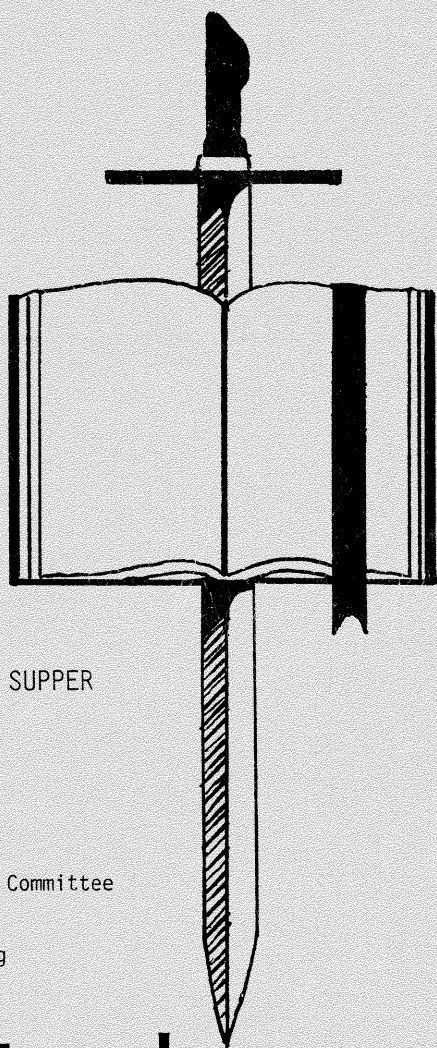


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THE THEOLOGY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

A Presentation of the ELS Doctrine Committee

Prepared by Gaylin Schmeling

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## FOREWORD

The Doctrine of the Lord's Supper has been under discussion in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod for several years. At its 1988 synodical convention the Synod adopted the following resolution: BE IT RESOLVED, That we commend to the 1988 Pastoral Conference these issues for consideration and discussion, allowing a full airing of all the points in the controversy. (Res. 4A, S.R. p. 69)

The Doctrine Committee responded by presenting a paper, The Theology of the Lord's Supper, to the 1988 General Pastoral Conference. This paper was authored primarily by Pastor Gaylin Schmeling of Okauchee, Wisconsin. The conference resolved that this be published in the Lutheran Synod Quarterly as the conference's official response to the 1988 convention. We are, therefore, printing this essay in this issue of the Quarterly.

The conference adopted also the following resolutions: BE IT RESOLVED, That the 1988 General Pastoral Conference adopt the essay, The Theology of the Lord's Supper, as being in full agreement with the theses adopted by the ELS in 1981 and BE IT RESOLVED, That we reaffirm that the theses of 1981 are a valid representation of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper as taught in the Holy Scriptures and the Book of Concord.

The 1981 theses, adopted by the ELS, read as follows:

On the basis of the Words of Institution (Matthew 26:26,27; Mark 14,22,24; Luke 22:19,20, I Corinthians 11:23-25) and other Scripture passages concerning the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 10:16,17 and 11:26-29.

1. We hold with Luther that "(the Sacrament of the Altar, instituted by Christ himself) is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, given to us Christians to eat and to drink." SC VI (Tappert)
2. We hold that "in the Holy Supper the two essences, the natural bread and the true natural body of Christ, are present together here on earth in the ordered action of the sacrament, though the union of the body and blood of Christ with the bread and wine is not a personal union, like that of the two natures in Christ, but a sacramental union...." SD VII 37,38
3. We hold that this sacramental union is in effect during the usus or actio: "Nothing has the character of a sacrament apart from the divinely instituted action (that is, if one does not observe Christ's institution as he ordained it, it is no sacrament). This rule dare not in any way be rejected, but it can and should be profitably urged and retained in the church of God. In this context 'use' or 'action' does not primarily mean faith, or the oral eating alone, but the entire external and visible action of the Supper as ordained by Christ: the consecration or words of institution, the distribution and reception, or the oral eating of the blessed bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ." SD VII 85,86
4. We hold that "it is the institution of this sacrament, performed by Christ, that makes it valid in Christendom, and that it does not depend on the worthiness or unworthiness of the minister who distributes the sacrament or of him who receives it, since, as St. Paul says, the unworthy receive the sacrament too. Therefore (we) hold that, where Christ's institution



and command are observed, the body and blood of Christ are truly distributed to the unworthy, too, and that they truly receive it." SD VII 16

5. We hold that it is the almighty Word of Christ "which distinguishes it from mere bread and wine and constitutes it a sacrament which is rightly called Christ's body and blood... 'When (if) the Word is joined to the external element, it becomes a sacrament.' ...The Word must make the element a sacrament; otherwise it remains a mere element." LC V 10
6. We hold that "No Man's word or work, be it the merit or the speaking of the minister, be it the eating and drinking or the faith of the communicants, can effect the true presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Supper. This is to be ascribed only to the almighty power of God and the Word, institution, and ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ." SD VII 74
7. We hold that the Words of consecration repeated by the minister in a proper celebration of the Sacrament are the effective means by which the real presence of Christ's body and blood is brought into being. "For wherever we observe his institution and speak his words over the bread and cup and distribute the blessed bread and cup, Christ himself is still active through the spoken words by the virtue of the first institution, which he wants to be repeated.... 'No human being, but only Christ himself who was crucified for us, can make of the bread and wine set before us the body and blood of Christ. The words are spoken by the mouth of the priest, but by God's power and grace through the words that he speaks, "this is my body," the elements set before us in the supper are blessed.' .... 'This his command and institution can and does

bring it about that we do not distribute and receive ordinary bread and wine but his body and blood, as his words read "this is my body," etc., "this is my blood," etc. Thus it is not our work or speaking but the command and ordinance of Christ that, from the beginning of the first Communion until the end of the world, make the bread the body and the wine the blood that are daily distributed through our ministry and office.' Again, '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 Lord's Supper and say, "this is my body," then it is his body, not because of our speaking or of our efficacious word, but because of his command in which he has told us so to speak and to do and has attached his own command and deed to our speaking.'" SD VII 75-78

8. We hold that "the words of institution are to be spoken or sung distinctly and clearly before the congregation and are under no circumstances to be omitted. Thereby we render obedience to the command of Christ, 'This do....' And thereby the elements of bread and wine are hallowed or blessed in (for) this holy use, so that therewith the body and blood of Christ are distributed to us to eat and to drink, as Paul says, 'The cup of blessing which we bless,' which happens precisely through the repetition and recitation of the words of institution." SD VII 79-82

9. We hold that we cannot fix from Scripture the point within the sacramental usus when the real presence of Christ's body and blood begins, yet we know from Scripture and we acknowledge in the Confessions that what is distributed and received is the body and blood of Christ.

-- WWP

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## The Theology of the Lord's Supper

### I. The Scriptural Basis of the Sacrament

#### A. The Historical Setting of the Supper

1 As our Lord and His disciples gathered that first Maundy Thursday evening, they came together to celebrate no ordinary meal. This was the Passover, the most solemn meal for God's Old Testament people. It was to remind Israel of how the Lord once saved their first-born in Egypt through the blood of the Passover lamb. This meal, however, not only pointed back to God's deliverance in Egypt through the blood of the Passover lamb, but it also pointed forward to the blood of the true Lamb of God who would redeem all men on the cross. As our Lord reclined at this meal for the last time, He was the fulfillment of the Passover ritual for all times.

2 Jesus used this setting to institute His New Testament meal of salvation. (For a complete discussion of the connection between The Lord's Supper and the Passover meal see J. Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, pp. 15-88) In this meal where Old Testament believers ate the flesh of the Passover lamb, which was to picture for them the true Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world, Jesus the very Lamb of God gave New Testament believers not only a picture of His flesh and blood with the bread and wine, but he gave them his true body and blood where he bestowed upon them all the blessings of the cross.

#### B. The Words of Institution

3 As the Passover meal got underway, Jesus

took bread (ἔλαβεν ἄρτον). This was likely a large flat loaf of unleavened bread, the matzah, for only unleavened bread was used in the Passover. He took the bread and gave thanks or blessed it. (Matthew and Mark have εὐλογῆσας; Luke and Paul have εὐχαριστήσας) Both the giving thanks and the blessing refer to the same act of our Lord. This is the same terminology used in the Passover meal to refer to the blessing or benediction (the Kiddush) spoken over the bread and the cup. This blessing, however, must have been quite different from the usual Passover benediction, for the Lord said concerning the blessed and offered bread "This is My Body." The words of explanation accompanying Christ's action are the key to understanding this thanksgiving and blessing. Chemnitz wrote concerning this blessing: "Mark uses the word 'to bless' (εὐλονεῖν) because it points to the special power of the divine Word, as in the account of the miracle of five loaves which were multiplied... Therefore, because the bread of the Supper received this designation from God by the divine power of the Word of Christ whereby it is the body of Christ and the wine is the blood of Christ, Mark uses the word "to bless" in order to show that it is the same power and has the same meaning in this passage as does the word 'to thank' (εὐχαλοστεῖν)." (LS 104)

4 After our Lord blessed the bread, He broke it (ἔκλασεν). This breaking was of practical necessity because of the size of the loaves. They had to be broken into fragments to be eaten, even as one would slice a loaf of bread today. Luther wrote, "We must not interpret or use the word 'break' according to our own fancies but according to scriptural usage. Now in scripture the word 'breaking,' especially where it is used in reference to bread or eating, is the equivalent of 'dividing into pieces' or 'distributing.'" (LW 37, 332;

see also LS 123) This breaking then is not an integral part of the institution. There is no need for a rite of fraction in order to have a valid sacrament as Dom Gregory Dix implied. In fact German Lutherans in general avoided the fraction because the Reformed emphasized the breaking in the interest of their symbolism. (C.F.W. Walther, Pastorale, p. 169)

5 This blessed and broken bread Jesus gave to His disciples saying, "Take, eat, this is My body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me" (Τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν.). These are the words Christ gave to the church so that in our Lord's Supper celebration the Word may be joined to the elements effecting the presence as St. Augustine says, "If the Word be joined to the element, it becomes a Sacrament" (Accedat verbum ad elementum, et fit sacramentum). Now whether Jesus distributed to each disciple individually or whether he simply passed it around cannot be ascertained. Nor is it important. But what is important is Jesus' word concerning what was distributed. "This is My body." Jesus did not say "This is a picture of My body" nor did He say, "This only represents My body." Rather He said, "This is My body." This Greek verb ἐστιν can be understood in no other way than "is." This is the confession of our Lutheran fathers: "Of the Supper of the Lord they teach that the body and blood of Christ are truly present and are distributed to those who eat in the Supper of the Lord." (AC X)

6 Concerning His true body Jesus said to the disciples, "This is given for you." This very body which they received on their lips was the same body which was the once and for all sacrifice for sin on the cross. Having received Christ's body in the Supper, the disciples received all the blessings of Christ's redemptive work.



7 The Words of Institution continue: "In the same way also, the cup after supper (ὡσαύτως καὶ τὸ ποτήριον μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι)." The phrase, "after supper" does not necessarily mean that the eating and drinking in the institution were separated by time. (LS 108-110) Rather, this phrase shows that the cup which Jesus used, the third cup of the Passover, the cup of redemption, (the cup of blessing according to Corinthians 10:16), was at the end of the Passover proper followed only by the great Hallel Psalms 115-118 and a final cup. From the institution one cannot assert when the Lord gave His disciples His body. It may have been directly before the giving of the cup after the Supper. To this view, however, Jeremias would not agree. (J. Jeremias, The Eucharistic Words of Jesus, p. 87)

8 Jesus took this third cup of the Passover, which was a cup of wine, for only wine was used in the Passover; He blessed it even as He had blessed the bread and gave it to them saying, "This is the new covenant (testament) in My blood" (Τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι). St. Matthew explains further, "which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins" (τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν). The words of explanation concerning this cup which is His true blood allude to the ratification of the first covenant in Exodus 24. In fact virtually the same vocabulary is used in the Septuagint version of Exodus 24 as is used in the Words of Institution. As the old covenant was sealed by animal blood sprinkled on the people picturing the blood of Christ, so the new covenant is sealed by the very blood of Christ through which we receive all the blessings of salvation. Real blood ratified the old covenant and the people were given that real blood in testimony of the fact that they received

the blessing of the sacrifice. Likewise real blood ratified the new covenant and God's people are still given that real blood of the true Lamb of God so that they are certain that the benefits of Christ's redemptive sacrifice apply to them. (LS 100-102). The Words of Institution summarize the blessings of this Sacrament with the phrase "for the forgiveness of sins," which shows that all the treasure house of salvation is offered in this Supper, as Luther said in the Small Catechism, "For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation."

