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THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION
AN EXEGETICAL STUDY

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of New Testament
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

by
Reuben A. Kruggel
June 1951

Approved by: William F. Arndt
Advisor

Carl H. Kopsch
Reader

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	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
CONTENTS	1
1. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH	6
2. THE CHURCH AS A SOCIETY	14
3. THE CHURCH AS A COMMUNITY	22
4. THE CHURCH AS A CULTURE	26
The Church as a Culture	31
5. THE CHURCH AS A SERVICE	34
6. THE CHURCH AS A SACRAMENT	40
7. THE CHURCH AS A CONFESSION	50
8. THE CHURCH AS A REVELATION OF GOD	58
9. THE CHURCH AS A SIGN	62
10. THE CHURCH AS A SACRAMENT	67
The Sacrament of Communion	67
The Sacrament of Baptism	71
CONCLUSION	84
BIBLIOGRAPHY	88

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter	
I. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TEXT	6
II. THE NIGHT HE WAS BETRAYED	14
III. TOOK BREAD	22
IV. HAVING GIVEN THANKS	26
The Eucharistic Prayer	31
V. THIS IS MY BODY	34
VI. HE TOOK THE CUP, MY BLOOD	43
VII. THE NEW COVENANT	50
VIII. FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS	58
IX. IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME	62
X. THE COMMUNION	67
The Concept of Communion	67
The Real Presence	71
CONCLUSION	86
BIBLIOGRAPHY	88

INTRODUCTION

This is the atomic age. That statement is heard so often that it soon loses much of its meaning. Scientifically it means that we have succeeded in breaking matter down into such minute particles that it is impossible to re-divide these particles.

As we look at the modern Church, we want to be able to say that the atomic age is past. For a long time in the last century, no denominational group or sub-group considered itself absolutely up-to-date unless it could point to some incident which caused it to split off from a larger group. The last thirty-five or forty years have witnessed a change of policy. Christianity is becoming ecumenically minded. Merger and union are now the key words for us.

Among the Lutherans especially, union on the basis of doctrine is very definitely maintained. This applies to merger between Lutherans of various synodical affiliations and between Lutherans and those who may wish to join them. One of the doctrines continually under discussion is that of the Lord's Supper. In the light of the many ecumenical movements now under way and the mergers contemplated, many Lutherans are attempting to re-define the Lutheran position concerning the Lord's Supper. A number of these shorter treatises, as well as some of

the better-known writings on the subject will be found in the bibliography. Apologetic, confessional, and scriptural approaches have been tried. In the following pages an attempt will be made to follow chronologically the words of institution as recorded by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Paul and to analyze the concepts underlying some of the important words. This will be followed by a treatment of Paul's explanation of the Holy Communion in I Corinthians 10 with particular reference to the "real presence."

Lutherans seem to agree on many of the basic facts of this doctrine, but they express themselves very differently on many of the details. As I shall hope to show later, many writers change their minds and views in the process of writing. This is a human weakness which no less great a man than C. P. Krauth admits in his monumental work. He states frankly:

No man, perhaps, is perfectly self-consistent. The reader may discover inconsistencies which the writer himself has not noticed. The mass of mankind hold very sincerely views which really involve a conflict.¹

As a background for an exegetical study of the words of institution, it is necessary to survey rapidly the sacramental history of the Old Testament. Krauth gives a good six-point summary of the foreshadowings of the

¹C. P. Krauth, The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology: as Represented in the Augsburg Confession, and in the History and Literature of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, c.1913), p. 727.

Holy Communion:²

1. Adam and Eve partook of the first sacrament when they ate of certain trees in the garden of Eden. It is assumed that they ate of the tree of life until the time of their disobedience. Through this eating, God graciously prolonged their lives. When our first parents ate of the tree of knowledge, God had to exclude them from the eating of the tree of life so that they would not continue to live eternally in their sinful state of disobedience. We shall again be eating of the tree of life when we are resurrected in the next life.

2. The Old Testament regulations forbade eating flesh with the blood in it. Provisions always had to be made for butchering, that is "bleeding," the meat animals to be eaten by man. This meant that the blood which is the life-giving and life-sustaining element in the make-up of animal existence was not to be consumed by man but to be spilled. It was only the blood of the "new covenant" that was to be drunk for the remission of sins, the gift of eternal life, and salvation.

3. The blood of the sacrificial animals in the Old Testament at the time of the ratification of the "old covenant" was sprinkled upon the Book of the Law, the holy vessels, and the people. According to an old legend Adam

²Ibid., pp. 585-599.

was buried at the place of the skull, Golgotha, so that when Christ's blood ran down from the cross it sprinkled the remains of Adam, the head of the race. The sprinkling of Jesus' blood ratified the "new covenant."

4. Many of the Old Testament sacrifices called for an eating of at least parts of the animal's flesh by the ones bringing them. Jesus Christ offered Himself for us, but through the Lord's Supper He wants us to be partakers of Himself, the perfect sacrifice given for us. This we do when we eat His body and drink His blood often in remembrance of Him.

5. Another Old Testament foreshadowing of the Lord's Supper was the Passover. The blood of the Passover lamb was sprinkled on the doorposts outside as a covering for sin while the flesh of the lamb was partaken of by a company of believers inside the house. So also Christ's body and blood are partaken of by the communicants inside the Church while the shed blood of Calvary is the external attestation of the sacrificed life which makes the communion possible for all sinners.

6. The last foreshadowing to be considered is the manna in the wilderness, a gracious gift of food from God, given without any merit on the part of the recipients except that God had elected them to be the channel of salvation for the lost world. The body and blood of Christ are given to sinners graciously without any merit on their part except

the love of God which wants them to be saved, every last one of them.

Some of these foreshadowings will enter into the exegetical study later because they are integrally bound up with the understanding of the Lord's Supper. The New Covenant is definitely established upon the basis of the old one as continuation, fulfillment, revision, and more glorious setting forth.

Matthew 26:26-28, St. Mark 14:22-24, St. Luke 22:17-20, and I Corinthians 11:23-25 which eliminates duplications and strives to include all of the divergent essentials.

Textual criticism of the conservative sort as well as destructive critical scholarship has attempted to restore the actual original words spoken by our Lord at the time that He instituted His Supper. You maintain that the original words were: ἄριστον ἔδοξα ὑμῖν τὸ
 τρώειν μετὰ ἐμοῦ τὸ εἶναι μετὰ τῆς δικῆς ἡμέρας τὸ
 συμπροσηύχαι ὑμῖν κτλ. He claims that this text eliminates all that may have been added by biblical writers or redactors to establish the historical setting. In rating the various accounts cited in the references above he says further:

I really believe the Pauline account is to be the basis, and this for two reasons: it is the oldest

Dr. Wm. Orr in *Still Held to the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper* (Columbus, Ohio: The Warburg Press, 1941), p. 40.

CHAPTER I

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TEXT

Basic to the exegesis of any text is the establishment of that text. The text of the words of institution found in the Lutheran liturgies, prayerbooks, and catechism is based upon a combination of the texts in St. Matthew 26:26-28, St. Mark 14:22-24, St. Luke 22:19-20, and I Corinthians 11:23-25 which eliminates duplications and strives to include all of the divergent essentials.

Textual criticism of the conservative sort as well as destructive critical scholarship has attempted to restore the actual original words spoken by our Lord at the time that He instituted His Supper. Reu maintains that the original words were: *Λάβετε, τούτο ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα μου. τούτο ἐστὶν τὸ αἷμα μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ ἐκχυνόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν.*¹ He claims that this text eliminates all that may have been added by biblical writers or redactors to establish the historical setting. In rating the various accounts cited in the references above he says further:

I really believe the Pauline account is to be the basis, and this for two reasons: It is the oldest

¹M. Reu, Can We Still Hold to the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper? (Columbus, Ohio: The Wartburg Press, 1941), p. 48.

account, and it is written under circumstances that demand a version setting forth the nature and purpose of the Lord's Supper in an authoritative and all-comprising manner.²

Acceptance of this statement would immediately raise the question as to the dating of the accounts of the evangelists. Paul tells his readers: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you" (I Corinthians 11:23). This does not give any indication as to how or when the message was received from the Lord. St. Paul was not present at the first Lord's Supper. Neither was St. Luke. St. Matthew, as one of the Twelve, was present. Although some scholars hold that the Lord's Supper was instituted in the upper room of St. Mark's mother's Jerusalem home, we have no indication that St. Mark was present. Thus it is certain that only one account was written by an eyewitness.

The information which Paul "received of the Lord" may have been by direct revelation and supplemented by conversation with the apostles or it may have been gained directly from the apostles as from the Lord Himself, since surely they were privileged to speak with authority on such matters.

Yet Reu is not completely satisfied with St. Paul's text, either, when he writes:

²Ibid., p. 51.

