of the canon and the words of institution are pronounced with lowered voice, is to be condemned, or that the Mass ought to be celebrated only in the language of the common people, or that water ought not to be mixed with the wine which is to be offered in the cup, because it is contrary to the institution of Christ, lhba.

## Appendix II

### THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

Christ is the high priest.  
His law is grace and life.  
The sacrifice is a living body.  
Good works are to serve one's neighbor.

Sin is to omit this.  
The punishment is eternal death.  
The reward is eternal life.  
His servants are the preachers of God's Word.  
The consequence is the bearing of the cross with joy.

### THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE POPE

The pope is the high priest.  
His law is the canon law.  
The sacrifice is the sacrament of the Altar and money.  
Good works are to pretend outward piety with singing,  
fasting, and prayer.

Sin is to omit this.  
The punishment is the invented ban.  
The reward is peace and property in this world.  
His servants are the proclaimers of bulls.  
The consequence is bad consciences.

*THE MISUSE OF THE MASS, LUTHER'S WORKS, VOLUME 36, pages 218-21*

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## Endnotes

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- <sup>xvii</sup> Krueger, op. cit., page 455.
- <sup>xviii</sup> Ibid., page 455.
- <sup>xix</sup> Schmid, op. cit., page 573.
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