9 Luther briefly summarized Christ's institution on that first Holy Thursday thus:

In summary, they had eaten the paschal lamb without his having commanded them to eat or drink, nor had he placed or laid it before anyone, but each one had eaten and drunk whatever he wished of that which stood before him, as Matthew and Mark say, "As they were eating, he took bread," etc. (Matt. 26:26, Mark 14:22). But now the meal proceeds in an entirely new manner. He takes and chooses a certain, particular loaf, pronounces thanks over it, breaks it, and divides it among them and offers it to them and commands them to eat. Then he adds, "This is my body which is given for you." In the same way also he took the cup, choosing and giving a special draught for them all. Of other loaves he does not command them to eat, or drink out of other cups, nor does he place or lay anything before anyone as he does here. With all this he doubtless indicated that this bread and wine were not ordinary bread and wine as was customary with the Passover, but something quite different, special, nobler, viz. as he says in his own words, it is his body and

his blood. (LW 37, 312-313)

10 Jesus concluded his institution with the command "Do This, as often as you drink it in remembrance of Me" (τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, ὡσάνκις ἔαν πίνετε, εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν). A similar command had already been given concerning His body. The words explain that this institution was not meant as only a one-time occurrence in the past. It is to be repeated until Christ comes again in glory. (I Corinthians 11:26) Each time Christians celebrate this Supper they bring Christ's great sacrifice into remembrance and receive the treasure of that sacrifice, the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

11 When Christ said, "Do this in remembrance of Me," He commanded us to continue this institution. What is necessary for a valid Lord's Supper? Jesus said, "Do this," do what I have done. One is to take bread and wine, bless them with Christ's almighty words of consecration "This is My body, This is My blood" which effect the presence, and distribute His true body and blood. "If we are to do what he did, then indeed we must take the bread and bless it, and break and distribute it saying, 'This is My body.' For all this is included in the imperative word, 'Do this.'" (LW 37, 187)

### C. Other Scriptural Testimony

12 Another portion of Scripture which is important in the study of the Lord's Supper is I Corinthians 10:16-17: "Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a participation in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a participation in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for all partake of the one bread." St. Paul did not say that the cup and bread are only visual aids to help us understand

Christ's redemptive work. No, he said that the cup and the bread are a participation (κοινωνία), a partaking of Christ's body and blood. It is the very same body which came forth from the Virgin's womb and died on the cross, the very same blood with which he washed away the sins of the world.

13 In I Corinthians 10:16 the imperative "Do This" of the Words of Institution is particularly illuminated. Here "the cup of blessing which we bless" (τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν) is explained. Notice that it is a cup which the church is to bless. Then the "Do This" is not only a command to distribute and receive but also to bless. One can distribute and receive forever but without God's commanded blessing it is only bread and wine. It is God's blessing which causes Jesus' body and blood to be present. On the other hand, one can say God's blessing forever but if there is no distribution and reception there is no Sacrament, for Christ's full institution has not been carried out.

14 Since the Lord has commanded that the bread and wine be blessed in order to have a valid Sacrament, what is the blessing that the Lord desired His church to use? Is it a eucharistic prayer complete with anamnesis and epiclesis? No, these prayers are based on tradition, not on Scripture. God would not have commanded His church to bless and then left it in the lurch as to how to bless. Rather, in close proximity to this Scripture where St. Paul particularly asserts that Christ's followers bless, he also gives the church a Word of the Lord in liturgical form concerning the Lord's Supper, "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed, etc." (I Corinthians 11:23) These words which Christ gave to St. Paul He wanted delivered to the church



for the celebration of the Supper. Then the blessing of the Lord which fulfills the "Do This" is none other than the Words of Institution as St. Paul recorded them in I Corinthians 11:23-26. Our Lutheran fathers clearly express this understanding in the Formula of Concord, which says, "...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." (SD VII, 82)

## II. The Essence of the Sacrament

### A. The Sacrament is a Thing (Res)

15 Probably the most concise statement concerning the essence of the Supper is to be found in the Small Catechism: "The Sacrament of the Altar is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself, for us Christians to eat and to drink." Here Luther speaks of the Supper as a thing. The bread is the true, essential, natural body of Christ and the wine is the true, essential, natural blood of Christ.

### B. The Sacrament is an Action (Usus)

16 The Sacrament is not only a res but also an usus. The Sacrament of the Altar is the true body and blood of our Lord for us Christians to eat and to drink. There must always be an action. Yet one must be aware of the false view that Christ is present only in the action of the Supper and not in the bread and wine, as Melanchthon tended to do in his later years. This is the reason he preferred the terminology "Christ's body is present with the bread" to "Christ's body is in the bread."

### C. In, With, and Under

17 In order to draw a distinction between their teachings and the doctrine of transubstantiation, which teaches that the substance of the bread and wine ceases to exist in the Sacrament with only its accidents remaining, the Lutheran fathers employed the terms "in, with, and under" to describe what occurred in the Sacrament. "In addition to the words of Christ and of St. Paul (the bread in the Lord's Supper 'is true body of Christ' or 'participation in the body of Christ'), we at times also use the formulas 'under the bread, with the bread, in the bread.' We do this to reject the papistic transubstantiation and to indicate the sacramental union between the untransformed substance of the bread and the body of Christ." (SD VII, 35, Tappert edition) Likewise Luther used the terminology "In, with, and under." (LW 37, 306) The Lutheran fathers always used the terms "Christ's body in the bread, with the bread, or under the bread" as equivalent to "the bread is the body of Christ." "In, with, and under" dare never mean anything less than "is" for Confessional Lutherans. This danger seems to be Dr. Teigen's concern when he criticizes the use of the terms "in, with, and under." (B. W. Teigen, The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz, p. 50, par. 134) As long as the terms "in, with, and under" are understood as equivalent to "is" they are proper Lutheran terminology.

18 Dr. Teigen in his book, The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz, speaks approvingly of using the word "change" in connection with the Supper to explain that the Words of Institution by virtue of Christ's original command cause the bread to be Christ's body and the wine to be Christ's blood. (Teigen, p. 51, par. 135)

Dr. Teigen here follows the terminology of Chemnitz and the Early Church:

We grant, with Irenaeus, that after the blessing in the Eucharist the bread is no longer common bread but the Eucharist of the body of Christ, which now consists of two things--the earthly, that is, bread and wine, and the heavenly, that is, the body and blood of Christ. This is certainly a great, miraculous, and truly divine change, since before it was simply only ordinary bread and common wine. What now, after the blessing, is truly and substantially present, offered, and received is truly and substantially the body and blood of Christ. Therefore we grant that a certain change takes place, so that it can truly be said of the bread that it is the body of Christ. But we deny that it follows from this that we must therefore assert the kind of transubstantiation which the papalists teach. (Ex. 2, 257-258)

The Lutheran Fathers did use the word "change" to explain that the bread and wine through the consecration are the body and blood of Christ. The bread and wine are not changed into the body and blood of Christ, but are so intimately united with them that Jesus can say that the bread and wine are His body and blood. It is not a change in substance but a change created by union, the sacramental union of two substances. Only with this understanding can the term be properly used today. Yet it must be used with extreme care for in the minds of many it conjures up the idea of transubstantiation.

### III. The Effectual Cause of the Presence

#### A. The Word and Institution of Christ

19 The Holy Sacrament bestows upon us all the blessings of salvation. Because it is such a treasure, Christians will want to be certain that they have the Supper in their midst. How do we know that we have the true Supper? What causes Christ's body and blood to be present in the Sacrament or what effects the presence? It is not any power or work of man but alone the Word and institution of Christ, as Chemnitz declares. (LS 139) It is that all-powerful Word which God spoke at the creation and it was done. It is that almighty Word which is like a fire and like a hammer that shatters the rock (Jeremiah 23:29), and is living, active, and sharper than any two-edged sword. (Hebrews 4:12) St. Paul says that by blessing with those words commanded in Christ's institution, we have "a participation in the blood of Christ" and "a participation in the body of Christ." (I Corinthians 10:16)

20 The church from its beginning has confessed that the Word of God effects the presence in the Sacrament. Justin Martyr in his First Apology, dated about 140 AD, writes:

And this food is called among us the Eucharist, of which no one is allowed to partake but the man who believes that the things we teach are true, and who has been washed with the washing that is for the remission of sins, and unto regeneration, and who is so living as Christ has enjoined. For not as common bread and common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Saviour, having been made flesh by the Word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation,



so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His Word, (δὲ εὐγῆς λόγου τοῦ παρ' αὐτοῦ) and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh. For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, have thus delivered unto us what was enjoined upon them; that Jesus took bread and when he had given thanks, said, "This do ye in remembrance of Me, This is My body;" and that, after the same manner, having taken the cup and given thanks, He said, "This is my blood;" and gave it to them. (Roberts and Donaldson, The Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. I, p. 185)

21 In regard to the power of the consecration Luther in the Large Catechism places himself in agreement with St. Augustine and the true confessors of the Medieval Church. "It is the Word (I say) which makes and distinguishes this Sacrament, so that it is not mere bread and wine, but is, and is called, the body and blood of Christ. For it is said: If the Word be joined to the element, it becomes a Sacrament. This saying of St. Augustine is so properly and so well put that he scarcely said anything better. The Word must make a Sacrament of the element, else it remains a mere element." (LC V, 10-11) Luther specifically says that the Words of Institution spoken by the minister in each celebration of the Sacrament effect the presence. "If they now ask: Where is the power that causes Christ's body to be in the Supper when we say, 'this is my body'? I answer: Where is the power to cause a mountain to be taken up and cast into the sea when we say, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea'? Of course, it does not reside in our speaking but in God's command who

connects his command with our speaking." (LW 37, 184) "For as soon as Christ says: 'this is my body,' his body is present through the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit. If the Word is not there, it is mere bread; but as soon as the words are added they bring with them that of which they speak." (LW 36, 341) In his study of St. John's Gospel Luther emphasizes the power of the Word in Baptism, Lord's Supper, and Absolution:

When a word is joined to the elements, then a Sacrament comes into being; the Baptism becomes a "washing of regeneration" (Titus 3:5). If the Word is not present, bread remains bread, and water is water. However, when the Word is added: "This bread is My body; the cup is My blood. This do in remembrance of me," then it is a Sacrament. When you go to confession do not focus your thoughts on your confession and contrition but on the words spoken by the pastor: "I announce the forgiveness of sins to you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Then you may know that your confession is based solidly on the Word of God. (LW 22, 515-516)

22 Chemnitz, the second Martin, follows in Luther's footsteps in his doctrine concerning the consecration. He writes, "We understand a sacramental change, that, although before it was only common bread and ordinary wine, when the Word of Christ comes to it, it is not merely bread and wine but at the same time also the body and blood of Christ, which is present, offered, and received here in the Eucharist." (Ex. 2, 267) For Chemnitz, too, the Word of Christ, that is, the Word of Institution, effects the presence. (Ex. 2, 258-9, 386, 415)

23 The Lutheran Confessions likewise declare that the Words of Institution cause the presence of Christ's body and blood. "For where His institution is observed and His words are spoken over the bread and cup (wine), and the consecrated bread and cup (wine) are distributed, Christ Himself through the spoken words, is still efficacious by virtue of the first institution, through His Word, which He wishes to be there repeated." (FC SD VII, 75) Again the Confessions state:

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 (and this for very many and the most important reasons. First,) in order that obedience may be rendered to the command of Christ: This do (that therefore should not be omitted which Christ Himself did in the Holy Supper), and (secondly) that the faith of the hearers concerning the nature and fruit of this Sacrament (concerning the presence of the body and blood of Christ, concerning the forgiveness of sins, and all benefits which have been purchased by the death and shedding of the blood of Christ, and are bestowed upon us in Christ's testament) may be excited, strengthened, and confirmed by Christ's Word, and (besides) 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 (I Corinthians 10:16): 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. (FC SD VII, 79-82)

Notice that the consecration is not spoken only in order that the hearers may be prepared for what is taking place, but also in order that the body and blood of Christ may truly be present and be distributed to us.

24 This is how the 17th century dogmaticians understood our Confessions. Quenstedt writes: "The consecration consists (a) in the separation of the external elements, the bread and wine, from a common and ordinary use; (b) in the benediction, so setting them apart for sacred use, as appointed in the Holy Supper, by solemn prayers and thanksgiving; (c) 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. (For 'by virtue of the Word the element becomes a Sacrament, without the accession of which it remains a mere element.')" (H. Schmidt, Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, pp. 572-573)

25 Our Synodical Conference fathers also agree that the Words of Institution effect the presence of Christ's body and blood. Dr. Walther writes, "We sincerely believe and confess that the presence of Christ's body and blood is dependent alone on the will and promise of Christ and the continual efficacy of the first institution. Yet we add that the repetition of the first institution by the minister at the celebration of the Holy Supper is not merely historical but...consecratory, through which according to Christ's ordinance the external symbols are truly and effectually determined for sacred use, so that in

the distribution they are a communion of Christ's body and blood as the apostle expressly states in I Corinthians 10:16." (C.F.W. Walther, Pastorale, pp. 171-172) Dr. A. Hoenecke, explaining why the Words of Institution should be recited, gives these three reasons: 1) In obedience to the command of Christ, "This do"; 2) To stir, strengthen and assure the faith of the hearers concerning the essence and benefit of this sacrament through Christ's words; 3) To consecrate and bless the elements so that with them Christ's body and blood are offered to us to be eaten and drunk. This consecration and blessing takes place through the recitation of the Words of the Institution. (A. Hoenecke, Dogmatik, Vol. IV, p. 128) Again Hoenecke says "The fact that for the partakers the bread and wine are the bearers of Christ's body and blood in the moment of the eating and drinking, is brought about through the consecration which takes place with the Words of Institution. This is also what our Confession wants to say in that it on one hand declares that the Words of Institution cause Christ's body and blood to be present, and at the same time, however, says that without the eating and drinking there is no Sacrament. With this it clearly says that by virtue of the Words of Institution in the moment of partaking of the bread and wine, Christ's body and blood are under the same." (A. Hoenecke, Dogmatik, Vol. IV, p. 131)

26 This brief study of certain 17th Century dogmaticians and Synodical Conference fathers is at variance with Dr. Teigen's evaluation of their doctrine of the consecration, where he seems unjustifiably negative. (Teigen, pp. 184-185), par. 458-461) Dr. Teigen's evaluation seems to stem from the premise that one deprives the Verba of their consecratory power if one will not fix the moment of the presence as beginning immediately following the last syllable of the consecration. There is no

scriptural basis for this view, as we shall seek to show in this paper. On the other hand, many of the 17th Century dogmaticians and Synodical Conference fathers unfortunately did fix the moment of the presence at the eating, a conclusion which is also improper.