It is impossible to assume that between 30, the year of the Lord's death, and 35, the year of Paul's conversion, the tradition concerning the Lord's Supper had undergone any essential change, as e. g. the addition of *τὸ τοῦτο ποιεῖτε ἐν τῇ ἑμέρᾳ ἀνάμνησιν.*³

The fact that St. Luke has the sentence on remembrance is not valid for Reu as will be shown later. Nevertheless, there is no textual evidence to eliminate this sentence from St. Paul's account. Furthermore, its elimination would remove from St. Paul's presentation one of the basic concepts underlying the Lord's Supper, namely that of a memorial act.

Connected with the words of institution is also the discourse concerning the "fruit of the vine." Jesus said (St. Matthew 26:29): "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." St. Mark has parallel words in 14:25 and St. Luke in 22:18. Even a casual reader will see that the first two place the discourse after the words of institution while St. Luke places it before.

This slight divergence of the texts should present no great difficulty. St. Matthew and St. Mark regard the "fruit of the vine" discourse as ending the Lord's Supper while St. Luke regards it as ending the Passover proper. The blessed cup of the Lord's Supper is no longer merely

³Ibid., p. 52.

the "fruit of the vine" since it is also the vehicle for conveying the blood of Christ.

The much discussed "short ending" of St. Luke deserves brief consideration. The words "given for you" concerning the bread and the rest of 22:19-20 are omitted. The textual authority for this is weak, only D (Beza) of the sixth century, a number of Latin manuscripts, and the two manuscripts of the old Syrian version, Sinaiticus and Curetonian, read thus. This is also the reading accepted by B. Weiss.

Reu accepts the short ending with the thought that St. Luke's grammatical mistake in the longer form makes it not his writing since his Greek is always correct. The redactor left it nominative when it should have been dative to fit the Pauline sense so as to read *τῷ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἐκχυνομένῳ*.⁴ Since it is assumed that St. Luke was inspired and the redactor was not, it is easy enough to push a grammatical difficulty out of the picture. However, the *τοῦτο* at the beginning of the sentence could be modified by an expression in the nominative case. Thus the expression could modify the *τοῦτο* instead of the *ἄματι*. The comma in the Nestle Greek text would permit this. Another explanation is that there is here a construction "according to the sense."

The chief reason advanced for supporting this short

⁴Ibid., p. 45.

ending is that thus a disciplina arcani can be shown to have been exercised by the early Church in that the mysteries attached to the Lord's Supper were hidden from the eyes of unbelievers while enough was said to give the reader the idea that something did take place. As Reu again remarks:

Theophilus had not yet joined the Christian congregation when Luke wrote his Gospel for him, and for an outsider it sufficed to know that here a mysterious act took place; to tell him in detail in what it consisted was neither necessary nor advisable.⁵

To hold this view it would be necessary to prove that the early Church exercised a disciplina arcani.

Jeremias, a German scholar, claims to be able to do this. He cites four instances of it being practiced on the basis of the New Testament text.⁶

First is cited I Corinthians 4:1 in which the ministers are referred to as "stewards of the mysteries of God." Jeremias claims that the mysteries here are the sacraments. This is not absolutely demonstrable. The mysteries can include many other things besides. Among them might be the gifts of the Spirit of apostolic times, the ability to preach the Word powerfully, and the miraculous powers which the apostles possessed but which their successors do not seem to have. The attachment of mystery

⁵Ibid., p. 46.

⁶Joachim Jeremias, Die Abendmahls Worte Jesu (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1935), pp. 42-57.

to the sacraments might well be considered a holdover from contemporary mystery religions which cultivated an air of mystery and secrecy about them. We have no proof that the early Church practiced "close communion" even to the exclusion of spectators. That developed later. Except during the height of persecutions, the Church never aimed to be an underground movement.

Jeremias also cites Revelation 10:7 as an instance of the use of mystery. If the Lord's Supper is a mystery of God, it will no longer be used at the time of the opening of the book mentioned in Revelation. In the heavenly face-to-face communion with Christ, the communion through elements will not be necessary. However, for Christians it has ceased to be a mystery to be hidden from the young and unbelievers long before that.

I Peter 5:13 with its veiled reference to the Church and particularly to Rome as "Babylon" is cited as a good example of the employment of veiled references to a disciplina arcani. This might be an excellent passage if all biblical authorities and scholars were agreed that the "she" is a church and that "Babylon" is Rome. Neither of these is unanimously admitted.

The clinching argument is supposed to be the fact that in the Book of Acts baptism is performed in the name of Jesus without reference to the Holy Trinity. Any reader of Acts will admit the lack of a Trinitarian baptismal

formula in that book. References to the Trinity in the New Testament are few and far between. However, the mystery of the Trinity is mysterious enough even for mature theologians and believers even today without making an effort to conceal such a mystery--unfathomable by the best--from the unlearned and unbelieving of the apostolic age. The formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity came at the end of three hundred years. At the time of Acts only the oral tradition was in existence, unless St. Matthew's Gospel was already widely circulated. The Trinitarian baptismal formula developed even as the eucharistic ritual took on color and form through the ensuing years.

With this brief survey the discussion of the text for the words of institution ends. The reasons for omitting the phrase "This do in remembrance of me" are very weak and based on a destructive hypothesis of biblical criticism. The advocates for the short ending of St. Luke's account do not have strong textual evidence to support them. The reasons for advocating a short ending on the basis of a disciplina arcani must yet be more conclusively proved. Nothing essential to the understanding of the Lord's Supper is gained by accepting the short ending since the parallel passages contain identical thoughts. These other passages were also written for people who were not always, strictly speaking, believers.

Small variations between the accounts will be dealt with in the chapters concerned. Some of these are the differentiation between "blessing" and "giving thanks" in reference to the consecration of the elements and the difference between "for you" and "for many." The differences here need cause no difficulty nor require any major treatment.

CHAPTER II

THE NIGHT HE WAS BETRAYED

St. Paul says, ". . . the Lord Jesus the night in which He was betrayed." The evangelists give a more complete picture of the Passover celebration and its surrounding circumstances during which the Lord's Supper was instituted.

Vincent says, "He instituted the Eucharist while His betrayal was going on."¹ [*italics V.*] Here the imperfect tense is used. It is an action scene similar to the first Passover. Then the angel of death was making the rounds while the faithful remained inside and partook of the Passover Supper. Jesus' betrayal was going on while He was instituting the Lord's Supper. The priests and temple police were getting ready and awaiting Judas Iscariot's arrival to lead them to Jesus.

The Scriptures are very definite concerning the institution on the night of Jesus' betrayal. However, careful scholars claim that it cannot be definitely ascertained which night of the week it was. The Church on the basis of the Bible has always maintained that this was Thursday night, the first night of the eight-day Passover celebration

¹Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), III, 250.

and that Jesus died on the following day (Friday). Scholars claim there is a discrepancy between the Synoptists and St. John as to the day of the institution of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

The symbolism is beautiful either way. If Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper as the Passover meal was at an end, then the New Testament sacrament forms the counterpart of the Old Testament covenant rite. If Jesus died as the Passover lambs were being killed in the temple enclosure, then the blood of the New Covenant was being shed to supersede the blood of all the sacrifices of the Old Covenant.

There should be a rule by which variant readings can be interpreted. Ylvisaker gives a good principle to follow when he says:

There is an accepted rule of exegesis that the later passage shall be interpreted in the light shed upon the words by an earlier citation covering the same ground, and not vice versa.²

On the basis of this rule, it is permissible to say that St. John wrote knowing that the Synoptics were right and his purpose was not openly to contradict them.

²Joh. Ylvisaker, The Gospels: A Synoptic Presentation of the Text in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John with Explanatory Notes (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1935), p. 644. There is an excellent discussion of the whole problem of the time in this book on pages 636-646.

St. John tells us (18:28) that the Jews would not enter the praetorium so that they would not be defiled. They wanted to eat the Passover. If the Passover were to be eaten Thursday night, this would bring Jesus' death on a Thursday. We read "it was the preparation of the Passover" (St. John 19:14) when Jesus was crucified. Improperly understood, even St. John has a contradiction within his own narrative.

At the time of Jesus, the Jews combined the celebration of the Passover with the Feast of Unleavened Bread making it a combined eight-day affair. The first day of unleavened bread was from Nisan 13 sunset to Nisan 14 sunset and was also the Passover. The Feast of Unleavened Bread then continued from Nisan 14 sunset to Nisan 21 sunset. The Passover was always the first day of this celebration. St. Matthew 26:17, St. Mark 14:12, and St. Luke 22:7 state this. The Passover lambs were killed in the temple courtyard starting right after noon on the first day. They were eaten that evening. However, that evening after sunset was already the next day according to the Jewish way of reckoning time. According to Ylvisaker, a special dispensation was made here.

In the second place, the evening after sunset on the 14th, which was counted with the 15th, reverted again to the 14th, so that the 14th was made to continue not only until sunset, but up to the hour of midnight.³

³Ibid., p. 634.

