

Large Catechism Lesson 26
Part 5: The Sacrament of the Altar

Questions about the Lord's Supper?

Introduction: Matthew 26:17-29

Numerous Old Testament connections lurk behind the scene.

- 1) Passover (Exodus 12) – Deliverance from slavery to freedom
 - The Passover lamb is not an atoning sacrifice.
 - Who will be the firstborn this time?
- 2) Covenant (Exodus 24; Jeremiah 31) – The corporate nature of the Lord's Supper
- 3) Atonement (Leviticus 19) – The forgiveness of sins
 - Matthew is the only Lord's Supper account to speak of the forgiveness of sins.

“The Jews had believed for some while that the original Exodus pointed on to a new one. in which God would do at last what he had long promised: he would forgive the sins of Israel and the world, once and for all. Sin, a far greater slave-master than Egypt had ever been, would be defeated in the way God defeated not only Egypt but also the Red Sea. And now Jesus, sitting there at a secret meal in Jerusalem, was saying, by what he was doing as much as by the words he was speaking: this is the moment. This is the time. And it's all because of what's going to happen to me.” -N.T. Wright

¶ **1-19**

-What is Donatism?

Excursus 1 | 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 | The Real Presence

- Bread and Wine, Body and Blood
 - Mystery
 - Not Consubstantiation
 - ‘In, with, under’
- Jesus is there because he promised it. Done.
 - All of him (100% God 100% Man)
 - Treat the sacrament with reverence.
 - Preparation, distribution, and cleanup
- The entire church past and future is one in the sacrament
 - All Saints Day’ & First Feast

Different beliefs about the Means of Grace and the Sacraments

Rome

- Gets you started on the salvation climb
- Works righteousness

- Lord's Supper for the Roman Catholic Church
 - Transubstantiation (substance & accidents)
 - Says too much beyond what Scripture reveals
 - Led to misuse (corpus Christi processions)
 - Sacrifice of the Mass
 - The priest re-sacrifices Christ. The priest earns forgiveness for all. (works-righteousness)

Priest: "Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

Congregation: "May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and for all his holy Church.

Reformed

- There are no means of grace (because of election).
- No grace for unelected
- Baptism and Communion are reduced to symbol and my work. "Ordinances"

• Lord's Supper for the Reformed

'*finitum non capax infinit est*' - 'the finite not capable of the infinite'

- How can they believe in the Incarnation?
- Center is you. You make the Supper happen. You recognize Christ's presence. (Gospel becomes Law)

'*manducatio indignorum*' - 'the eating of the unworthy'

- The Reformed reject this. Lutherans believe this.
 - Everyone gets the body and blood
 - Not about your faith
 - Jesus is always present for everyone (even the atheist).

¶ 20-32

-Where in Scripture is the forgiveness of sins spoken in connection with the Lord's Supper?

¶ 33-38

-What is the role of faith in receiving the Lord's Supper?

Excursus 2 | How to receive the Sacrament worthily?

Read: Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Corinthians 10:15-22

Unity in Christ, Doctrinal Unity, & Closed Communion

Admission to the Lord's Supper

1) Individual - "Worthy"

- Where does this person stand before God?
- Does this person have faith, is baptized, repentant, and recognizes the real presence?

2) Confessor - "Appropriate"

- Where does this person stand with everyone else?
- What does the individual confess about the *regula fide* (rule of faith)?
- Is his confession the same as ours? The same as this altar?
- Where does this individual worship?

3) Celebration of the Supper celebrates the unity in that place, at that altar.

- Communicates what we believe (i.e. matters of doctrine)
- Congregation celebrates the unity they have with each other.

- Being LCMS does not mean I have the right to commune at any LCMS congregation
- This community unified in its confession of Christ celebrates its unity in the Supper.
- What do you do when a relative attends worship here?
- What do you do when you attend worship at another congregation?

4) Are we the only Christians who practice closed communion?

To Our Congregation and Guests about the Lord's Supper:

The Lord's Supper is Jesus' meal of forgiveness and strength. However, because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because we also believe that receiving the Lord's Supper together is an outward profession of unity with one another in faith and doctrine, we would therefore only invite communicant members of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod to receive this gift with us. If you still desire to receive the sacrament, please first speak with the pastor.

Guests are still encouraged to come to the altar, cross their arms over their chests, and receive a special blessing.

Preparation for the Lord's Supper can be made by reading the front inside cover and pp. 326-327 of the hymnal along with reaffirming the following statements:

- *I am baptized.*
- *I repent of my sins, trusting in Jesus' atoning sacrifice for forgiveness and eternal life.*
- *I believe that I will eat Jesus' actual flesh and blood in, with, and under bread and wine.*
- *As Jesus has forgiven and loved me, I do not refuse to forgive and love.*
- *By God's grace I will continue to frequently receive Word and Sacrament, and I will strive to lead a Godly life to the praise and honor of Jesus' holy name.*

¶ 39-44

-Why does Luther say that those who deprive themselves of the sacrament for such a long time are not to be considered Christians?

-Scenario: what if you lived 4 hours away from the closest LCMS congregation?

-How does the devil drive and deter people from the Word and Sacraments?

¶ 45-63

-How often should we commune?

-What are Luther's criteria for despising the sacrament?

-How does this translate to life in a pandemic?

-Why do we go to the Supper?

¶ 64-84

-Why should we or should we not approach the Supper?

-Sin

-The world

-The devil

Concluding Discussion on the Large Catechism

¶ 85-87