27 Therefore, we can be certain of the function of the consecration, the chief purpose of which is to effect the presence of Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament. This Dr. Teigen has validly and convincingly shown through his book. The main emphasis of his book, that the Words of Institution spoken by the pastor are the effectual cause of the presence, is a fundamental part of the Lutheran doctrine of the Sacrament which dare not be denied. Dr. Teigen is to be commended for his witness to the creative power of the Word. His emphasis on the power of the Word is very beneficial in our time when this truth has often been neglected. It is alone the almighty Word of Christ which causes His presence and not our action or doing, as is stated in Thesis Seven of the ELS Lord's Supper statement: We hold that the Words of consecration repeated by the minister in a proper celebration of the Sacrament are the effective means by which the real presence of Christ's body and blood is brought into being. (ELS Synod Report, 1981, p. 76) We, therefore, assert the absolute necessity of employing the Verba in every administration (celebration) of the Lord's Supper.

#### B. The Connection Between the Consecration and the Original Command

28 The Formula of Concord indeed declares the Words of Institution spoken by the pastor to be the effectual cause of the presence. At the same

time it binds the consecration into an intimate relationship with Christ's original institution and command. "For where His institution is observed and His words are spoken over the bread and cup (wine), and the consecrated bread and cup (wine) are distributed, Christ Himself, through the spoken words, is still efficacious by virtue of the first institution, through His word, which He wishes to be there repeated." (FC SD VII, 75) Chemnitz says in a similar vein, "Neither can any creature but only the Son of God by virtue of His omnipotence bring it about that bread should be His body and wine His blood. Yet He brought this about in the first supper through the Word, when he said: 'This is My body.' Therefore the Words of Institution are spoken in our Lord's Supper, and not merely for the sake of history but to show to the church that Christ Himself, through the Word, according to His command and promise, is present in the action of the Supper and by the power of this word offers His body and blood to those who eat." (Ex. 2, 229) Like the Formula, he even alludes to the Sermon of Chrysostom in which he compared the words, "This is My body" to "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth," showing that it was spoken but once and is ever efficacious. (FC SD VII, 76; Ex. 2, 227) Thus the Words of Institution are efficacious by virtue of the original institution. Terms like "causa efficiens" and "causa instrumentalis" (WELS Lord's Supper Statement, ELS Synod Report, 1981, p. 75) have been used to explain this connection but the important thing is to see the connection between the Words of Institution and Christ's original institution as Chemnitz and the Confessions teach. (The Aristotelian terminology of Chytraeus, which he intended for Article VII of the Formula, (Teigen p. 23, par. 59, note 7) should be seen in this light.) The fact that the terminology of

Chytraeus is missing from the Formula does not necessarily mean it was rejected. It is just as likely that the Chytraeus material was too long and had to be shortened. (J. W. Montgomery, Chytraeus on Sacrifice, pp. 21-22). Also notice Chemnitz's use of Aristotelian terminology in his Enchiridion p. 90, par. 181 is eliminated in the Article of the Formula concerning election. (FC SD XI:8)

### C. The Whole Sacramental Action Must Remain United

29 When our Lord gave us His body and blood in the Supper, He gave it for a certain use, to be distributed and received for the forgiveness of sins. Therefore, while the almighty Word of Christ indeed effects the presence, the Lutheran fathers are very careful to keep the whole sacramental action (usus) as a unit. "Nevertheless the meaning is not that the blessed bread which is divided, which is offered, and which the apostles received from the hand of Christ was not the body of Christ but becomes the body of Christ when the eating of it is begun. For the whole action of the institution hangs together, and the words, 'This is My body' belong to the entire action. Therefore, it is concerning that bread which is blessed, which is broken or divided, which is offered, received, and eaten--I say, it is concerning that bread that Christ says, 'This is My body.'" (Ex. 2, 248)

"The blessing of the Eucharist and the promise of the presence of the body and blood of Christ ought not to be torn apart and forcibly separated from the use which is prescribed and commanded in the institution. For it is of the blessed bread, which is distributed, received, and eaten, that Christ asserts, "This is My body." (Ex. 2, 249)

"But the command of Christ, this do (which embraces the entire action of administration in this



Sacrament, that in an assembly of Christians bread and wine are taken, consecrated, distributed, received, eaten, drunk, and the Lord's death is shown forth at the same time) must be observed unseparated and inviolate, as also St. Paul places our eyes the entire action of the breaking of bread or of distribution and reception, I Corinthians 10:16." (FC SD VII, 83-84) "This do" included the entire action of the Sacrament: consecration, distribution, and reception. (LS 186)

30 The whole action of the Sacrament must remain united. For theological purposes this three-fold sacramental action of consecration, distribution, and reception should therefore be viewed and considered holistically as a factual and conceptual unity rather than sequentially as a series of three distinct occurrences. It is not enough just to repeat the Words of Christ. His total command must be followed. To be sure, the Words of Institution are the effectual cause of the presence, but the entire action commanded by our Lord must occur in order to have a valid Sacrament. In his book, Dr. Teigen is right in stressing the doctrine of the consecration. However, one must be careful lest a stress on the consecration detract from the importance of the distribution and reception as equally necessary parts of the sacramental action outside of which there is no Sacrament. This is the same problem that the crass receptionists have whom Dr. Teigen correctly opposes; only they are on the opposite end of the spectrum. They so emphasize the reception that they play down the consecration. Both crass receptionists and crass consecrationists ignore Christ's full command concerning the Supper. They run the risk of separating in one direction or the other what has been biblically joined together. The efficacious power of the Words of Institution must be clearly taught, but not in a way that obscures the integrity of the

whole usus. The forms of expression used by the teachers of the church must not give the impression that elements over which the Verba have been spoken are the body and blood of Christ regardless of whether or not they are distributed to be eaten and drunk.

D. There is No Sacrament Without Distribution and Reception

31 If there is no distribution and reception, for the Lutheran fathers there is no Sacrament. Chemnitz writes, "Now we ask, if these words are pronounced over the bread and wine, 'This is My body; this is My blood,' but no distribution is made, it is given to no one, and there is no one to receive, eat, and drink--we ask, I say, whether the institution of Christ is being observed there. It is clear that it is not. We ask secondly whether the genuine Sacrament of the Eucharist is there where the institution of Christ is not being observed. Surely, because the sacraments of the New Testament are consecrated by the institution, it is evident and certain that there is no sacrament where the institution is not being observed." (Ex. 2, 246) "For when the words are indeed spoken over the bread but the action which is prescribed and commanded in the institution is either not observed or is changed into another use, then we do not have the promise of the presence of the body and blood of Christ there, as it is present in His supper." (Ex. 2, 280) "Therefore when the bread is indeed blessed but neither distributed nor received, but enclosed, shown and carried about, it is surely clear that the whole word of institution is not added to the element, for this part is lacking: He gave (it) to them and said, Take eat. And when the Word of institution is incomplete there can be no complete Sacrament. In the same way it is also not true

Baptism if the Word is indeed spoken over the water, but if there is no one who is baptized." (MWS 121) Likewise, Luther writes, "Just as Baptism is nothing else than mere water if there is no child to be baptized, so we also maintain most assuredly that where no people are present eating and drinking according to the institution of Christ, only bread and wine are present, even if the Words of Institution should be repeated a thousand times." (St. L. XXIb, 3458, as corrected from WA Br. Vol. XII, p. 400, see the full text in addendum I) For Luther and Chemnitz the consecration indeed effects the presence, but if there is no distribution and reception there is no presence. The whole action of the Supper must remain united.

32 This teaching was incorporated into the Formula in the Nihil Rule: Nothing has the character of a Sacrament outside its intended use:

To preserve this true Christian doctrine concerning the Holy Supper, and to avoid and abolish manifold idolatrous abuses and perversions of this testament, the following useful rule and standard has been derived from the Words of Institution: Nihil habet rationem sacramenti extra usum a Christo institutum ("Nothing has the nature of a sacrament apart from the use instituted by Christ") or extra actionem divinitus institutam ("apart from the action divinely instituted"). That is: 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. (FC SD VII, 85-86)

## IV. The Moment and Time of Presence

### A. The History of this Question

33 The Words of Institution state that the Lord blessed the bread, broke it and then gave the bread to the disciples saying, "Take, eat, this is My body which is given for you." He did the same with the cup. These words show that the blessed bread and cup are Christ's body and blood but they say nothing about an exact moment when the presence began. In fact, Jesus does not name the elements as His body and blood except in offering them to His disciples. (See addendum III) Likewise, St. Paul in I Corinthians 10:16 shows that the blessing causes a participation in Christ's body and blood but he says nothing about an instantaneous presence. (See addendum IV) From the Scripture an exact moment of the presence cannot be ascertained, but the Scriptures do show that in the Supper Christ's body and blood are present, distributed, and received for the forgiveness of sins.

34 An overview of the writings of the Ancient Church fathers shows that they were totally unconcerned about a moment of the presence in the Supper. Justin, Irenaeus, Chrysostom, and Augustine all taught that the Verba effect the presence but they never spoke of an instantaneous presence immediately after the Words of Institution are said. In fact, many of these fathers and especially those in the Eastern Church used the epiclesis in the liturgy after the Verba. The epiclesis is an invocation of the Holy Spirit to make Christ's body and blood present in the Sacrament. The placing of the epiclesis after the Verba indicates that they were not fixing an exact moment of the presence directly after the Words of Institution. Rather, they considered the entire

Sacramental action as a unified whole. Even today the Greek liturgy places the epiclesis after the Verba. (G. Mastrantonis, The Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, p. 67) It is interesting to note that the epiclesis from Chrysostom's liturgy is referred to in the Apology. (Ap X, 55; Ap XXIV, 93-95) While the Lutheran fathers had definite objections to the Eucharistic prayers of the Greek liturgies, the Apology does not reject them because they do not speak of an instantaneous presence as soon as the Words of Institution are said. Also, Chemnitz in Examen often quotes approvingly from the Eucharistic prayers of the ancient Greek liturgies.

35 With the rise of Scholasticism in the Western Church came an almost overriding desire for precision which in turn was to set the stage for questions concerning the moment. The Scholastics tended to stress rational speculation in explaining the make-up of the Sacraments. In trying to explain the "how" of the Lord's Supper, they appealed to transubstantiation, an instantaneous replacing of one substance with another. Some of the Scholastics were not even satisfied with fixing the moment of the presence immediately following the Verba. They began to debate whether it occurred at "Hoc" or "Corpus" or "Meum." The dogma of Scholastics crystalized in the High Middle Ages as it was confessed at the Council of Trent. "And this belief has always been in the Church of God, that immediately after the consecration the true body of our Lord and His true blood, together with His soul and divinity are under the form of bread and wine." (Ex. 2, 214)

#### B. The View of Luther

36 Because of this endless squabbling over moment

and time in the Middle Ages, the Lutheran fathers were very careful to say no more than the Bible in this area. They knew the Bible stated nothing about an exact moment of presence, but at the same time they were absolutely certain that Christ's true body and blood were present, distributed, and received in the Sacrament because He said, "This is My body, this is My blood." In a letter to Carlstadt written in 1528, Luther discusses this issue:

Why have you not taken note of this word of the Evangelist, "saying," by which he clearly indicates that the bread was given as He (Christ) was speaking and adds what He said, "Take and eat, this is My body." From this it is clear that the giving of the bread took place at the same time as and together with the speaking, that is, as the words of Christ were uttered and spoken: This is My body.... By the participle dicens (saying) the Evangelist completely removes a time interval.... If I would give you a hundred florins, it would certainly make no difference whether after or before giving them I would say, "Here are a hundred florins," The nature of the act and the account of the event strongly suggest, however, that the giving and speaking were simultaneous, so that at one and the same time he gave the bread and said, "This is My body." For thus it is usually done in every action that the giver simultaneously gives and speaks or mentions what he is giving. (This portion of the translation is quoted from Prof. W. R. Gawrisch's review of Dr. B. W. Teigen's book The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz, Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly Vol. 84, No. 2, pp. 155-156) Unless you

would again bring up to us that miserable old question concerning the moment of the presence according to which, as the papists teach, Christ's body is there at the last syllable (of the words of institution) and not before. We despise these thoughts and prescribe no certain moment or time for God, but we are satisfied simply to believe that what God has said certainly happens.... For we do not quarrel over which moment the leper was cleansed, when Jesus said (Matthew 8) "I will do it, be cleansed," but it is enough that we believe he was cleansed as Jesus said. Likewise, we believe that the royal official's son became well (John 4:50) as Christ had said, "Go forth, your son lives," and we do not concern ourselves about at which syllable or in which moment it happened. And Lazarus became alive as the Word of Christ sounded (John 11:43), "Lazarus, come out." We leave it to the idle people and useless babblers as to whether he became alive again at the words "Come out" or "Lazarus," and there are many other things like this. Thus we also say here, that the bread is the body of Christ because Christ said, "This is My body." We leave it to others, namely to those who quarrel over words, to fight about the moment and syllables. For we are commanded to believe that the Word of God is true; but we are not to investigate as to which moment or how they are true or fulfilled. (St. L. XX, 332-333; WA Br. IV, 366-388)

37 While it is true that in the Carlstad letter Luther is referring mainly to the old medieval question, whether the presence begins at "Hoc"

or "Corpus" or "Meum," when he speaks of "the moment of the presence," still he cannot be limited to that context. As Luther does not feel it necessary to discuss at which syllable of the Words of Institution the presence begins, so he is not concerned about how many seconds it occurs after the consecration. It may occur as soon as the "Y" is pronounced in the phrase, "This is My body" or it may take place moments afterward. That Luther leaves in God's hands. He says no more or less than the Scriptures. He does however confess, and this is the important point, that that which is present, distributed, and received in the Supper is the body and blood of the Lord. Since the Carlstadt letter emphasizes that the speaking and giving were simultaneous in the first institution, they should be thought of theologically as if they occurred simultaneously now as well.