The left-over portions of the temple sacrifices were eaten the day after the Passover. This the Jews who did not enter the praetorium wished to do. St. John does not say that they wished to slaughter the Passover lambs, he only says they wanted to eat the Passover.

At the time of Jesus it was already customary to arrange the Passover celebration in such a manner that only one week-end would be involved and also that the celebration would never coincide with a Sabbath observance. Therefore when St. John mentions that it was "the preparation of the Passover," he is stating that it was the Friday (always called the day of preparation for the Sabbath) of the week of the Passover celebration.

Jeremias, the German scholar, emphasizes that the last meal of Jesus at which He instituted the Lord's Supper was a Passover. Thus he links the New Testament sacrament directly to the Passover in point of time. If Jesus had eaten an anticipatory meal on Wednesday night so that He could die while the Passover lambs were being slain on Thursday, He would not actually have been eating a Passover nor perfectly fulfilling the Law. Moreover, He would then not have risen from the dead on Sunday but on Saturday, the third day after the crucifixion, which is contrary to Scripture which maintains that the resurrection took place on Sunday, the first day of the week (St. Mark 16:2 and St. Luke 24:1).

To prove his contention, Jeremias makes use of six arguments based upon the Bible and supplemented by quotations from rabbinic literature.⁴

In the first place the supper was eaten in Jerusalem, within the very walls of the holy city--St. Mark 14:13, St. Matthew 26:18. It was one of the requirements of the meal that the lamb be slain at the temple and then eaten in companies of believers inside the city walls even as the first Passover was eaten indoors while the angel of death passed over outside. This often necessitated crowding into streets and up on housetops. No wonder the disciples were anxious about preparing a place for the meal. Moreover, it should be noted that after the meal they departed for the garden of Gethsemane outside the city walls. Jesus had spent the previous nights in suburban Bethany. It was most essential, however, that this meal be eaten within the city walls of Jerusalem.

Another requirement of the Passover was that it should be eaten at night after sunset. St. Mark tells us (14:17) that Jesus came to the supper in the evening. The scenes following the supper took place at night as can be seen from the fact that the disciples could not stay awake while Jesus was in His agonizing periods of

⁴Joachim Jeremias, Die Abendmahlsworte Jesu (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1935), pp. 6-27.

prayer. Jesus also referred to Himself as being betrayed that night. The reference in connection with the cock crowing and Peter's denial indicates that the time for the cock to crow was past (for that day) and was a coming event (of the next morning). The fact that the meal was repeatedly referred to as a "supper," the chief meal of the day, has its significance. Scholars have found that the Jews at the time of Christ had their chief meal in the evening.

Jesus and the disciples reclined at the meal, a custom ordinarily not followed by Palestinian Jews, yet proper for this festive and memorial occasion. (St. Matthew 26:20, St. Luke 22:14). The first Passover was eaten standing in expectancy of the deliverance from the Egyptian bondage. Later, with the deliverance from this bondage accomplished, one could recline because deliverance was now no longer expected; but here the memorial feast could be eaten in security.

Wine was drunk at this meal, a prerequisite for the Passover. Jesus refers to the "fruit of the vine" which in the spring season of the year could be nothing else than fermented grape juice. More will be said about this in connection with "the cup." Wine was drunk only for such festive occasions as circumcisions, weddings, burials, and Passover. It was not as plenteous a commodity for Palestinian Jews as we are often led to believe. Since wine was drunk at this meal which was surely not a

circumcision nor a wedding, and a funeral only by anticipation, we must conclude that Jesus now celebrated the Passover. No other "church year" festival was at hand.

There is also the closing hymn of the meal to be considered (St. Matthew 26:30, St. Mark 14:26) which was a typical feature of the Passover celebration though not exclusively so. Edersheim⁵ says this was the last part of the Passover Hallel, namely Psalms 115-118 used as a group.

Lastly, one can not fail to consider the actual setting for the Lord's Supper. As Jesus handled the elements, He spoke certain words, now known as the words of institution. These can not but remind one of the telling of the Passover story in connection with the meal as indicated from Exodus 12:26 and 13:8. The difference between the two uses of the spoken words, however, is important. The Passover account recalled certain past events which were intended for the present and the future, even as was the case with Jesus' words of institution as He also indicated that the repetition of His words and actions in the Lord's Supper was to be done in remembrance of Him. It was not so much only a replacing of the old covenant sacrament in the Passover as a continuation of it in perfected and glorified form in the fulfilled revelation in

⁵Alfred Edersheim, The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1947), II, 513.

the Messiah.

These arguments of Jeremias standing singly would not prove conclusively that the Lord's Supper was instituted at a Passover, but taken together, they make a decided impact, especially when the biblical account will verify the statements.

The institution of the Lord's Supper came at the end of the Passover meal, so that this was the last Passover of Jesus. It was to mark the end of an era. Ylvisaker says:

We do not believe that they partook again of the paschal lamb after the Holy Supper was instituted.⁶

All this was done while the betrayal was going on. It was similar to the Passover in that the Passover preceded the liberation from bondage while the institution of the Lord's Supper preceded His liberating death for the relief from the bondage of sin.

Having established the Lord's Supper as occurring on the night of Jesus' betrayal as He completed the Passover celebration, it is then proper to examine in detail the actions, words, and elements employed in instituting the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

⁶Ylvisaker, op. cit., p. 658.

CHAPTER III

TOOK BREAD

Our Lord Jesus Christ in the night He was betrayed took bread. He took the remains of the Passover bread which was before Him. This was to be one of the visible elements in the institution of His supper. It is important to see just what the significance of this bread is even apart from its being a vehicle of divine grace.

Robertson¹ points out that the Greek word here used for bread, *ἄρτος*, comes from the verb form, *ἄω*, meaning "to join or fit." This can be applied to the bread which Jesus had before Him. It was flour mixed with water and baked. Two ingredients for human nourishment were joined to make an even more palatable and nourishing product by the process of baking.

Behm² states that *ἄρτος* was the word used by Hippocrates for wheat bread. Although Behm leans heavily on the Johannine conception of the "living bread" and the rest of Jesus' discourse in John 6, yet what he has to say

¹Archibald Thomas Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1930), I, 155.

²Johannes Behm, "*ἄρτος*," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1933), I, 475-476.

about bread as a means of physical nourishment also being used as a vehicle of spiritual nourishment in the Lord's Supper can be applied in all of the sacramental passages. This idea of joining flour and water by means of baking can also be applied to the joining of the bread with the promise of Christ on the basis of Christ's word and promise that this is His body. This brings about a participation in salvation which will be later discussed in the chapter on the communion.

If it is assumed that the Lord's Supper was instituted in connection with the Passover, there is little difficulty in establishing that the bread used was unleavened. The Israelites used unleavened bread at the first Passover because of the Lord's command and because of the haste required in its baking in connection with the impending exodus from the bondage of the land of Egypt. At first the festival of the unleavened bread was separate from the Passover, but at the time of Jesus it was a combined festival. The eating of the unleavened bread was integrated with the eating of the Passover lamb.

The Greek word *ἄρτος* does not prove that the bread was unleavened because it is the general word used for bread. The Greek word for unleavened bread is *ἄζυμος*. Many critics therefore point out that leavened bread could just as well have been used by our Lord in the Lord's Supper, since they say there is no basis for claiming that

ἄρτος means unleavened bread. This would be true only if it could be proven that *ἄρτος* is never used to designate unleavened bread. Besides the use of leavened bread would not conform to the Passover background for the institution of the Lord's Supper.

Jeremias says, "In Wahrheit ist die Behauptung, ungesäuertes Brot könne nicht als *ἄρτος* bezeichnet werden, falsch."³ Jeremias goes on to show that the showbread on the table in the outer chamber of the temple, which Jewish literature says is unleavened, is called *ἄρτοι* in Greek.⁴

This should show that on the basis of the word used for bread in the Greek text of the words of institution it is impossible to definitely state whether the bread was leavened or unleavened. That fact must be supplied on the basis of the Passover tradition which insisted on the use of unleavened bread.

Lenski⁵ raises an interesting grammatical problem at this point. *ἄρτος* is masculine whereas in referring back to it Jesus uses the neuter pronoun *τὸ*. Lenski solves the problem by making the antecedent no longer the bread

³Joachim Jeremias, Die Abendmahlsworte Jesu (Goettingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1935), p. 27.

⁴Ibid., p. 28.

⁵R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Mark's and St. Luke's Gospels (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, c.1934), p. 384.

but the thing which Jesus gives to His disciples. This is no longer the bread but it is bread having been blessed and for which thanksgiving had been made. This supports Lenski's emphasis upon the consecration of the elements, but this interpretation is hardly necessary upon the basis of the grammar. *τὸ* is the subject of the sentence which has *σῶμα* as its predicate complement. *σῶμα* is a neuter noun and governs the gender of the pronomial subject. Taken thus, the sentence makes excellent grammatical sense. Since no possible noun intervenes between the *ἄρτος* and the *σῶμα*, the two still are related to each other, though not as direct appositives. Jesus did not use the word *ἄρτος* since He had the item in question before himself. Therefore He could legitimately say *τὸ*.

