

286. The True Lutheran, Biblical Doctrine of the Holy Supper.

The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? 1 Cor. 10, 16.

The Lutheran doctrine of the Lord's Supper is true because the Bible, God's Word, so teaches. That settles the matter. God speaks; we are to hear and believe. That is the attitude of the Lutheran Church towards the Bible and hence also to the teaching of this doctrine. Assuming this attitude, the doctrine as such is not difficult of comprehension. It is very simple. We only collect all the passages of Holy Writ treating of this matter and record the facts, "So says the Lord." True, we find mysteries here, but "so says the Lord." If there were no mysteries in the Scriptures, we should need no Bible, for then our mind would be just as great as that of God. No, we follow the apostle and take reason captive to the obedience of Christ, knowing that by adhering to His Word we are, as He Himself says, His disciples indeed.

Now, then, what does Scripture say regarding the Lord's Supper? It says that in, with, and under the bread, Christ Jesus gives us that true and natural human body which was received into the person of the Son of God and which was given into suffering and death on the cross for our atonement. Scripture says that in, with, and under the wine Christ gives us that true and natural blood which was shed upon the cross for the remission of our sins.

What manner of eating and drinking, then, takes place in the Holy Supper? Not only natural nor only spiritual, but *sacramental eating and drinking*; that is, the earthly elements, bread and wine, as well as the heavenly gifts, Christ's body and blood, are at the same time taken with the mouth of the body. In what manner are they taken? Bread and wine are taken in a natural manner and Christ's body and blood in a supernatural manner.

This Lutheran, Biblical doctrine is very plain and clear. We take the words of the dying Son of God in their original sense, literally, just as they read.

Prayer.

O Lord God, Thou hast instituted Holy Baptism and the Sacrament of the true body and blood of Thy dear Son; to these Sacraments Christ has bound us, and therein He has revealed Himself to us. If in these Sacraments we lay hold on Christ, we surely have Him. All other things not enjoined on us we should dispense with, otherwise we would far miss the mark. Lord God, render me well prepared, so that Thy true body and blood, a priceless nourishment, may refresh my soul at this heavenly feast of love and joy. Array Thou me in the vestures of salvation and in the garment of the righteousness of true faith. Amen.

Abide with heavenly brightness
Among us, precious Light;
Thy truth direct, and keep us
From error's gloomy night.

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