38 Luther's statement concerning the moment of the presence in the Carlstadt letter was also understood in this way in the Reformation Era. This can be seen from Der Abschied der Mecklenburgischen Herzöge also known as the Wismar Recess. This document ended the Saliger Controversy and was partially incorporated into the Formula:

Although now in this complete inseparable action of the Holy Supper which indeed is properly named the Sacrament of the Holy Supper, Christ is truly and essentially present, and distributes and delivers His true body and blood with the bread and wine, since the true presence of Christ's body and blood is not to be denied for the reception, but in this church confessed with customary and useful statements; nevertheless the following strange statements which are not customary in our church and which are doubtful, obscure and offensive



should not be used in the schools and churches of this land. These statements are nowhere found in God's Word or the writings of Dr. Luther but are very commonly used among the papists to confirm their magical blessing and the permanent inclusion of Christ's body under the form of the bread before and after the reception (Niessung). The following are such statements: that there is a Sacrament also before the use, sacramentum esse ante usum; again, when the blessing is spoken the bread is no longer an element; again, that in St. Paul's words, "The bread which we break is a participation in the body of Christ," the word participation is to be understood as the joining or unifying of the bread and body before the reception and not as referring to the eating by the communicants; again, that after the spoken blessing the bread and wine are a complete Sacrament also before the distribution (Austheilung) (which might not take place until several days or months later), and the opposite statement (which is held by no one in our church on the basis of the action) that the body and blood of Christ are not present in the Supper before the blessed bread and wine are touched with the lips or enclosed in the mouth; again, the body of Christ is not the bread but in the eating, etc. "For we prescribe no moment or time to God," says Luther, "but are satisfied thus, that we simply believe that what God says happens or occurs does certainly happen." (Jobst Schöne, Um Christi Sakramentale Gegenwart, pp. 68-69)

39 Notice that the two opposite extremes in terminology are condemned in this quotation from the Abschied. On the one hand, it rejects the view that the bread and wine are a complete Sacrament the moment the blessing is said, that is, the body and blood have to be present as soon as the Words of Institution are spoken. On the other hand, it rejects the opposite view that the body and blood are present only in the eating. Both extremes try to fix an exact moment of the presence in the Sacrament and Abschied will have none of it. The authors of the Abschied then quote Luther's statement in the Carlstad letter to corroborate what has been said. Obviously the authors of the Abschied see that Luther was not only referring to the old medieval question in this statement but to all useless disputing concerning time in the Supper.

40 Conrad Porta (1541-85) wrote a text-book in pastoral theology, first published in 1581, which he really considered to be Luther's because it consisted largely of Luther quotations. In this work, Porta asks the question, "How should a pastor answer those who dispute about the instant of the consecration, that is, concerning the moment of the presence." He then answers using Luther's Carlstadt letter: "Dr. Luther calls the idea that the body of Christ is present at the last syllable, a miserable old papist question. We despise these thoughts and prescribe no moment or time for God, but we are satisfied simply to believe that what God says happens or occurs does certainly happen." (Conrad Porta, Pastorale Lutheri, p. 439; see also R. Kolb, "Luther the Master Pastor: Conrad Porta's Pastorale Lutheri, Handbook for Generations," Concordia Journal, Vol. 9, No. 5, p. 184.) This quotation shows how Porta understood Luther on the question of moment and time, for his intent

was to reiterate Luther's theology. Luther clearly confesses that the Words of institution effect the presence in the Sacrament but he leaves the moment and time to the Almighty.

41 In connection with this discussion one should also consider Luther's Opinion Concerning the Words of Augustine: Accedat verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum. "To understand this text is so much more useful, the more the Papists misuse it and derive from it great errors. For thus they conclude: Augustine affirms that a Sacrament consists of two parts, namely, of the Word and of the external sign (elementum). Consequently, as soon as the priest has recited the words of the Supper in the presence of the bread and wine, immediately the body and blood of Christ must be there. Moreover, in order that the proper honor be shown Christ, the bread must be enclosed in a strong little house that it shouldn't be a food for the worms and the mice and hereafter it must be adored by men." (St. L. XXI, 3457, see the full text in Addendum I) Here he classifies the view that Christ's body and blood must be present as soon as the words are said with the reservation and adoration outside of the use. Through the use of sarcasm he shows his disdain for these views.

42 There are certain statements of Luther, in which he seems to define the moment, as in The Sacrament - Against the Fanatics; here Luther says, "For as soon as Christ says: 'This is my body,' His body is present through the Word and the power of the Holy Spirit. If the word is not there, it is mere bread, but as soon as the Words are added they bring with them that of which they speak." (LW 36, 341) However, if one

looks at the full context of these passages and the purpose for which they were written, it is seen that the emphasis of Luther was not one of time but rather of the efficacy of the Word. Luther does not develop a theory about the moment of the presence because this cannot be based on Scripture. Rather, he confesses ignorance as to how of the presence and its beginning. "On this we take our stand, and we also believe and teach that in the Supper we eat and take to ourselves Christ's body truly and physically. But how this takes place or how he is in the bread, we do not know and are not meant to know. God's Word we should believe without setting bounds or measure to it. The bread we see with our eyes, but we hear with our ears that Christ's body is present." (LW 37, 29) "We are not bidden to search out how it can be that our bread becomes and is the body of Christ. It is the Word of God that says so. We hold to that and believe it. Chew on it, you poor devil, and search for as long a time as you need to discover how it occurs." (LW 40, 215; also see Sasse, This is My Body, pp. 137-138)

### C. The Wolferinus Correspondence

43 Related to the question of time and moment in the Supper, there has been much discussion concerning the two Wolferinus letters. (WA Br. X, 340-341, 348-349; St. L. XX, 1604-9) Now it is debatable whether these Wolferinus letters are the lost Luther reference in Article VII, par. 87, of the Formula, (B. Teigen, "The Case of the Lost Luther Reference," Concordia Theological Quarterly, Vol. 43, No. 2, pp. 295-308; E. Fredrich Editor, Luther Lives, pp. 157-168) The important thing, however, in the present consideration is Luther's statement to Wolferinus concerning the duration of the presence. In the second letter he writes,

"Therefore, we shall define the time or the sacramental action in this way: that it starts with the beginning of the Our Father and lasts until all have communicated, have emptied the chalice, have consumed the hosts, until the people have been dismissed and [the priest] has left the altar." (This translation of the Latin text of the Weimar edition by E. F. Peters is found in "The Origin and Meaning of the Axiom: 'Nothing has the Character of a Sacrament Outside of the Use' in Sixteenth-Century and Seventeenth-Century Lutheran Theology," a Th.D. dissertation at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1968, pp. 210 ff.) Some feel that "Our Father" is a mis-translation of Oratio Dominici and that it should rather be understood as the "Word of the Lord" or "the Words of Institution." Then Luther would be saying that the presence begins with the Words of Institution. Yet ever since the time of Cyprian this phrase has been one of the standard terms for the Lord's prayer in the Latin language. There is little, if any, historical basis for translating it as the Words of Institution. Oratio Dominici obviously refers to the Lord's Prayer.

44 If Luther in the Wolferinus correspondence is referring to the Formula Missae, he is not saying that the presence begins at the consecration, but only after the Sanctus, when the Our Father was prayed and the distribution took place. If he is referring to the Deutsche Messe, then the presence is there before the consecration because here the Our Father comes before the Words of Institution. Even if one were to grant that in this text Oratio Dominici refers to the Words of Institution, Luther still would not be saying what Dr. Teigen would have him say. Then Luther would be saying that the presence starts at the beginning of the consecration while Dr. Teigen says that the presence must begin immediately after the words of consecration are said. Also, this view causes Luther to contradict

what he said in the Carlstadt letter. Here he is supposed to be saying that the presence starts with the beginning of the consecration, but in the Carlstadt letter he is not concerned about the syllable at which the presence begins.

45 Probably Luther is referring to the Deutsche Messe in which the Lord's Prayer occurs before the Words of Institution. If this is the case, Luther is simply saying for practical purposes that the sacramental action begins with the Communion liturgy and continues until all have communed. The whole sacramental action must be considered as a unit within which the body and blood of Christ are definitively present, distributed, and received but concerning which no more precise statement concerning the beginning or end of the presence is possible. Luther in his pastoral concern defines for practical purposes the sacramental action within which Christ is present so that tender hearts will not be burdened by unanswerable and useless questions, as he says to Wolferinus in the next line, "In this we will be safe and free from doubts and from offensive, interminable questions." Luther here is not defining the exact duration of the presence but he is speaking of the sacramental action within which Christ's body and blood are present. Also, because of the infiltration of Zwinglianism, Luther admonishes Wolferinus not to do certain things such as mixing consecrated and unconsecrated hosts, because at that time these things might imply agreement with the Zwinglians.

#### D. The View of the Lutheran Fathers

46 The Lutheran fathers, likewise, do not teach an instantaneous presence the moment the Words of Institution are said. Now, to be sure, Chemnitz speaks of Christ's body and blood being on the altar. Quoting the Early Church fathers, he writes,

"The table of the Lord takes the place of the manger, for in it lies the body of the Lord, not indeed wrapped in swaddling clothes but clothed with the Holy Spirit...let us meditate on or think of the fact that there is also placed on that sacred table the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." (LS 155) According to Chemnitz, Christ is present in the action (usus) of the Supper. "Nevertheless the meaning is not that the blessed bread which is divided, which is offered, and which the apostles received from the hand of Christ was not the body of Christ but becomes the body of Christ when the eating of it is begun. For the whole action of the institution hangs together, and the words, 'This is My body,' belong to the entire action. Therefore, it is concerning that bread which is blessed, which is broken or divided, which is offered, received and eaten -- I say, it is concerning that bread that Christ says, 'This is My body.'" (Ex. 2, 248) This statement is as close as Chemnitz gets to fixing the time of the presence. Yet this does not necessarily mean that as soon as the action begins, the presence is there. If this were the case then as soon as the pastor says "This" in the phrase "This is My body" the presence has to be there and one is back to fighting over moment and syllable, a strife which Luther condemned. Chemnitz is here saying the entire action must be carried out or there is no Sacrament. All that can be ascertained from the statement is that the body and blood of Christ are present in the Supper and that they are truly distributed by the hand of the pastor and received by the communicant. For Chemnitz the body and blood are present in the sacramental action but he does not state an exact moment.

47 Chytraeus, the main author of the Abschied, states concerning the beginning and end of the presence, "Since it is sufficient for the pious

heart to know from the Words of Institution that the bread which is presented to me by the minister is the true body of Christ, of what use is it to dispute about the bread that lies on the paten or is left after the reception?" (Cum piae menti satis sit a verbis institutionis discere, panem, qui mihi a ministro exhibetur, verum Christi corpus esse, quid opus est de pane in patella jacente aut post sumptionem reliquo disputare?) (Jobst Schöne, Um Christi Sakramentale Gegenwart, p. 55) Similarly Andreae writes regarding the presence in 1568, "Concerning the Holy Sacrament of the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, we believe, teach, and confess on the basis of God's Word and the position of the Christian Augsburg Confession that in it, with the bread and wine, the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is present in a heavenly way unfathomable by human reason, is distributed and received by all who use this Sacrament according to His command and institution." (R. Kolb, Andreae and the Formula of Concord, p. 60) Selnecker writes concerning the Holy Supper, "The Holy Supper is the special ordinance, institution, and testament of Christ which is to be celebrated, distributed, and received in His Christian churches and among their members as He has commanded until His return in the last days. That means that when the consecrated bread is distributed and received in agreement with the Word of Christ, then also likewise the body of the Lord Christ which was given for us, that is, His true, real, human body, is distributed and received or eaten; and when the consecrated cup or wine is distributed and received in agreement with the Word of Christ, then also in like manner the blood of the Lord Christ, which was shed for our sins, that is, His true, real human blood, is distributed and received or drunk." (Vom Heiligen Abendmal [1591], quoted in Seth Erlandson, "The Biblical and Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's



Supper." Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly, Vol. 74,  
No. 2, p. 105)

48 Chemnitz, Chytraeus, Andreae, and Selnecker are all formulators of Article VII of the Formula of Concord. Neither in their personal writings nor in their combined efforts in the Formula is there any emphasis placed on a moment of the presence. Article VII which is carefully worded to settle the sacramental controversies of that time does not even discuss a moment of the presence, showing thereby that an exact moment of the presence cannot be designated on the basis of the Scripture. Nor should one think that this issue was not under discussion at that time. This very issue together with the cessation of the presence was debated just a few years earlier in the Saliger Controversy, and yet the Formula does not make dogmatic statements in this area. The Formula does not demand a fixing of the moment of the presence even though Dr. Teigen has Chemnitz say "that on the basis of Christ's own words one can and must fix the point within the sacramental usus when the presence of Christ's body and blood begins." (Teigen, p. 100, par. 251) The Formula does not make the confession of Christ's body and blood on the altar immediately after the consecration a prerequisite for fellowship. Rather, the authors of the Formula are content with what can be proved on the basis of Scripture, namely, that Christ's body and blood are present in the Sacrament by the power of the Word and that they are distributed and received for the forgiveness of sins.