The fact that Jesus broke the bread need not be interpreted to mean that the bread at all the successive celebrations of the Lord's Supper must be broken. The bread was in sheet-like pieces upon the table. In order to be distributed, the bread had to be broken. The manner of distribution is not essential, but the fact of the distribution and reception is essential for the completion of the communion.

CHAPTER IV

HAVING GIVEN THANKS

After Jesus took the bread and the cup successively into His hands, He gave thanks before distributing to the disciples. St. Matthew and St. Mark use the word *ἐυλογήσας*, "blessed," for the bread and *εὐχαριστήσας*, "having given thanks," for the cup. St. Luke and St. Paul use *εὐχαριστήσας* in connection with the bread and indicate the same was true of the cup. In I Corinthians 10:16 St. Paul uses "bless" again. In this connection the words seem to be used interchangeably.

Instead of raising a question of difficulty in interpretation, the use of two words here merely enriches the meaning of the act. Ylvisaker says, "*ἐυλογήσας, εὐχαριστήσας*. One word supplements the other. He gave thanks to God and blessed the bread through prayer."¹ In the remainder of this chapter the two words will be considered as denoting one concept.

In post-apostolic and patristic times, as Vincent²

¹Joh. Ylvisaker, The Gospels: A Synoptic Presentation of the Text in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John with Explanatory Notes (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1932), footnote p. 661.

²Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), III, 250-251.

shows, the word "eucharist" was first applied as a technical term for the Lord's Supper or to the consecrated elements. This kept the view uppermost that the Lord's Supper was a service of thanksgiving with a memorial aspect. The term fell into disuse as the sacrificial element of the Lord's Supper became the dominant feature. The modern Church has as yet not been able to keep these various aspects of the Lord's Supper in proper balance. Doctrine and practice tend to be interwoven in this respect.

Beyer³ explains that blessing is related to curse as a factor in primitive religion. Blessing plays an important part in the lives of the Old Testament believers. In fact, the promise of blessing is one of the features of the religion of Israel. The patriarchs made it a regular policy to bestow a blessing on their heirs, often with great ceremonies. Yet the blessing depended upon God for its completion and fulfillment. The people were familiar with the temple ceremony which included the Aaronitic blessing.

The New Testament carries over the Old Testament ideas including the obligation to praise God with thankfulness. Jewish families prayed at the table, and Jesus, being one of them, followed the custom. This is where the New Testament concept of *εὐλογία* enters this picture. It

³H. W. Beyer, "*εὐλογία*," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1933), II, 751-763.

refers to a blessing particularly in the sense of a table prayer.

In connection with the use of the word in I Corinthians 10:16, Beyer says, "Paulus braucht hier den jedem Juden geläufigen Ausdruck τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας."⁴ A cup of blessing was used as part of the Friday evening meal in hallowing the Sabbath and it played a prominent role as the third cup to be passed around as part of the Passover ritual. Jesus Christ made use of this cup of blessing in instituting His supper toward the close of the celebration of the regular Passover meal.

This brief word study leads inevitably to the big problem of the consecration of the elements in the Lord's Supper. From the earliest post-apostolic times onward great importance was attached to some form of recitation for the words of institution, usually in a prayer form but sometimes declaratory. This recitation was to "consecrate" the elements for use in the Lord's Supper. It was a setting apart for use as divine vehicles of grace. Later on even the dogma of transubstantiation grew out of it. The words then accomplished the miracle of changing the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ so that only the appearances of bread and wine remained. The difficul-

⁴Ibid., p. 760.

ties connected with this view will be shown in the last chapter of this thesis.

Lenski says very boldly:

If the cup (and the bread) is not blessed by consecration, no sacrament is received. Paul does not say what words of blessing the apostolic church used. We are quite certain that they were not the words that were originally spoken by Christ when he consecrated the elements, for these words have not been preserved to us for the very reason, too, that we are not to repeat them.⁵

It is difficult to interpret this statement of Lenski's because it seems to indicate two somewhat contradictory things. In the first place it emphasizes the need for a specific consecration without which the sacrament is not considered valid. In the second place it indicates that we have no specific formula for bringing about this consecration because Christ's original words have not been preserved for us. Lenski writes further:

Our sacrament complies with Christ's original words and has abiding power when we truly obey his sacramental command: "This do." In order to make sure of this essential point the church uses the so-called words of institution when she consecrates the elements and adds the Lord's Prayer instead of a prayer of her own. The words of institution plus this prayer are our *εὐχαριστία*. The consecrated cup must, of course, also be received by the communicants in order that there may be a sacrament. But not merely a blessing of some kind suffices to make the cup thus received "a communion of the blood of Christ," it must be a specific

⁵R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul's First and Second Epistles to the Corinthians (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg Press, c.1946), p. 408.

sacramental blessing, i. e., one that certainly connects the cup with Christ and his original and efficacious institution of the sacrament.⁶

This problem would not concern the exegete as much as the liturgiologist if it were not for the fact that doctrine underlies liturgy and Scripture is basic to both. There are miraculous instances of blessing in the New Testament. Jesus Christ miraculously fed five thousand or more people with five loaves and two fish, yet one can not say directly that the miracle was due to the blessing. In this case the miracle itself was a blessing, entirely independent of Jesus' words or actions. Jesus' power can not be limited to words or actions, nor to their proper or improper usage.

The same can be said concerning the use of the words of institution at the Lord's Supper. The elements were consecrated once for all time by Jesus Christ himself. Our subsequent handling of the elements must be done in the spirit of His intention and in the fulfillment of His promises.

One would never say that the water in the baptismal font is consecrated by the recitation of the words of the Great Commission (St. Matthew 28:19-20). Yet, by analogy with the words of our Lord used in instituting the Lord's Supper, that would have to be the case. Both passages

⁶Ibid., p. 409.

(the Great Commission and the Words of Institution) should be read at the respective sacramental services but not as consecrations. These words portray the background, commands and promises upon which the sacraments are based. They work no magic or miracles in and of themselves.

The Lutheran Church has used these words in a peculiar way. One wonders whether they have not often been said as a prayer (without an "Amen") by the officiant facing the altar and accompanied as they were by some form of manipulation of the elements. Then portions of the words are repeated to each communicant. One asks whether this does not amount to a double consecration where on strictly doctrinal grounds none is actually needed. Realizing the logical and practical difficulties involved in this treatment, a committee composed of men from the American Lutheran Church, the Augustana Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Suomi Synod, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the United Lutheran Church in America has started a revision of the communion service.

The Eucharistic Prayer

This is the prayer which has been prepared by this committee for use in the communion service.

Holy art Thou, Almighty and Merciful God. Holy art Thou, and great is the Majesty of Thy glory.

Thou didst so love the world as to give Thine Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life: Who, having come into the world to fulfill for us Thy holy will and to accomplish all things for our salvation, in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave it to His disciples saying, Take, eat: This is my Body which is given for you: This do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also, He took the cup, when He had supped, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it: This cup is the New Testament in my Blood, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins: This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore His salutary precept, His life-giving Passion and Death, His glorious Resurrection and Ascension and the promise of His coming again, We give thanks to Thee, O Lord God Almighty, not as we ought, but as we are able; and we beseech Thee mercifully to accept our praise and thanksgiving, and with Thy Word and Holy Spirit to bless us, Thy servants, and these Thine own gifts of bread and wine, so that we and all who partake thereof may be filled with heavenly benediction and grace, and, receiving the remission of sins, be sanctified in soul and body and have our portion with all Thy saints.

And unto Thee, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory in Thy Holy Church, world without end. Amen.

The words of institution are included in this prayer. However, a rubric indicating the manipulation of the elements is also included which still keeps the idea of a consecration. It is a step forward in the right direction from the Jewish idea of blessing to the more

7 "The Prayer of Thanksgiving," Liturgical Texts, approved by the Joint Commission on the Liturgy, Easter Week, 1950. (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House), pp. 18-19.

strictly New Testament idea of giving thanks.

In summary it can be said that the most important concept to grasp from the fact that Jesus Christ blessed and gave thanks in connection with the visible elements of the sacrament is that the special presence of God was desired at this new supper. Consecration can be thought of only in the sense that the action designates the elements which will be used as vehicles of divine grace without in the least affecting them.

The Reformed Church has taken the stand that the word, "is," in the Eucharist, for the Eucharist is this permanent sign does not mean "is" but "symbolizes" or "signifies" or "stands for." Such a view can not be sustained in the English language and surely not in any other language as rightly pointed out by the Greek. According to the best grammatical usage, "is" must always be taken to be a simple copulative verb which denotes a relation between subject and predicate complement so as to make them equivalent, complementary, or descriptive.