49 The Lutheran fathers clearly taught that Christ's almighty Word is indeed the effectual cause of the real presence in the Sacrament as the Scriptures teach and Luther confessed. Nothing we do, whether it be our eating or our believing

causes Christ's body and blood to be present in the Supper, but alone the Words of Institution which are still efficacious today by virtue of His original command and institution. This indeed agrees with the central article of our teaching, justification by faith alone. At the same time these Lutheran fathers refused to fix chronologically the exact beginning and end of the real presence in the Supper. To do this would have been to speak where the Holy Scripture does not speak. The Bible does not answer these questions concerning time, as Dr. Sasse aptly summarizes: "We cannot determine the moment of the beginning and the end of the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament of the Altar with watch in hand, just as we cannot fix temporally the presence of Christ when two or three are gathered in His name and therefore the promise of Matt. 18:20 is fulfilled for them. We may never forget the presence of Christ, His Divine and human nature, is always an eschatological miracle in which time and eternity meet." (H. Sasse, We Confess the Sacraments, p. 137)

50 All Confessional Lutherans today would agree that the Words of Institution by virtue of Christ's original command effect the presence in the Supper. Admittedly, there have been articles written by brethren which have inadequately expressed the scriptural and confessional position of the Lord's Supper, but none of their statements is a public confession. The real problem, however, is that Dr. Teigen will not accept as sufficient the statement that the Words of Institution effect the presence unless one at the same time declares that the presence begins immediately after the words are said. Here a demand is made which has no basis in the Scripture or the Confessions. We acknowledge the importance of confessing the almighty power of the Word but we prescribe no

moment of time to God as Luther said. Therefore, if one believes, as it seems much of the Ancient Church believed, that after the consecration Christ's body and blood are on the altar, he should not be accused of error. In the same way, the brother should not be condemned who does not want to say when the Lord is present on the altar but who is certain that the true body and blood of Christ are present in the Supper and are distributed and received, for we cannot fix from the Scripture an exact point within the sacramental usus when the real presence begins. Yet we know from Scripture and the Confessions that in the Supper the body and blood of Christ are truly present, distributed, and received.

## V. The Reliquiae

### A. The Consumption of the Reliquiae

51 Related to the discussion of moment and time in the Sacrament is the question of the reliquiae, the elements remaining after a Communion Service. Chemnitz writes, "And there is no word of God about the bread of the Eucharist being reserved or carried about in processions; in fact, it conflicts with the Words of Institution when the bread which has been blessed is not distributed, not received, not eaten." (Ex. 2, 281) From this statement and others like it, it has been assumed that all consecrated elements must be consumed in the Communion Service. (Teigen, pp. 120-125, par. 306-316) These words of Chemnitz must be seen in their context. He is rejecting the Roman practice of reservation, veneration, and the Corpus Christi Festival. He is not saying that all must be consumed in the Communion Service, for even in the Ancient Church the elements were sometimes burned (Ex. 2, 298) or carried to the sick. (Ex. 2, 301 ff.) Rather, he is rejecting

the abuses of the Roman Church. The Sacrament was not instituted to be carried around but to be eaten.

B. There is No Enduring Union Outside of the Sacramental Action

52 Chemnitz confesses that there is no enduring union between the body and blood and bread and wine outside of the sacramental action:

But the men of Trent speak only of the eating, and because, before that eating, Christ, God, and man, is present in the action of the Supper when the bread is blessed, divided, and received, giving to those who eat, together with the bread and wine, His body and blood, the men of Trent attempted to construct from this that Christ, God and man, is present in the Eucharist in such a way with His body and blood, also before its use, that once the Words of Institution have been spoken over the bread and wine, even if the remaining action which is prescribed and commanded in the institution, namely, that it be divided, offered, received, and eaten, does not follow for a number of days, yes, for some months or even years, Christ is nevertheless compelled meanwhile to remain in the bread and wine with His body and blood in an enduring union, and this in such a way that it can meanwhile be handled in the sacrifice of the Mass, reserved, carried about, displayed, adored, and whatever is connected with these things. These are the things which are not in harmony with the institution, yes, which militate against it. For the institution of the Supper prescribes the action thus:

To take bread and wine, bless, divide, offer, receive, eat, and add this Word of Christ: "This is My body; this is My blood," and to do all this in remembrance of Him. (Ex. 2, 249)

Discussing the controversy with the Reformed, he writes, "The question does not have to do with transubstantiation or a change of the elements, or with an absolute and unchanging presence in the elements outside of their use, or with the reservation, carrying about, offering, or adoration of the elements: both parties reject and disapprove of these practices on the basis of Scripture." (LS 37)

53 In The Two Natures in Christ, Chemnitz specifically says that there is no sacramental presence outside the sacramental action:

In the fifth place, by the external ministry of the Word and Sacraments God is truly present in the church, working with us and effectually acting in us through these means. He is present even in the external signs in the use of the Sacraments, dispensing and communicating through these visible signs His invisible grace, according to His Word. But the signs themselves, by themselves, add nothing toward this grace. God is not present with them inseparably, but because of the covenant and according to the Word they are not Sacraments apart from their use. When these Sacraments have been completed, they either pass away, as Augustine says, or are separated from the Sacramental union. But the hypostatic union of the two natures of Christ is something else, for it is permanent, inseparable, and intimate, constituting one

hypostasis of both natures in which each nature works in communion with the other. (TNC 109)

The hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ is permanent and inseparable, but the sacramental union exists only in the sacramental action.

54 Chemnitz is in complete agreement with the rule of our Confessions: Nothing has the character of a Sacrament apart from the divinely instituted action. "For when the Words are indeed spoken over the bread but the action which is prescribed and commanded in the institution is either not observed or is changed into another use, then we do not have the promise of the presence of the body and blood of Christ there as it is present in His Supper." (Ex. 2, 280) That which the Papist reserves is not the body of Christ, for the complete action of the Sacrament is unfulfilled. Likewise, the remaining elements in our Communion Service are not the body and blood of Christ because the "Do this" of the Words of Institution is unfulfilled. The entire sacramental action does not take place. These elements are not distributed and received. Concerning the reliquiae, the Word of Institution is incomplete and there is no Sacrament. "When the bread is indeed blessed but neither distributed, nor received, but enclosed, shown, and carried about, it is surely clear that the whole Word of Institution is not added to the element, for this part is lacking: He gave (it) to them and said, take and eat. And when the Word of Institution is incomplete there can be no complete Sacrament. In the same way it is also not true Baptism if the Word is indeed spoken over the water, but if there is no one who is baptized," (MWS 121) Since the remaining elements are not distributed and received, Chemnitz considers the remaining elements to be outside the sacramental

action. Thus he considers the reliquiae to be only bread and wine.

55 Andreae concurs with Chemnitz' view of the reliquiae. "We truly believe that the bread and wine are present together with the body and blood of the Lord and are distributed to all the communicants. For then, indeed, at that time the Lord's body and blood are distributed when we conform to this commandment of Christ: 'Eat ye, drink ye.' And when it is not eaten nor drunk, then we believe that the bread and the wine have not been united mystically with the body and blood of Christ, for without this utilization the bread and wine in themselves are not Sacraments." (G. Mastrantonis Augsburg and Constantinople, p. 262) Likewise, Chytraeus asks, "Since it is sufficient for the pious heart to know from the Words of Institution that the bread which is presented to me by the minister is the true body of Christ, of what use is it to dispute about the bread that lies on the paten or is left after the reception?" (Jobst Schöne, Um Christi Sakramentale Gegenwart, p. 55) The fact that the remaining elements are only bread and wine these men confess in the Nihil Rule of the Formula: Nothing has the character of a Sacrament apart from the divinely instituted action. Since the remaining elements are not distributed and received, they are outside the use and therefore only bread and wine.

56 When the problem of the reliquiae is discussed by the 17th Century theologians, they generally agree that the elements which are left after the celebration are merely bread and wine. Yet they are very concerned about how the elements are treated. Many prefer that the elements be consumed either in the service or after the service. The reason for this concern is that nothing offensive be done with the elements which were the

bearers of Christ's body and blood. They want to avoid anything that could give the appearance of Calvinism. Also, in certain places there still remained remnants of papistic sorcery where the sacristans would sell what was left of the baptismal water and where some would sell the remaining host so that the people could use these for superstitious purposes. Consuming the elements would avoid such a desecration of the Sacrament.

(E.F. Peters, "Nothing has the Character of a Sacrament Outside the Use," p. 318) Others in the period advise that the remaining host be properly stored away and kept for a subsequent celebration. This is the opinion of Dr. Leonard Hutter, a professor at Wittenberg from 1596 until his death in 1616, who was considered to be the most prominent theologian of his age. "There is no reason for the anxious inquiry, where are the consecrated wafers to be kept, if there be no use for them? Or what is to be done if there are more consecrated wafers than communicants? For they are to be stored away and kept for use upon a subsequent occasion and in the same place where the other unconsecrated wafers are kept." (H. Schmidt, Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, p. 573)

### C. The Sacramental Union and Reliquiae in Luther

57 Luther's advice in the Wolferinus correspondence has been understood to mean that the presence continues outside the sacramental action (consecration, distribution, and reception). Then the reliquiae would be the body and blood of the Lord. Walther alludes to this very point. (Walther, Pastorale, p. 189) He notes that here Luther seems to be saying that even outside the usus the elements are the body and blood of the Lord, but Luther only appears to be saying this.



His real concern is that nothing is done which would give offense. A number of years after the Wolferinus incident, hosts were burned because consecrated hosts had been mixed with unconsecrated hosts. Concerning this situation Luther wrote to Amsdorf, "As for the mixed particles (the mixed consecrated and unconsecrated hosts) it was good that they were burned, although in this situation it would not have been necessary to burn them, since outside the use nothing is a Sacrament as the water of Baptism outside the use is not Baptism." (St. L. XXIb, 3179-3180); WA Br. XI, 258; see the Amsdorf letter in addendum II) Also in this regard it is important to remember that Luther agreed to the Wittenberg Concord quoted in the Formula which states, "For apart from the use, when bread is laid aside and preserved in the sacramental vessel [the pyx], they do not hold that the body of Christ is present." (FC SD VII, 14; St. L. XVII, 2088) Luther then clearly declares that the remaining elements are not the body and blood of Christ. This is also how he is understood by Sasse. "For Luther only the celebration of the Lord's Supper that corresponds to Christ's institution is a proper Sacrament; therefore, a private Mass in which no congregation communes is not one. The consecration spoken in this Mass is ineffective, while even in the Roman Mass with communion--even though only under one kind--Christ's institution is still there, though badly deformed. Extra institutionem Christi (outside of Christ's institution) the sacrament is not there; consequently, the Real Presence ceases when the celebration is over. There is no reservation of the Sacrament, no procession with the Sacrament, and naturally no veneration of the reserved host." (H. Sasse, We Confess The Sacraments, p. 132) Luther, just as Chemnitz and our Confessions, teaches that outside the sacramental action there is no Sacrament.

Therefore the remaining species are simply bread and wine.

#### D. The Proper Attitude Toward the Reliquiae

58 At the same time the remaining species should not be handled improperly or in a way that casts doubt on our belief in the real presence. This is Luther's point in the Wolferinus and Amsdorf correspondence. He urges Wolferinus not to mix consecrated and unconsecrated elements because at that time this could give the impression that Wolferinus was a Zwinglian. Luther argues here on the basis of offense. Wolferinus should not offend the weaker brother by a practice which could look like that of the Reformed. The situation today is quite different. The handling of the reliquiae is not a matter of offense for the weaker brother. The mixing of consecrated and unconsecrated elements outside the sacramental action is common Lutheran practice in the twentieth century and ought cause no one to doubt the real presence or to fear the infiltration of Calvinism. Each congregation is free to do as it wishes with the reliquiae. One congregation may want to consume the reliquiae. Another may want to save the remaining species for the next Lord's Supper celebration. Still another congregation may have a special means of disposal of the consecrated wine, e.g., piscina, and may burn the hosts. Each manner of disposal is acceptable. The important thing is that the remaining elements are handled with respect.

### VI The Adoration of the Sacrament

#### A. The History of the Adoration

59 When our Lord instituted the Holy Sacrament,

He gave it to us for a definite purpose, to be eaten and drunk for the forgiveness of sins. None of the scriptural references to the Supper command any external adoration. Likewise, in the Early Church there is little emphasis on the adoration. In the fourth century a contrast begins to appear between the Eastern and Western eucharistic devotion. In the East the assumption arose that the people should not see the consecration so the veil or the screen became common in the Eastern Church, while in the West it was assumed that the people should see it. In the Middle Ages the emphasis on seeing the consecrated elements developed into an outward adoration of Christ's body and blood in the Sacramental culminating in the elevation in the twelfth century.

60 At the same time the concept of the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass was coming into full bloom and was linked to the adoration in the elevation. The elevation became the focal point of the sacrifice. As this occurred, the people began to expect all sorts of benefits and advantages from seeing the sacrifice. The communing of the laity, at least in the minds of the people, was considered less important than beholding the sacrifice. One participated in the sacrifice of the Mass through his spectatorship. It became a work that one performed. Rather than being a blessing that God gives His people, it became a work of sacrifice which the church was required to do. Vajta makes this interesting comment concerning medieval adoration: "The tendency to substitute a passive admiration of the host for its active reception lies at the bottom of the sacrifice of the Mass. It is the attitude of the beggar who instead of accepting the alms which a benevolent ruler grants him, wants to use them to secure his ruler's favor." (V. Vajta, *Luther on Worship*, pp. 43-44)

61 In the Reformation Luther rejected all allusions of sacrifice linked to the elevation but he permitted the practice to continue for the sake of the weak. (WA 54, 162; LW 38, 314) He allowed the rite of elevation because he believed that it could have a good and salutary meaning. It was a witness to the real presence of Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament. In 1542 Bugenhagen abolished the elevation in Wittenberg and Luther did not oppose him. By 1514 Luther seems to have favored the retention of the elevation as a witness against the sectarians who denied the real presence; still he never reinstated the elevation in Wittenberg nor did he demand that it be done elsewhere. In his excursus on the elevation, Wisløff shows that Luther's whole doctrinal direction was moving toward ending the elevation because of its association with sacrifice. Yet he never totally rejected it because as Zwinglianism began to rise he saw it as a powerful confession of the real presence. (C. F. Wisløff, The Gift of Communion, pp. 156-165)

B. True Adoration is an Inner Spiritual Preparation for the Sacrament

62 There may be various forms of outward adoration, but true adoration for Luther is a true spiritual worship, a proper attitude of the heart. "It is the adoration or bowing of the heart, so that from the bottom of your heart you thereby show and confess yourself to be his subordinate creature. For from this you see that true worship can be nothing else than faith; it is faith's sublimest activity with respect to God. For no one is capable of such heartfelt confession, adoration, bending, and bowing (or whatever you want to call it) before God in his heart, unless he unwaveringly holds God to be his Lord and Father, from whom he receives

and will receive all good things, and through whom, without any merit on his part, he is redeemed and preserved from all sins and evil." (LW 36, 293)

63 In a number of places in his writings Chemnitz also discusses the adoration of the Sacrament. "It is certain also that the worship of God is not restricted to either time or place (John 4:21; I Tim. 2:8). Therefore Christ is to be worshipped always and everywhere. Therefore if we believe that Christ, God and Man, is present with a peculiar mode of presence and grace in the action of His Supper, so that there He truly and substantially imparts His body and blood to those who eat, by which He wants to unite Himself with us in such a way that with this most precious pledge He applies and seals the gifts of the New Testament to everyone who eats in faith, gifts He gained for the church by the offering of His body and the shedding of His blood; if, I say, we truly and from the heart believe these things, it neither can nor should happen that faith would fail to venerate and worship Christ who is present in this action." (Ex. 2, 277) Obviously, the adoration spoken of here is within the sacramental action. All adoration outside the sacramental action is rejected as in the case of the Roman reservation.

64 Chemnitz then explains that proper adoration is an inner spiritual worship which expresses itself in true preparation for the Sacrament:

The true inner and spiritual veneration and worship is comprehended in these Words of the Institution: "Do this in remembrance of Me." Likewise: "You proclaim the Lord's death." When do you do this? When, in the first place, the heart believes and thinks rightly, piously, and reverently about the essence and use of this Sacrament, according to the Word.

Second, when with a thankful mind we faithfully ponder and consider, and with the heart and mouth praise these immeasurable benefits of the Son of God, the Mediator, that coming down from heaven for us men and for our salvation He assumed a body of our substance, and offered it to the Father on the cross for our redemption, and poured out His blood in a most bitter death; and that in addition He communicates this His holy body to us that it may be eaten, and this blood that it may be drunk in this His Supper, in order that in this way He might apply and seal the benefits of the New Testament to the believers with a most sure and precious pledge, that He might unite Himself by means of the firmest covenant with this our poor and defiled substance, and that He might transform and prepare our soul for health and our body for immortality, etc. Third, when, having considered our uncleanness and wretchedness, we call in ardent prayer upon Christ, God and man, whom we believe to be truly and substantially present in that action, that He would be our Mediator, Propitiator, Advocate, Intercessor, Justifier, and Savior, that we may, because of His death, be received and preserved in the covenant of the New Testament, by which the Father wills, because of His Son, to be reconciled to the believers; likewise, when faith in prayer interposes the sacrifice of Christ the Mediator between our sins and the wrath of the Father, as Anselm speaks. When we consider the greatness of the mystery and our own unworthiness, we pray that we may not by unworthy eating become guilty of

profaning the body and blood of Christ but that, ingrafted by this eating into the body and blood of Christ, we may draw life from it as branches from the vine and that this eating may benefit us for strengthening of faith, increase in love, mortification of flesh, etc. Therefore we pray that the gifts of repentance, faith, and love may be bestowed on us, preserved, confirmed, and increased in us. (Ex. 2, 282-283)

For both Luther and Chemnitz true adoration of the Sacrament is an inner worship and preparation of the heart.

#### C. Outward Forms of Reverence Lie in the Area of Adiaphora

65 When this true inner worship is present in the heart, then outward manifestation of reverence will follow of their own accord. (Ex. 2, 283; MWS 132) These outward signs of reverence will not be tied to the elements, "For He is not contained in them as being locally shut in. We eat the bread of the Supper reverently, but in our worship we look upon Christ Himself, supernaturally present in heavenly majesty in the Supper." (Ex. 2, 280) True adoration is a proper preparation of the heart for the Sacrament and a proper use of the same. All signs of outward reverence are in the area of Christian freedom as long as a particular practice does not cause offense. A permissible custom should not be introduced or used that could easily be misunderstood. Concerning outward signs of reverence, Luther writes in The Adoration of the Sacrament, "We say that one should not condemn people or accuse them of heresy if they do not adore the Sacrament, for there is no command to that effect and it is not for that purpose that

Christ is present. Just as we read that the apostles did not adore the Sacrament since they were sitting and eating at table [Matt. 26:20, 26]. On the other hand, one should not condemn and accuse of heresy people who do adore the Sacrament. For although Christ has not commanded it, neither has he forbidden it, but often accepted it. Free, free it must be, according as one is disposed in his heart and has opportunity." (LW 36, 295; also see WA Br. XII, 399-401, St. L. XXIb., 3457-3459, Addendum I; The Anhalt letter, WA Br. X, 85-86, St. L. XIX, 1341; H. Sasse, This is My Body, p. 84) Likewise our Confessions state, "We reject the teaching that the elements or visible species or forms of the consecrated bread and wine must be adored. However, no one, unless he be an Arian heretic, can and will deny that Christ Himself, true God and man, who is truly and essentially present in the Supper, should be adored in spirit and in truth in the true use of the same, as also in all other places, especially where His congregation is assembled." (FC SD VII, 126)

66 It has been argued that since the Reformation fathers permitted outward signs of reverence such as kneeling and even the elevation, the body and blood of Christ must be present as soon as the Words of Institution are spoken or there would be a bread worship. (Teigen, pp. 117-120, par. 302-306) These outward signs of reverence are a confession of the real presence in the sacramental action and an adoration of Christ but they do not fix an exact moment of the presence. Luther even implies that such signs of adoration are proper in Baptism, Absolution, and at the reading of the Gospel where there is no sacramental presence. (Ex. 2, 278; LW 8, 144-145, St. L. II, 1842-1843) If such signs of reverence are proper in Baptism and at the reading of the Gospel, then even the person who is not sure of the exact moment of presence can perform



signs of reverence in the sacramental action such as kneeling or the old German bow without becoming guilty of idolatry. The Fathers permitted these outward signs of adoration out of respect for the Sacrament and as a confession of the real presence.

67 True adoration is an inner spiritual worship.

This is possible only through repentance and faith. The Christian should have true sorrow over his sin and trust in Christ's forgiveness in the Sacrament, which is given through His true body and blood. This sacrament will strengthen his faith throughout this earthly journey until he reaches the heavenly fatherland. When this inner spiritual adoration is present, outward signs of adoration will naturally follow. What type of outward reverence an individual or a congregation may choose to use is a part of Christian freedom. However, the inner spiritual worship is the important thing. Without it all outward veneration is worthless.

## VII. The Blessings of the Sacrament

### A. The Forgiveness of Sins

68 Luther aptly summarized the blessings of the Supper in the Small Catechism: "The benefit which we receive from such eating and drinking is shown us by these words: Given and shed for you for the remission of sins, namely, that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation." Forgiveness of sins is the chief blessing of the Sacrament as the Words of Institution declare and from it flows all the other blessings of the Supper.

## 1. A Means of Grace

69 The Lord's Supper is a real means of grace which gives us everything which Christ won on the cross in our stead. This Sacrament is the Gospel. Here we receive all the benefits of Christ's redemptive sacrifice. Luther demonstrates the connection between the cross and the altar in the Sacrament. "So that our readers may the better perceive our teaching I shall clearly and broadly describe it. We treat of the forgiveness of sins in two ways. First, how it is achieved and won. Second, how it is distributed and given to us. Christ has achieved it on the cross, it is true. But He has not distributed or given it on the cross. He has not won it in the Supper or Sacrament. There He has distributed and given it through the Word, as also in the Gospel where it is preached. He has won it once and for all on the cross. But the distribution takes place continuously before and after, from the beginning to the end of the world." (LW 40, 213-214)

## 2. The Ransom Money for Sin

70 The Holy Sacrament assures each individual personally of the Gospel declaration of forgiveness. In our weaknesses and failures we can often begin to wonder whether we are really forgiven. How can God forgive a wretch like me? Are my sins just too great to be pardoned? In this Supper the Lord Jesus removes our every doubt. As we come to the Lord's Table we are in spirit at Golgotha kneeling before the cross embracing His dying body and drinking from His five bloody wounds. As a kidnapped child is bought back by its parents with money, so Jesus bought us back not with gold or silver but with His holy precious blood and His innocent suffering and death. His body and blood are the ransom for sin. In the Supper we receive the very thing which paid for

sins, the very thing which freed us from hell's destruction. Then no matter how great and terrible our sins may be, no matter how heavily they burden our conscience, receiving this Sacrament we need never wonder whether our sins are forgiven, for within us we have the very ransom money which paid for our sins, namely, His true body and blood. (C.F.W. Walther, Brosamen, pp. 108-117)

### 3. The Presentation of Christ's Sacrifice

71 Orthodox Lutherans have always rejected the Roman concept of sacrifice in the Sacrament and rightly so. It is a terrible insult to Christ's once and for all sacrifice on the cross. Yet there is an inseparable connection between the cross and the altar. The power and efficacy of the Lord's Supper is derived ultimately from Christ's redemptive sacrifice at Calvary. The Lord's Supper is a presentation of His atonement offering among His people. The Sacrament brings to us the sacrifice of Calvary and gives us all its blessings, forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. This is the concept that Chemnitz has in mind when he speaks of the Sacrament as a saving sacrifice:

The fathers call the body and blood of the Lord which are present in the Supper a saving sacrifice, a pure host, our ransom, the purchase price of our redemption, the ransom for the sins of the world, a propitiatory sacrifice and a propitiation, not because the body and blood of Christ are offered in the Mass by the action of the priest in order that they may become the ransom and propitiation for the sins of the whole world, but because that sacrifice which was once offered on the cross for our redemption and for the sins of the whole

world - the body and blood of the Lord - is present, is dispensed, offered, and taken in the Lord's Supper, so that the power and efficacy of this offering, once made on the cross, is applied and sealed individually to all who receive it in faith. Thus Cyprian says of the Lord's Supper: "This life-giving bread and the cup of blessing, hallowed by the solemn benediction, benefits the life of the total man, being at the same time a medicine and an offering, to heal our infirmities and to purge our iniquities."  
(Ex. 2, 491)