One can say, "the automobile is pink." Pink is not different from automobile but merely supplies another detail to the description of the automobile. The same is true in the sentence, "the sun is pink." Whereas one

CHAPTER V

THIS IS MY BODY

After Jesus had taken the bread and given thanks, He brake it and gave it to the disciples saying, "This is my body." Immediately upon reading these words the logician and grammarian see here a figure of speech, preferably a metaphor. It is possible to admit a figure of speech here without in the least impairing the sense if this is properly done.

The Reformed Church has taken the stand that the *ἐστιν*, "is," is the figure. For the theologians of this persuasion *ἐστιν* does not mean "is" but "symbolizes" or "signifies" or at best "stands for." Such a misuse can not be condoned in the English language and surely not in any other language as highly polished as the Greek. According to the best grammatical usages, "is" must always be taken to be a simple copulative verb which denotes a relation between subject and predicate complement so as to make them equivalent, complementary, or descriptive.

One can say, "The automobile is pink." Pink is not different from automobile but merely supplies another detail to the description of the automobile. The same is true in the sentence, "The snow is pink." Whereas the

detail here is contrary to natural perception, the relationship still stands grammatically. "The automobile is a motorcycle" states this predicate relation a little differently because the predicate now no longer strictly states a quality of the subject but is equivalent to the subject since it is also a noun, the same part of speech as the subject.

Pronouns may also be used in these complementary relationships. In the sentence, "This is an automobile," the speaker is indicating an object when he says "this." Whatever he may indicate with the word "this" he means that object is an automobile.

It will be noted that the verb in these illustrative sentences is the same in every instance. "Is" here denotes the state of being. One could not say, "The automobile signifies pink" nor "The snow symbolizes pink" nor even the reverse. "Pink signifies snow" would hardly be correct to the person who has seen that snow is white and would be better symbolized by white. Although the sentence with the word "is" states a falsehood to the reason and senses when one says "The automobile is a motorcycle," yet to say, "The automobile signifies a motorcycle," or "The motorcycle symbolizes an automobile" would be changing the expressly intended meaning of the words. When the word "is" is used, the words before and after it may often be interchanged. This can not be done when "signifies" or

"symbolizes" is used.

Reformed theology started out with the idea that "is" in the words of institution meant "signifies" and therefore contained a metaphor. This idea fell into disuse very early, but it still comes up once in a while. Careful grammatical study simply will not permit such an interpretation.

These interpreters do not hold such an interpretation consistently or they would invalidate the whole revealed teaching of God in the Bible. "And the Word was God" (St. John 1:1) means that Jesus, "the Word," was God. If He only symbolized or signified God, then there would as yet be no revelation of God outside of nature and the Christian faith would be a meaningless creedal formulation. In St. John's gospel are many "I am" passages in which Jesus calls Himself the "door," "shepherd," "bread of life," etc. If the "am" were used so as to make Jesus say, "I symbolize the door," then the seeker of truth can well say, "If you merely symbolize the door, then away with you, give me the real thing."

Applying this grammatical study to the words of institution, one can ask the same question, "If this merely symbolizes the body of Christ, then there is not much use in having the symbol. Why not have the real thing?" If it is impossible to have the real thing, then to treat the symbol as the real thing is a form of idolatry. This one

avoids by taking "is" to actually mean "is." The Lutheran Church has always maintained the true meaning of ἔστιν throughout the Bible.

There are metaphors in the Bible and there may be in the words of institution, but to establish these on the basis of a wrong meaning for the copulative verb is to invalidate the use of the word, or at least seriously to question its use, throughout the Bible or any other literature. Consequently, if a metaphor is to be found here, it must be sought in the subject or the complement. In this sentence of the words of institution it would be difficult to establish a metaphor in the subject, τούτο, which is a demonstrative pronoun. As previously mentioned,¹ the τούτο designates what Christ holds in His hands, which the context tells us is bread. Since the copulative verb, ἔστιν, also appears here, τούτο also serves as predicate complement to the σῶμα, being interchangeable with it. Finding a metaphor in "this" would be impossible without finding a metaphor in whatever is designated by the "this." That means there is also a metaphor in "body." This would result in everything becoming nebulous and obscure.

That leaves only one possibility for the metaphor, namely σῶμα, translated "body." After the grammarian has finished his job on "this" and "is," the biblical inter-

¹Supra, pp. 24-25.

preter has to work out the meaning of "body" on the basis of the inspired text and context. This is begun by assuming that there is no metaphor present. The word "body" is taken to mean body unless it can be proven that Jesus meant it otherwise. The meaning of the word body will decide whether it can be made applicable in this instance. If this can not be done, then a metaphor of some kind must be inferred.

The early Church was often accused of cannibalism because ignorant unbelievers wrongly interpreted what they heard concerning the eating of Christ's body. This should lead one to think that early generations of believers actually believed the body of Christ to be received in the sacrament. The question of the "real presence" will be discussed in the last chapter.

Meanwhile, what is meant by the word *σῶμα* as Jesus here uses it? The word is translated "body," yet it is not meant in the crass, obviously material sense. Then the word *σάρξ* would have fit better which means "flesh." There must be a reason why *σῶμα* was used and not *σάρξ*. Besides, why is there a separation of the sacrament into two elements, body and blood? Althaus attempts an answer when he says:

"Leib" und "Blut," in ihrem Nebeneinander, bezeichnen das Leben als sterbendes und nur als solches. Nur im Tode scheiden sich Leib und Blut. Jesus deutet in der symbolischen Handlung also auf

seinen Opfertod. Er gibt den Jüngern sein Leben als sterbendes hin.²

The question then is whether "body" and "blood" denote the same thing, two aspects of one thing, or two entirely different things. Althaus indicates correctly that body and blood are separated only in death, but that is true only when death results from the shedding of the blood so as to render the body lifeless. This immediately links the account of the Lord's Supper to the Passover with its sacrificed lamb and to the death of Jesus Himself which was to take place the next day. Without the former as background and the latter as fulfillment, the Lord's Supper would be a mere ceremony without value.

Whereas "flesh" indicates that part of our being which is laid to rest in a cemetery after a period of years, "body" indicates more than that. Body includes the whole concept of life and personality. The divinity as well as the humanity of Christ's body must be considered. His body had the human, fleshly attributes which came to it through its union with Christ as the divine Son of God. The body could be true and natural in essence and in glorious condition, thus having glorious properties

²Faul Althaus, Die lutherische Abendmahllehre in der Gegenwart (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1931), p. 39.

which were not used during the humiliation. Communicants receive the glorified body, not the mere fleshly body.

Many theologians have wrestled with this problem. Krauth, one of them says:

It is evident that as it is only after Christ's blessing the bread, that it is true that "This," which He now commands us to "Take, eat," is His body--and that this bread [p. 609] was just as much a symbol out of the sacrament as in it--that the "this" cannot refer to the bread merely, nor can the bread in the Supper be more than a symbol.³

This is in agreement with Lenski as to the effect of consecration on the elements. These two men hold one view. The unbiased reader asks whether they succeed in avoiding the doctrine of transubstantiation.

On the other side stands Robertson who says that the body here means the mystical or spiritual body of Christ which is the Church of which Christ is the head (Colossians 1:18, Ephesians 5:23).⁵ That explanation would be good on the surface but not in the context. This mystical body can hardly be eaten nor can it be given for us. The Church can administer the sacrament, but it cannot itself

³C. P. Krauth, The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology: as Represented in the Augsburg Confession, and in the History and Literature of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, c.1913), pp. 608-609.

⁴Supra, pp. 29-30.

⁵Archibald Thomas Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Richard R. Smith, Ind., 1930), IV, 155.

be handled sacramentally as Jesus here obviously handles His body.

Althaus hardly gives an acceptable position when he says, "Das Handeln der Gemeinde im Namen Jesu ist heute seine uns betreffende Leiblichkeit."⁶ He says again, "Brot und Wein als ausgeteilte und empfangene sind heute Jesu uns betreffende Leiblichkeit."⁷

The safest interpretation of the whole phrase, "This is my body," is to take it literally. One lets the copulative verb mean just what it says. The demonstrative pronoun as subject contains no metaphor. It refers forward grammatically and backward in content and designation. The predicate complement, "body," is taken in its wider rather than in its narrower meaning. This rules out the changing of the bread into the body by some sort of magical or miraculous process. It also rules out the symbolical or mystical interpretation which designates "body" as a metaphor and seeks to make it mean the Church as the body of Christ. One does not want the body of a dead Saviour according to the days of the humiliation which any emphasis on the "flesh" produces. Nor does one want a Saviour so far removed from the world that He does

⁶Althaus, op. cit., p. 47.

⁷Loc. cit.

not have any contact with humanity, dealing with it only in a mystical fashion. The Lord's Supper is not a funeral meal memorializing a dead Saviour, but it is a wedding feast in which Christ, the head, is united with His body, the Church, through His own commanded sacramental means. It anticipates the final marriage supper of the slain Lamb in heaven.