#### 4. The Various Means of Grace

72 It has been asked why we need forgiveness in the Lord's Supper when we have already received forgiveness through the preaching of the Gospel, Holy Baptism, and Absolution. We should not ask the impertinent question why God has given us four means of grace instead of one, rather thank Him that He has so richly blessed us in making us partakers of forgiveness and that He, through these means, gives us a joyful heart assured that we are acceptable to Him. Anyone whose heart has been terrified by his sins knows how important it is to believe in the forgiveness of those sins and will readily appreciate the greatness of divine mercy in providing not only one but many means through which we receive the forgiveness of sins. Therefore just as certain as we are that we receive with our lips the body and blood of our Lord which were given into death for our sins, just as certain should we be that the forgiveness of sins is ours. (Der Kleine Gebets-Schatz, pp. 64-65)

73 In the Examen Chemnitz discusses the wonderful comfort derived from the various means of grace:

Moreover, in temptations the mind is troubled chiefly about this question, whether, in view of the fact that the promise is spoken in general, I also, who believe, have forgiveness of sins; whether I have it truly, surely, and firmly. Also, a pious mind is concerned lest it be snatched away or wrested from it. For this use therefore God, who is rich in mercy, which He pours out abundantly on the believers, instituted beside the Word also the use of the Sacraments. However, we leave and ascribe both to the Word and to each Sacrament what belongs to each in particular. Through Baptism we are reborn in Christ; having been reborn, we are nourished with the Word and the Eucharist; if we have fallen, we return through repentance and and faith to the promise of grace, and by faith in the promise we are again reconciled to God through the Mediator. Nevertheless the Eucharist, which contains the basis for the remission of sins, namely the body and blood of Christ, is not excluded from also this use. For the Son of God testifies in the Eucharist by a most extraordinary and sure pledge, namely by exhibiting His body and blood, that He surely communicates, applies, and seals to each and everyone who uses this Sacrament in faith, forgiveness of sins, reconciliation with God, and all the other benefits which He obtained for the church by the offering up of His body and the shedding of His blood that they might be offered in the Word and Sacraments and be accepted by faith. And so faith has in the use of the Eucharist a firm anchor of consolation of sins. It also has an effectual remedy for raising up and supporting a feeble

faith in the midst of sorrow and trials,  
against want of confidence, doubt, faint-  
heartedness, and despair (Ex. 2, 239)

## B. Life

### 1. The Supper as Nourishment

74 The Holy Supper confers life. This is not temporal life which we received through natural birth, but it is that new spiritual life which has been regenerated in us through the new birth in Holy Baptism. Since this life is still weak and imperfect, and constant growth is necessary, the Lord Jesus has instituted this Sacrament as a true spiritual nourishment. Luther says concerning this:

On this account it is indeed called a food of souls, which nourishes and strengthens the new man. For by Bpatism we are first born anew; but (as we said before) there still remains, besides, the old vicious nature of flesh and blood in man, and there are so many hindrances and temptations of the devil and of the world that we often become weary and faint and sometimes also stumble. Therefore it is given for a daily pasture and sustenance, that faith may refresh and strengthen itself so as not to fall back in such a battle, but become ever stronger and stronger. For the new life must be so regulated that it continually increase and progress; but it must suffer much opposition. For the devil is such a furious enemy that when he sees that we oppose him and attack the old man, and that he cannot topple us over by force, he prowls and moves about on all sides, tries all devices, and does not desist, until he finally wearies us, so that we

either renounce our faith or yield hands and feet and become listless or impatient. Now to this end the consolation is here given when the heart feels that the burden is becoming too heavy, that it may here obtain new power and refreshment. (LC V, 23-26)

## 2. The Supper is Life-Giving

75 Our Confessions quote the Early Church fathers as saying, "Christ's flesh is a truly quickening food and His blood a truly quickening drink." (FC SD VIII, 76) Likewise, Chemnitz cites the fathers of the Council of Ephesus in 431 AD, "The flesh of Christ on account of the union with the divine nature, which is life itself, is made life-giving or a life-giver and it thus has the authority or power to give life, and this authority it exercises in the action of the Lord's Supper in the believers." (TNC 474) The body and blood of our Lord in the Supper are life-giving. They are never unfruitful, impotent, and useless. Here we receive the body and blood of the living God into this body made of dust. What can be more powerful? What can be more beneficial? This is the greatest treasure in the life of a Christian. It is the greatest benefit for body and soul. "This life-giving bread and cup of blessing, hallowed by the solemn benediction, benefits the life of the total man, being at the same time a medicine and an offering, to heal our infirmities and to purge our iniquities." (Ex. 2, 491; see also Teigen, pp. 154-159, par. 388-401, where the concept of life in the flesh of Christ is well summarized.)

## 3. The Supper and the Sanctified Life

76 Since the flesh and blood of Christ are life-giving, they provide the strength that

believers need to live a more sanctified life. Out of thanks for all that Christ has done for us by saving us from everlasting death, we will desire to lead a Christ-like life. Yet as we view our lives we see failures on every side. We do not have the strength in ourselves to battle the attacks of the devil, the world, and our flesh. Then as we are tossed about by temptations, when it seems that we have no power in ourselves, we come to His wonderful Table. Here He gives us His quickening flesh and blood which is the strengthening for a holier life. It is the power to walk in His loving footsteps. (LS 191)

#### 4. The Supper and our Daily Burdens

77 As the Christian travels in this life, he faces problems and troubles all the way. There are often financial difficulties in our home, bitterness in our family, conflicts with our friends, sickness, and even the death of those most near and dear. For this reason the German Lutheran fathers often speak of this life as the Jammertal, the "vale of tears." Yet in every difficulty and problem of life the Lord Jesus says, "Come to My Table all you that labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest." Through the Sacrament of His body and blood He gives us the strength to face all the problems and troubles of life and to do all things through Him. Come to this refreshing repast. Here is the nourishment, the heavenly manna we need all the way through the journey of life. In the Large Catechism Luther speaks of the Sacrament as our refuge and comfort in life:

For here He offers us to the entire treasure which He has brought for us from heaven, and to which He invites us also in other places with the greatest kindness, as when He says in St. Matthew 11, 28:



"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."... We must never regard the Sacrament as something injurious from which we had better flee, but as a pure, wholesome, comforting remedy imparting salvation and comfort, which will cure you and give you life both in soul and body. For where the soul has recovered, the body also is relieved. Why, then, is it that we act as if it were a poison, the eating of which would bring death?... Those, who are sensible of their weakness regard and use it only as a precious antidote against the poison which they have in them. For here in the Sacrament you are to receive from the lips of Christ forgiveness of sin, which contains and brings with it the grace of God and the Spirit with all His gifts, protection, shelter, and power against death and the devil and all misfortune. (LC V, 66-70)

78 Luther says that the Sacrament is a "wholesome, comforting, remedy imparting salvation and comfort, which will cure you and give you life both in soul and body." (LC V, 68) Chemnitz says that the Supper is "a heavenly and spiritual nourishment for both body and soul of the believer unto eternal life." (LS 61) Because of this believers in every burden and conflict of life will come to the Supper. This will also be the case in physical needs and sickness and especially at the hour of death. For there is no better help than that of the Divine Physician who gives His life-giving flesh and blood as the soothing medicine which aids and quickens us in soul and body.

##### 5. The Supper as Communion With Christ

79 There are many today who are seeking a closer

walk with Jesus, a closer relationship with the Savior. There are times in every Christian's life when he feels very distant from the Divine Redeemer. At such times the Christian is not to attend some wild emotional revival to have an experience of Christ. He is not to try to wrestle with the Lord in Prayer until he feels His presence. Rather, he is to go where the Lord has promised to be found, in the Word and Sacraments. In the Supper there is an intimate union with Christ, for here He comes into the believer with His body and blood and remains with him. Concerning this communion with Christ, Chemnitz writes, "Moreover, the Son of God testifies that in the true use of the Eucharist He grafts the believers into Himself as members that He may bear, sustain, guide, and quicken them, in order that they may be united with Him more and more and may be enabled to continue more firmly in Him and hold fast the benefits they have received. This sweet, useful, and necessary comfort and strengthening of the faith the papalists endeavor to take away from the church, when they remove the application and sealing of the forgiveness of sins from the fruits and effects of the Eucharist." (Ex. 2, 239-240) "Therefore, in order that we might be able to lay hold on Christ more intimately and retain Him more firmly, not only did He Himself assume our nature but He also restored it again for us by distributing His body and blood to us in the Supper, so that by this connection with His humanity, which has been assumed from us and is again communicated back to us, He might draw us into communion and union with the deity itself." (LS 188)

80 In illustrating the communion and union with Christ in the Sacrament, many of the Lutheran fathers used the example of the vine and the branches. (Ex. 2, 283; W. Elert, The Structure of Lutheranism, p. 158) By receiving His body and

blood we are ingrafted into Him, drawing life from Him as branches from the vine. We are so united with Him that we can say, "It is not I that live, but Christ lives in me." When we remain in Him and He in us through a regular use of Word and Sacrament we will bear abundant fruit, for without Him we can do nothing.

#### 6. The Supper as Incorporation into the Body of Christ

81 This incorporation into Christ which the Lord's Supper grants constitutes at the same time a true communion among all members of His body. One cannot be united with Christ without also at the same time existing in communion with all the other members of this body. As He comes into us with His flesh and blood uniting us with Himself, so He comes into all the other communicants drawing us together as His church. St. Paul says, "Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." (I Corinthians 10:17) As many kernels of wheat are ground together to form a loaf of bread and as many grapes are crushed to form one cup of wine, so in the Supper we become one body by partaking in His one body. Receiving His one body in the Sacrament, we become His one body, the church. This is a wonderful fellowship where we will bear one another's burdens by showing love and compassion to each brother and sister in need. We will regard each other as members of Christ. (LW 35, 54) Also because this Sacrament draws us into one body, we are to receive the Sacrament only with those who are one with us in Christ, those who teach His Word in its truth and purity. Otherwise we are really lying. We are declaring we are one when we are not one.

## C. Salvation

### 1. The Supper as the Gateway to Heaven

82 The Holy Supper confers salvation. Where there is forgiveness of sins there is also eternal salvation. In the Supper the believer receives the very ransom money that paid for his sins and freed him from destruction. This is what has thrown open the doors of heaven and broken every barrier down. As we receive His body and blood in the Supper we know that heaven is ours. "Thus the Sacrament is for us a ford, a bridge, a door, a ship, and a stretcher, by which and in which we pass from this world into eternal life." (LW 35, 66)

### 2. The Supper as the Viaticum

83 As Christ walked among men, people were healed and raised from the dead by His very touch. His flesh and blood are life-giving. Then as we receive His glorified and risen body and blood into this dying body, we are assured that, even though it returns to the dust from which it was formed, on the last day it will break forth from the grave glorified like Christ's glorified body and so we will ever be with the Lord. Because of this the Early Church fathers have often spoken of the Supper as the viaticum, "the medicine of immortality," which is a food preparing us for eternal life.

84 Luther clearly points to the Sacrament as a pledge and seal of the resurrection and eternal life: "So, when we eat Christ's flesh physically and spiritually, the food is so powerful that it transforms us into itself and out of fleshly, sinful, mortal men makes spiritual, holy, living men. This we are already, though in a hidden

manner in faith and hope; the fact is not yet manifest, but we shall experience it on the Last Day." (LW 37, 101) Again he says: "Similarly, the mouth, the throat, the body, which eats Christ's body, will also have its benefit in that it will live forever and arise on the Last Day to eternal salvation. This is the secret power and benefit which flows from the body of Christ in the Supper into our body, for it must be useful, and cannot be present in vain. Therefore it must bestow life and salvation upon our bodies, as is its nature." (LW 37, 134; also see 37, 132) Chemnitz likewise espouses this position:

Because in the Eucharist we receive the body of Christ which has been given for us, and blood of the New Testament which has been shed for the remission of sins, who will deny that believers there receive the whole treasury of the benefits of Christ? For they receive that through which sins are remitted, by which death is abolished, by which life is communicated to us, by which Christ unites us to Himself as members, so that He is in us and we are in Him. Hilary says beautifully: "When these things have been taken and drunk, they bring about both that Christ is in us and that we are in Him." Cyril says: "When in the mystical benediction we eat the flesh of Christ in faith, we have from it life in ourselves, being joined to that flesh which has been made life, so that not only does the soul ascend through the Holy Spirit into a blessed life, but also this earthly body is restored by this food to immortality, to be resurrected on the last day." Therefore we receive in the Eucharist the most certain and most excellent pledge of

our reconciliation with God, of the forgiveness of sins, of immortality and future glorification... Beautiful is that statement of Ignatius, which is found in his Epistle to the Ephesians, where he calls the Eucharist pharmakon athanasias, antidoton tou mee apothanein, alla zeen en theoo dia Ieesou Christou, katharteerion alexikakon, that is, "A medicine of immortality, an antidote, that we may not die but live in God through Jesus Christ, a cleansing remedy through warding off and driving out devils." (Ex. 2, 233-234)

### 3. The Supper and Eschatology

85 St. Paul says, "As often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes." (I Corinthians 11:26) Not only does the Supper point us back to the sacrifice of the cross, but it at the same time points forward to the final consummation of our redemption on the last day. Each time we celebrate the Sacrament we do it eagerly awaiting the second coming as the whole Ancient Church cried Maranatha, "Lord come quickly." The Father then gives us His Son under the form of bread and wine as a foretaste of the great wedding feast of the Lamb which will be ours at His second coming. In the Supper we for a moment step out of our mundane workaday existence where we carry one after another to the grave, and we have a foretaste of heaven, where the Lamb once slain Himself descends and angels prostrate fall. Here in heaven on earth as the fathers prayed, "Your Supper be my heaven on earth, till I enter heaven." Then as we eat at His Table here, we have the certainty that we will be at His Table there where we will eat of the heavenly manna and drink of the river of His pleasure forevermore.