At the conclusion of the Passover meal, Jesus gave the disciples His body by means of unleavened bread. As the second part of the institution of the Lord's Supper, Jesus gave them His blood to drink by means of the cup of wine which was present on the table at this meal.

It is interesting to consider the physical elements which constitute this part of the Supper. The cup is of no great importance. It is mentioned merely as the container for the wine. Since a liquid cannot be handled

In the possession of Dr. John G. Thompson of New York is a cup, called the chalice of Antioch from the place of its discovery, which some scholars believe may have been the actual cup used by Christ at the institution of the Lord's Supper. The inner cup is of plain silver whereas the outer one is elaborately carved with figures of Christ and the apostles, vines, loaves and fish, etc. all very symbolic. Further information on this chalice can be found: See: Henry H. Kelley, *Eastern Bible Handbook: An Abbreviated Bible Commentary* (Chicago: Henry H. Kelley, 1943), pp. 308-309. Also: H. Howard Aramson, "The History of the Chalice of Antioch," *The Biblical Archaeologist* (New Haven, Connecticut: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1941), IV, 40-54.

CHAPTER VI

HE TOOK THE CUP, MY BLOOD

After the same manner also when He had supped, He took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them saying, Drink ye all of it. This cup is the New Testament in my blood.

At the conclusion of the Passover meal, Jesus gave the disciples His body by means of unleavened bread. As the second part of the institution of the Lord's Supper, Jesus gave them His blood to drink by means of the cup of wine which was present on the table at this meal.

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without a container, it is easy to speak of the container and the contents as one unit, since it is also obvious that Jesus here meant the contents not the container. One can not possibly drink a cup, but one can drink the contents of the cup.

Because of the supposed short ending of St. Luke's gospel and various references to the Passover ritual, it has sometimes been hard to determine just which cup is here meant. Strack-Billerbeck² believe that the third cup of the Passover is here meant. It is properly referred to as a "cup of blessing" and therefore is in complete accord with St. Paul in I Corinthians 10:16.

Arguing that the cup followed after the meal, not only after the eating of the bread, Reu describes it thus:

This is what Paul had in mind when he wrote *μετὰ τὸ δεῖναι*. The eating of the Passover lamb was followed by a long, more general prayer and after that by a prayer of thanks (Matthew as well as Mark wrote *ευχαριστίας*); and now the third cup, called the cup of thanksgiving, was passed. As Jesus had connected the first part of His new supper with the distribution of the unleavened bread, so now he connected the second part with the passing of the cup of thanksgiving as the eating of the lamb was over.³

²Hermann L. Strack und Paul Billerbeck, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung [Oskar Beck], 1922), III, 419.

³M. Reu, Can We Still Hold to the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper? (Columbus, Ohio: The Wartburg Press, 1941), p. 56.

With this brief description of the cup itself and the role that it played in the celebration, it is next proper to examine its contents. The Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and some Reformed Churches have traditionally used wine. With the increased emphasis in modern society on prohibition, temperance, and scientific analysis of alcoholic intoxication and its habit-forming properties, a movement has gotten started within the Church to substitute grape juice for wine. Some of the liberal scholars even believe that the biblical text will permit this. Before entering into that argument it would be well to investigate what is meant by wine according to some scholars. Vincent says, "The wine was the ordinary one of the country, only red. [*italics V.*] It was mixed with water, generally in the proportion of one part to two of water."⁴ This is a pretty clear picture as to what the cup contained.

Lenski becomes overly dogmatic without sure footing in Scripture when he writes:

Hence the use of any other liquid than actual wine made from grapes--this alone was "wine" in Christ's day, this alone was used in the Passover--renders the Sacrament invalid, so that it ceases to be the Sacrament.⁵

Conceivably, then, churches and missions established

⁴Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), I, 227.

⁵R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Mark's and St. Luke's Gospels (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, c.1934), p. 386.

in areas of the world where grapes are not grown for climatic or other reasons must import all of their sacramental wine or else be without the blessings and benefits of this Sacrament. To be sure, the Lord's Supper is not absolutely essential to salvation, therefore ceasing its celebration for lack of the traditional physical elements will be a hardship but an unavoidable one. Christ's word and elements must be remembered.

That wine was actually used by Jesus is thus stated by Reu:

Only on special occasions was it custom to drink wine in Palestine, at family festivals or at a banquet, the circumcision, betrothal, marriage meal, also during the first week after a funeral; then on Passah, Pentecost, and Tabernacle festivals.⁶

This is in essential agreement with Jeremias' argument on the use of wine at the Passover, previously stated.⁷ It is thus shown that Jesus used wine at the first Lord's Supper. His followers are to emulate that example as far as possible, always bearing in mind Christ's original elements and institution.

The sacramental value of the wine is an even more important consideration. Of the cup Jesus says, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood shed for you." The important concept of the "New Testament" will be reserved

⁶Reu, ibid., p. 35.

⁷Supra, p. 19.

for the following chapter. Here first consideration will be given to the verb "shed." Vincent says that "is being shed" is the proper translation for ἑκχυρόμενον because to the Lord the sacrifice was already being offered.⁸ Christ was instituting the Supper in the light of the consequences of the next day when His blood actually would be shed on Calvary's cross. It is impossible to divorce the celebration of the Lord's Supper from the events of Good Friday which actually give the Sacrament its validity. The body and blood of a living person can not be given to others without the sacrifice of the person who is the donor.

The idea of a blood sacrifice as it is used here is definitely couched in the tradition of the Old Testament Judaism which had for more than a thousand years of its history experienced the idea. Behm⁹ points out that flesh and blood are the constituents of weakness in an earthly being. Blood is the carrier of life in the body as any simple study of physiology indicates. Except for the refined methods sometimes used in our civilized society, killing is still done by the shedding of blood. Even for modern man, meat to be eaten should be "butchered,"

⁸Vincent, *ibid.*, p. 227.

⁹Johannes Behm, "ἄρρα," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1933), I, 171-176.

that is, it must be killed in such a manner that the blood is drained from the body rather than left in the flesh. The Jews were forbidden to partake of blood. It was, however, satisfactory for sacrifice, Leviticus 17:11. In Old Testament terminology "to shed blood" was to destroy life. This is expressed by Behm: "'Blut Christi' ist wie 'Kreuz' nur ein anderer, anschaulicher Ausdruck für den Tod Christi in seiner Heilsbedeutung."¹⁰

Strack-Billerbeck¹¹ understand the blood to refer to Exodus 24:8. This was the blood of the covenant which Moses sprinkled upon the people. The blood was for the people even as Jesus' blood was to be partaken of by the communicants or guests at His Supper.

It actually refers to the blood poured out against the base of the altar in Ex 24:6 or in subsequent Passover celebrations of Jerusalem, The Temple.

It need not appear strange on the basis of the Old Testament that Jesus chose red wine as the vehicle for the conveying of His precious blood. Genesis 49:11 and Deuteronomy 32:14 refer to the "blood of the grapes." Isaiah 63:3,6 refers to Jesus' treading the winepress alone. This is a figurative reference to His shedding of His own blood. It was He alone who gave His blood for the forgiveness of sins. Even as the grapes are duly squeezed and crushed to produce wine, so His body was beaten, bruised, and speared to shed His blood upon the cross of Calvary.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 173.

¹¹Strack-Billerbeck, op. cit., I, 991.

There is another correlation between wine and blood which should not be overlooked. Wine as a beverage with alcoholic content has an exhilarating effect upon the person who drinks it in such a manner that a little of it acts as a stimulant. Too much, of course, tends to overstimulation, and consequently dullness if not actual deadness results.

The same holds true with the blood of Christ. It is a life-giving element in its proper use. The blood was shed to redeem fallen mankind, to forgive people their sins. Life follows this as Luther says in explaining the Lord's Supper in his Small Catechism, "for where there is forgiveness of sins there is also life and salvation."

The problem arises because any translation of the word requires something to be read into it. The Septuagint renders it *kyrios* in all cases except Deuteronomy 1:15 and 1 Kings 11:11. In some instances in the Old Testament (*kyrios* *kyrios*, I Samuel 1:24, 2:12, and 1 Kings 11:11) it seems an agreement between the human parties on a matter and *kyrios* *kyrios*. Yet when God is a party to

acknowledgment should have been made to Prof. J. F. Miller, former Methodist missionary, St. Paul, who prepared the Old Testament concordance along with a word study of "kyrios" as used in the Old Testament.

CHAPTER, VII

THE NEW COVENANT

With the words "This cup is the New Testament in my blood" Jesus consciously links His Supper with the previous testament given to Israel. The Greek word here used is *διαθήκη*. This word occurs thirty-three times in the New Testament. In the Authorized Version it is translated "covenant" twenty-one times and "testament" twelve times, mostly in Hebrews and in connection with the Lord's Supper. The Revised Version uses "covenant" thirty-one times and "testament" only twice in Hebrews 9 and 16. Some students of Hellenistic Greek feel that "testament" should be used in every case in the New Testament.