Soli Deo Gloria

## A Lord's Supper Prayer

O Lord, although I am not worthy that you would today enter my heart, yet I need Your help and desire Your grace for the strengthening of my faith. My only confidence as I near your Holy altar is that You have invited me, a poor miserable sinner, to receive your body and blood for the forgiveness of sins.

O Lord Jesus, now unite Yourself with me so that I remain in You and You in me, ever undivided both here in time and forever in all eternity. May Your holy body, Lord Jesus Christ, nourish me; Your rose-colored blood quench me, Your bitter suffering and death strengthen me. O Lord Jesus Christ, hear me, and in Your holy wounds hide me, that I never be separated from You. From the old evil foe redeem me, and in the true faith keep me. Then I, together with all the elect, may joyfully sing Your praises both here and hereafter in eternity.

Amen

Luther's opinion concerning the words of Augustine:  
Accadat verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum.  
St. L. XXIIb, 3457-3459; Walch XXI, 1588-1590;  
WA Br. XII, 399-401

1. To understand this text is so much more useful, the more the Papists misuse it and derive from it great errors. For thus they conclude: Augustine affirms that a Sacrament consists of two parts, namely, of the Word and of the external sign (elementum). Consequently, as soon as the priest has recited the words of the Supper in the presence of the bread and wine, immediately the body and blood of Christ must be there. Moreover, in order that the proper honor be shown Christ, the bread must be enclosed in a strong little house that it should not be a food for the worms and the mice and hereafter it must be adored by men. There is a similar opinion among the Papists impressed on the minds of the people. According to this opinion they suppose that their prayers would never be more acceptable to God and would never be more easily granted a favorable hearing as when they pray in the place where the named bread is enclosed. In order to avoid these errors, one must be aware that Augustine speaks not only concerning the pronounciation of the words of Christ, but rather includes with it the command to take and eat the bread. And afterward He adds: hic est corpus meum (here is My body), which is as much as saying, outside the use, My body and My blood are not joined with these external signs. For one must not think that this Supper is like a magical trickery (juggling) in which Christ can be tied up through simple human superstition. Therefore just as baptism is nothing else than mere water if there is no child to be baptized, so we also maintain most assuredly that where no people are present



eating and drinking, according to the institution of Christ, only bread and wine are present, even if the Words of Institution should be repeated a thousand times.

2. But when asked what parts are necessary to the essence of the Sacrament, we answer, "There are three things which belong to the Sacrament." First, the elementum is required, that is, a visible sign. After this the complete recitation of the words must come. Third, the legitimate use according to Christ's institution must be added. For example, the element in Baptism is the water; the words, which must be recited here are these, "I baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Finally the dipping or the pouring over the child itself contains the legitimate Christ-commanded use. Likewise, one must also speak about the Supper. First, the complete elements, bread and wine, must be present there. After this the words of the testament must be entirely recited. Finally, the legitimate use must be added, that is, the eating and drinking. From this, as I believe, it is evident enough what the true meaning of this text is, which is inculcated in all the schools.

3. But here we must still incidentally examine the question concerning adoration, which some, as an indeed not necessary matter, under this pretense would like to prove and lay down as a rule, namely, that Christ must be adored. Christ is in the Supper. As a result the Supper must be adored. Yet this objection can be easily answered, if the Words of Christ are diligently considered. For he does not say, "Take and adore" but commands that we should eat and drink. For alone the prescribed action by Christ and the worthy eating and drinking are the true and principle honor, which we can and should show in this ceremony.

But although no one finds fault with the veneration, which exists in the gestures of the body, nevertheless, since it has arisen out of the tradition of this people, it must be a superstitious opinion that such pedagogy was a necessary service of God and could not be omitted without sin. For we must at all times be mindful of the rule which Christ quotes out of Isaiah in Matt. 15, "In vain they honor me according to human ordinances." That means human traditions are not a service to God. Therefore, if we with a superstitious opinion adore the bread and wine distributed in the Supper, we would be manifest idolators and would establish a service of God which disagrees with the explicit Word of God, because God wants to be appealed to in no other way than He Himself prescribed to us, namely, in spirit, and in truth.

Luther's letter to Nicolaus von Amsdorf  
St. L. XXIb, 3179-3180; WA Br. XI, 258

To Nicolaus von Amsdorf, Bishop at Naumburg

Grace and peace in Christ! Since Dr. Philip, Cruciger and Major are absent, it is necessary that the two of us, Pommer and I, answer you, your gracious excellent father in the Lord. First, it is not a matter of negligence but evil and indeed extreme evil on the part of this deacon,\* who as a despiser of God and men publicly dared to regard consecrated hosts and unconsecrated as one and the same. Therefore he must by all means be expelled from our church; let him go to his Zwinglians. It is unnecessary that a man who does not belong to us be held imprisoned. He must not be believed even under oath.

Furthermore, the one who has received the unconsecrated host has sinned in nothing. His faith has saved him in that he believed that he was receiving the proper Sacrament and he relied on the Word of God. He is not cheated, just as the believing one who is baptized is not cheated even if the baptizer were to play a game or had baptized with another liquid. Moreover, on this occasion it is not imperative to dispute so severely so that simple consciences are not disturbed and provoked. It is enough that all is possible for him who believes. As for the mixed particles (the mixed consecrated and unconsecrated hosts) it was good that they were burned, although in this situation it would not have been necessary to burn them, since outside the use nothing is a Sacrament as the water of Baptism outside the use is not Baptism. With those who eat and believe, Christ operates in the Sacrament. But on the

account of offense the pastor did what was right with the burning.

Besides this I have no news. Yesterday, Dr. Philip, called by the Prince, went to Torgau in order to see if he must go to the Colloquy at Regensburg. I have vigorously warned the Prince that he should not send Dr. Philip, who is fearfully sick, to such a useless, futile, and vain Colloquy in which they only mock us and we lose time and expenses. They consider us asses who do not understand their coarse and absurd calculations and follies which are not less foolish than the laughable wisdom and contentious sly calculations of your Misnians (people who live in Meissen, Germany). Farewell in the Lord. January 11, 1546.

Your Gracious

Martin Luther, D.

\*Adam Besserer was a young assistant to Amsdorf in Weida. In a Communion Service he lost a consecrated host and in its place gave an unconsecrated host to a communicant. Later the host was found and he put it with the unconsecrated hosts. As a result he was imprisoned by Amsdorf, who wrote to Luther for advice in this situation. Luther said concerning Besserer, "Let him go to his Zwinglians," not because of what was done with the reliquiae, but because he had given an unconsecrated host to a communicant. Besserer's practice denied the power of consecration. Also Luther considered the burning of the remaining species in this situation appropriate because of offense, but it would not have been necessary for outside the use nothing is a Sacrament. What is done with the reliquiae lies in the area of adiaphora.

The Words of Institution and the  
Moment of Presence

The Words of Institution state that the Lord blessed the bread, broke it, and then gave it to the disciples saying, "Take, eat, this is My body which is given for you." He did the same with the cup. These words show that the blessed bread and cup are Christ's body and blood but they say nothing about the exact moment when the presence began. In fact, Jesus does not name the elements as His body and blood except in offering them. In the first Supper the distribution and our Lord's words, "This is My body, this is My blood," were simultaneous. The various aorist verb forms in the Words of Institution simply state so many facts in past time. One would normally assume that they should be taken consecutively with the aorist participles dependent on the main verbs as for example Lenski does in his translation of St. Matthew's account of the Last Supper. "And while they were eating, Jesus, having taken bread and having blessed it, broke it, and having given it to the disciples said, Take eat! This is My body." (R.C.H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Matthew's Gospel, p. 1022.) There is nothing in the grammar of the Words of Institution that would give the exegete the liberty to ignore the textual connection between Jesus words, "Take, eat, this is my body," and the distribution in order to connect them with an earlier event in the Supper. Even in the Lukan text where the "saying" is a present participle it is still dependent on the main verb. "He gave."

Since the speaking and giving were simultaneous in the first institution, they should be thought

of theologically as if they occurred simultaneously now as well. The entire sacramental action must be seen as an indivisible unit. However, in our Supper the actions are not carried out simultaneously. In our Supper, the consecration occurs first and then the distribution and reception. When we say, "This is My body," "this is My blood," the "This do" of Christ's command is not yet complete as it was when Jesus said these words in the original Supper; there has been no distribution or reception. The entire sacramental action must occur to have a valid sacrament. To demand that Christ's body and blood must be present as soon as the consecration is said pulls apart conceptually the action commanded by Christ. It emphasizes only one action of our Lord's command and not the rest of it. The efficacious power of the Words of Institution must be clearly taught, but not in a way that obscures the integrity of the whole usus. Forms of expression used by the church must not give the impression that elements over which the Verba have been spoken are the body and blood of Christ regardless of whether or not they are distributed to be eaten and drunk. Concerning the bread which He blessed, which He broke, which He distributed, concerning that bread He said, "This is My body." (Ex. 2, 248) In the original Supper, Jesus speaks of the elements as His body and blood only in giving them to the disciples.

Our confessions teach that in a valid Lord's Supper celebration, the pastor stands in the place of Christ speaking Christ's words which are still efficacious today by virtue of the first institution. (SD VII, 75) On this basis it is argued that when the pastor in Christ's stead says, "This is My body," then immediately it is Christ's body. Note, however, there is a different sequence in the original Supper than in our Supper. In the

original Supper "This is My body" was said at the distribution showing that it refers to the whole action. In our Supper "This is My body" is said in the blessing or consecration but it likewise refers to the whole action. This argument connects Christ's words said at the distribution, which words refer to the entire action, only to the blessing, an argument which is improper. The sequence of events is not the same in our celebration in reference to time between the two as this argument advocates. This argument therefore is not valid. Jesus blessed the bread, broke it, and gave it to them saying, "This is My body." He did not say when His body was united with the bread but He did say that it had already occurred at the distribution. Likewise, the pastor today, standing in the place of Christ, blesses the bread with Christ's almighty Words of Institution, which effect the presence, and distributes to the faithful declaring, "This is the true body of Christ." While he cannot point out an exact moment of the presence, he declares as Jesus did that, that which is present, distributed, and received in the Supper is the body of Christ. No more precise definition of time can be made on the basis of Scripture. Luther says, "If we are to do what He did, then indeed we must take the bread and bless it, and break and distribute it saying, 'This is My body.' For all this is included in the imperative word, 'Do this...'" (LW 37, 187)

I Corinthians 10:16-17  
and the Moment of the Presence

In I Corinthians 10:16-17, St. Paul writes, "Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a participation in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a participation in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread." On the basis of this text it is argued that since St. Paul says that the cup of blessing which we bless is a participation in the body of Christ, therefore the presence begins as soon as the blessing is said. It is indeed true that St. Paul here tells the church to bless and that this blessing with the Words of Institution effects a participation in the body and blood of Christ, but he does not give an exact moment of the presence. This was not his purpose. He merely shows that a partaking in Christ's body and blood takes place in the Lord's Supper where there is the blessing, the distribution, and the reception.

Note that the apostle makes mention of all three parts of the sacramental action: the blessing or consecration verse 16a, the breaking or distribution verse 16b, the partaking of the elements verse 17. Paul is not pointing out an exact moment of the presence beginning at the blessing for in the entire context, the distribution, and reception are automatically assumed as is indicated in verses 17 and 21. Rather, he shows that the entire action of the Sacrament must occur, otherwise there is no Sacrament, that is, there is no real presence. He does not intend to teach that the cup becomes a participation in the



blood of Christ at the moment of its being broken. If one asserts that St. Paul is telling us that Christ's blood is present the moment the blessing is said when he writes, "Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a participation in the blood of Christ," then one could logically assume that the body of the Lord is only present in the distribution, for St. Paul also says, "Is not the bread which we break a participation in the body of Christ." If St. Paul's purpose was to tell that the Lord's blood was present as soon as the blessing was said, then he surely would have emphasized the same concerning the Lord's body rather than only speaking of it at the distribution. While the text speaks only of the blessing of the cup and only of the breaking and the partaking of the bread, it is evident that the cup must not only be blessed but also distributed and drunk and the bread not only broken and eaten but also blessed prior to the distribution. The whole sacramental action must take place. St. Paul then is teaching that the body and blood of Christ are present in a valid Lord's Supper celebration, that is, where the entire sacramental action occurs. He makes no more precise statement concerning a moment of the presence.

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## Abbreviations

Lutheran Confessions (all quotes are from the Triglott unless otherwise indicated):

- AC - Augsburg Confession
- Ap - Apology of the Augsburg Confession
- FC - Formula of Concord
- LC - Large Catechism
- SD - Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord

Luther's Works:

- LW - American Edition
- St. L. - St. Louis Edition
- WA - Weimar Edition

Writings of Chemnitz

- MWS - Ministry, Word, and Sacrament
- TNC - Two Natures in Christ
- Ex - Examination of the Council of Trent
- LS - Lord's Supper