The problem arises because any translation of the word requires something to be read into it.¹ The Septuagint renders *בְּרִית* as *διαθήκη* in all cases except Deuteronomy 9:15 and I Kings 11:11. In some instances in the Old Testament (Genesis 21:27, I Samuel 18:3, 23:18, and I Kings 20:34) *בְּרִית* means an agreement between two human parties on a mutual and equal basis. Yet when God is a party to

¹Acknowledgment should here be made to Prof. J. P. Milton, Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, who presented his Old Testament exegesis class with a word study of "covenant" as used in the Old Testament.

a covenant, it can be mutual but surely not equal. Then it is a sanction or disposition by God to which man can do nothing but agree. Two reactions are forthcoming from man: either faith and obedience or unbelief and rebellion. God covenanted with Noah, Abraham, David, and even with the whole Hebrew nation during the course of Old Testament history as recorded for us.

The emphasis is upon the promises of God rather than upon the commandments. The word *δικθήκη* means a legal disposition or testament. In view of the meaning of *ἰσχυρά* as an agreement, *συνθήκη* would probably have been better. Yet that would remove the absolutely divine origin and character of the covenant. A word can not be translated by a definition. Consequently, the Septuagint translators took a close word, *δικθήκη*, and gave it an emphasis in view of their desired meaning. A covenant or testament, therefore, is a solemn and sovereign disposition of God by which He gives us the Gospel promise, which man can accept or reject.

After this background material is surveyed, it is necessary to look at the covenant specifically in reference to the Lord's Supper. Vincent² points out that the noun is modified by the adjective *καίρη*. He distinguishes

²Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), I, 138-139.

between νέον and καινόν. The former denotes time or quality while the latter shows something as not yet defined or showing signs of dissolution. Vincent admits that this distinction can not be pressed in all cases.

Behm³ likes to consider the covenant in connection with the Kingdom of God. As the Father wills the kingdom to the Son, so the Son here wills His followers to have participation (Mitherrschaft) in the kingdom. St. Paul points out the binding effect of any covenant in Galatians 3:15.

The most important occurrence of this word in the Synoptics is in the Verba Testamenti. Paul connects it with the chalice, hence the death of Christ. In summarizing Behm says:

Die καινή διαθήκη ist ein Korrelatbegriff zur βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ . . . διαθήκη ist durchgehends die Verfügung Gottes, die machtvolle Kundgebung des souveränen Willens Gottes, in der Geschichte, durch die er das Verhältnis zwischen sich und den Menschen gemäss seiner Heilsabsicht gestaltet, die autoritative göttliche Verordnung (Stiftung), die eine entsprechende Ordnung der Dinge herbeiführt.⁴

The correlation between the covenant and the kingdom is very interesting. Those who accept the covenant are members of the kingdom and consequently heirs of the promise of the testament. This kingdom is often identified with

³Johannes Behm, "διαθήκη," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1933), II, 105-137.

⁴Ibid., p. 137.

the Christian Church here on earth. Usually the definition also specifies that only true members make up the real, proper, or invisible Church. Since the Means of Grace, in which the sacraments are included, are administered in and through the Church and, properly speaking, nowhere else, the identification of the kingdom with the Church and the covenant or testament is established. The covenant is made with each individual Christian, yet only as he is a member of the group which constitute the Christian Church. The Church exists where the faith and promises are and the faith and promises exist where the Church is.

The thought of a "new" covenant would not be entirely strange to the disciples who were gathered about Jesus at the Lord's Supper. The prophet Jeremiah (31:31-34) prophesied concerning the new covenant written in the hearts of men. People would know the Lord and He would forgive them their sins. Jesus brought this about in the fuller revelation which He himself was.

Reu sees this fulfillment in the Church and the Kingdom of God in close relation.

Even the thought of the "new" covenant was no entirely new idea compared with the discourses of Jesus, since it was indicated by the emphasis which Jesus in Matthew 16:18 laid on the future tense and on the personal pronoun: *ὁμιθεομίσω* and *μου*, I shall build *my* *ἐκκλησίαν*; the new *ἐκκλησίαν* and the new covenant are closely connected ideas.⁵

⁵M. Reu, Can We Still Hold to the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper? (Columbus, Ohio: The Wartburg Press, 1941), p. 38

Neither the Church nor the covenant could exist separately. They depend upon and grow out of each other.

Although Strack-Billerbeck⁶ believe the blood to be that of Exodus 24, Reu wishes to have the blood of the covenant refer back to that of Exodus 12⁷ which speaks of the blood being sprinkled upon the doorposts. This makes it a means of salvation from death. The blood of Jesus Christ is that indeed. There may also be a possible allusion to Zechariah 9:11.

See
p. 48
of
thesis

Since the benefits of a will or testament can first be received when the testator dies, it is easy to see the connection of the blood with the covenant also here.

This blood is modified as the blood of the new covenant; and this can mean nothing else than the blood that established the covenant. To speak accurately we must say: According to Matthew and Mark Jesus spoke of the blood by means of which the covenant is established, and according to Paul He spoke of the covenant that is established by the blood. In both cases blood and covenant are inseparably connected. Furthermore: Matthew and Mark describe the blood as blood that is about to be shed (*τὸ περὶ (Mark ἕπερ) πολλῶν ἐκχυνόμενον*). Paul does not have this modifying clause, but this causes no uneasiness to him who knows that the New Testament, when speaking of the blood of Christ, never means the blood that flowed in His veins while He lived but always the blood that was shed.⁸

⁶Supra, p. 48.

⁷Reu, op. cit., p. 59.

⁸Ibid., p. 57.

Of course, the blood that flowed in His veins was also the blood that was shed. However, it took the act of shedding the blood with its consequent surrender of life to establish the covenant. This raises the question as to how the disciples at the original institution could partake of blood which was about to be shed. This is usually explained as a miraculous anticipation wrought by Christ because of His divine powers. This will be more fully discussed later.

The concept of children being heirs of the covenant as St. Paul so vividly presents it in Romans 8:17 can not be overlooked. In this respect Christians are sharers in a covenant by virtue of becoming members of the covenant through baptism. This makes the Lord's Supper a continual strengthening and renewing of this covenant.

The whole covenant concept in the New Testament is based upon and interwoven with the Old Testament concept. The new fulfills, continues, and replaces the old. The old covenant was based upon the same gracious promise of God as the new. The commandments of Moses have given way to the Christian principle of love. The blood of the sacrificial lambs has been replaced by the blood of the Lamb of God. The Lord's Supper has succeeded the Passover. The children of the covenant are no longer the racial Israel but the spiritual house of Israel, the redeemed Christians in the Church.

The entire sacramental action at the Lord's Supper is a reminder of the covenant and testament. The body shows us the sharing in the love, heritage, and desires of the giver. The blood shows forth the death of the testator, which makes possible the reception of the benefits of the testament. By the death of the testator, the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given to the heirs according to the promise. This testament is entirely a one-way action. God gives it entirely. We can only be on the receiving end. Jesus Christ gave His body and blood. The only injunction which has been imposed upon us is to "do this" which means we should receive the grace given in the sacrament.

Althaus definitely points out that all of this is implied in the Words of Institution. He states that the life of the believer and recipient results from the death of the Giver.

Aber welches ist dann positiv der Sinn der Einsetzungsworte? Was heisst es, dass Jesus den Jüngern Brot und Wein als seinen Leib und sein Blut gibt. Die Handlung ist zunächst Jesu letztes Gleichnis: er verkündet im Sinnbild samt dem deutenden Worte sein nahes Sterben, er stellt indem er Brot und Wein zu Sinnbildern seines Opfertodes macht, die Bedeutung seines Todes für das Leben der Menschen dar: "Ihr lebet davon, dass ich sterbe." Aber das letzte Mahl Jesu ist nicht nur Predigt von dem Segen seines Todes in Form einer symbolischen Handlung, es ist in der Form der Gleichnishandlung selber Akt, Tat. Indem Jesus das Brot und den Wein zu Sinnbildern

seines Sterbens macht und so zu geniessen gibt, verleiht er ebendamit im gleichnishafte Pfande Anteil an dem Ertrage seines Sterbens.⁹

Thus we see that in the midst of death there is life. Christ died in order that those who believe on Him might have life thereby. The Testator provided for the wants of His heirs and survivors through the blood of the new testament or the new covenant.

⁹Paul Althaus, Die lutherische Abendmahlslehre in der Gegenwart (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1931), p. 43.

CHAPTER VIII

FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS

Jesus gave the disciples His holy body and blood by means of the bread and wine for a purpose. These loving acts which realized their full significance in Christ's death were for the sinful human race.

A look at the texts of the Synoptics reveals that St. Matthew specifically indicates that Christ's blood was shed for many for the remission of sins. St. Mark also says "for many" while St. Luke says "for you." The disciples were included in the promise of the forgiveness of sins, but the other Synoptics made sure to show that this act of grace was meant for all people. St. Paul says that the eating and drinking show forth Christ's death until He comes (again)--I Corinthians 11:26. This also makes it an act once for all time.

Jesus Christ died upon the cross, even as He had instituted the Lord's Supper, once for all men for all time to come. That made this new sacrifice so significant. It was not a yearly, monthly, weekly, or daily sacrifice for sin such as was customary for the Hebrew religion. This act of sacrifice and sacrament combined was once for all by an only-begotten Son of God. It was a unique act.

Examination of the Greek text reveals that two propositions are used here: $\pi\epsilon\rho\iota$ and $\u03b9\u03c3\u03c4\u03b5\rho$. The two are largely equivalent in their meaning here. Furthermore, Lenski¹ states, "These acts could not be "for," "in behalf of," "for the benefit of," unless they were "instead of." The whole dogmatic concept of the vicarious atonement enters into the consideration here. Without the extraordinary death of Christ as a perfect and substitutionary sacrifice, the promises of the Lord's Supper would be very meaningless.

A brief study of the concept of the grace of God is appropriate at this point.² In the first place, it is part of the nature of God to be gracious. Consequently, anything which God does because of His graciousness is grace. Grace is something which God effects. It is not a quantity but more a quality, or better yet, an activity. It is part of God's graciousness to redeem mankind from the sinfulness in which it finds itself. Although man is to blame for his condition, yet God did not want him to remain that way. The medium through which God works redemptively is His means of grace.

¹R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Mark's and St. Luke's Gospels (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, c.1934), p. 388.

²Acknowledgment is here made to Prof. George Aus, Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, for material gotten from his class lecture notes.

It should be stressed that grace is not a quantity. Gross errors could create havoc here. God is not sitting beside a big tank-like reservoir of grace in heaven and giving it out with a soup ladle. Man would then never know when he has had enough and God would have to provide an inlet to replenish His reservoir. That is contrary to the all-encompassing nature of God. The Roman Catholic Church has made just this error. The saints who lived their extraordinarily good lives accumulated surplus merit in the treasury in Rome which the pope can give out for a price to the average and below average mortals who have an excess of sinfully-gained demerits. This sort of work-righteousness is not Christian according to the Lutheran conception of grace and faith. God promises salvation to those who believe and one means of showing man that promise is in the Lord's Supper.

Too often the real value of the Lord's Supper as a means whereby we receive the grace of God is lost in the dogmatic and philosophical theories connected with the sacrament. Gohdes puts this across very pointedly:

The feeding on Christ Himself is not determined primarily by dogmatic positiveness and consistency but by the hunger and thirst for righteousness, by the depth of repentance, and by the desire to receive the blessing and power of the living Christ.³

³C. E. Gohdes, "A Review of the Traditional Lutheran Position on the Lord's Supper," The Lutheran Church Quarterly, XVII (October, 1944), 340-360.

In God's divine plan it was determined that when man, because of the freedom given to him as a personality, fell, he would be redeemed by God's only-begotten Son who would become man and as a unique God-man personality die as a sinless man so that man might be redeemed from sin. As that Son, Jesus Christ, was in the process of accomplishing all of this for man, He gave man a visible means by which this graciousness of God manifested in Christ's person might be appropriated by man. This He did in the Lord's Supper when He gave His body and blood by means of bread and wine for His disciples and all believers ever after to share. In receiving the body and blood of Christ we receive the forgiveness of sins which His death made possible for us. Then follow life and salvation because as Christ did not remain dead but arose, so we being sacramentally partakers of His death shall also be partakers of His resurrection unto eternal life.

. . . the essence of the Sacrament is the presence of Christ assuring His disciple of forgiveness, of His covenanted Kingdom, and of food for the soul through imparting Himself to the recipient.⁴

⁴Ibid., p. 349.

CHAPTER IX

IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

When Jesus said the words "This do in remembrance of me," the action for the first time centered in the recipient. So far Jesus had done and given everything. Now, finally, the spotlight is focused in the other direction and the believers learn about their part in the reception of the Lord's Supper.

Regarding this phrase, Reu discusses the text thus:

It is true, neither Matthew nor Mark nor the original text of Luke contain these words; but since when does it follow from the fact, that when one of the three or four telling the same story offers a new feature, this new feature is a later interpolation?¹

When a witness at a court trial offers some new or different bit of evidence, it is eagerly received. When an historian digs up and offers some new slants and facts, the picture as a whole is benefitted and the contribution is worthwhile though seemingly contradictory at times.

The exhortation to remembrance is considered by Behm² not so much a remembrance of Him as passively considered

¹M. Reu, Can We Still Hold to the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper? (Columbus, Ohio: The Wartburg Press, 1941), pp. 49-50.

²Johannes Behm, "ἀνάμνησις" Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1933), I, 351-352.

but an active remembrance in the doing of the Last Supper act with its therein grounded new covenant. Since a covenant with God cannot be equal but it can be mutual, the part of man's response in making it mutual is here brought forth. It takes a remembrance of Christ's original institution and its intimate connection with His death to make the Lord's Supper actually have its full meaning. The Lutheran Church faithfully recites the Words of Institution at its communion services, but, except, perhaps for Maundy Thursday, that is all the memorial that is found in our celebration of the sacrament. The Roman Mass had done it a little better. The Reformed Churches have overdone the memorial aspect of the Lord's Supper to the virtual exclusion of the consideration of the Sacrament as a means of grace.

Again one cannot help but make a comparison of this aspect of the Lord's Supper with the prototype as found in the celebration of the Hebrew Passover. Strack-Billerbeck state it thus:

Auch das Passahmahl sollte nach Ex. 12,14; 13,8f. u. Dt. 16,3 eine Gedächtnisfeier sein. In diesem Sinn hat die alte Synagoge ihre Passahfeier auch tatsächlich begangen; dabei waren die Blicke nicht bloss dankbar auf die Vergangenheit, auf die erste Erlösung, hingerichtet, sondern zugleich auch hoffend auf die Zukunft, die die endgültige Erlösung bringen sollte.³

³Hermann L. Strack und Paul Billerbeck, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch (München: C. H. Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung [Oskar Beck], 1922), II, 256.

Reu also states that it is Jesus' remembrance that is to be emphasized. Like the Passover,

The new supper that Jesus instituted is likewise to be repeated, and its repetition is likewise to serve as a memorial, but as a memorial of Him and the greater deliverance that He was about to accomplish by the shedding of His blood.⁴

The Lord's Supper holds the two-way look in common with the Passover, funerals, and other memorial occasions and services. The Passover looked back to the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage at the time of the first Passover, but it also looked forward to the coming of the Great Deliverer, the Messiah, who would redeem the people. Of course, many made this a temporal deliverance and redemption and so lost out on the joy of becoming active sharers and participants in Christ's kingdom, but the faithful remnant believed on Jesus when He came and shared the spiritual gifts of grace. At the Christian funeral services we are prone to pause in reflection upon the life lived by the person whose mortal remains are being committed to the grave. However, the more important look is toward the joyful meeting of the future when farewells come no more and the believers are gathered forever with their Lord in a face-to-face communion. The Lord's Supper is also a memorial in these respects. It looks back through

⁴Reu, op. cit., p. 61.

the Words of Institution to Jesus' original meal in the upper room on the night in which He was betrayed. His sufferings and death are seen as necessary for man's redemption and in order to make man the heir to the testament promises of grace. That is not all. The Lord's Supper is a stop-gap measure designed to fill the needs of the Church. It also looks to the future. "This do as often as you do it (the eating and drinking) in remembrance of me." Christ came once, but He is coming again. The Lord's Supper dare not overlook the fact of Christ's coming again. Then the relation will no longer be by means of the elements of bread and wine. It will be a knowing even as also we are known. The memorial will then be wholly unnecessary.

Jesus Christ gave the promises of grace and the elements of bread and wine as His body and blood in instituting His Supper. This gift is without any merit on our part since it is to redeem us from our sinful and unworthy lives. It can, therefore, require no good work of any kind on our part. The only obligation imposed upon man is that he be diligent in his frequent use of this means of grace. In thus remembering Him the believers have a memorial of His atoning death for sin. When a Christian is asked, "What does this celebration of the Lord's Supper mean to you?" he can answer, "This is done in remembrance of Christ's death. It is a living memorial by which His

life is remembered in ours. Moreover, it is a means of grace whereby the Christian receives the inheritance of the everlasting life of the Redeemer."

CHAPTER X

THE COMMUNION

In considering an exegesis of the thought of St. Paul as recorded in I Corinthians 10:16-17 one must study two things. First there is the concept underlying the word *κοινωνία*. Secondly, derived from this study is the statement of the so-called "real presence" of the Lord in His Supper.

The Concept of Communion

A major headache to the interpreter of the Words of Institution as recorded in the Synoptics would have been avoided had not St. Paul inserted the verses on *κοινωνία*. Robertson¹ points out that the word is derived from *κοινωνός*. It has a variety of related New Testament meanings, such as "partnership," Philippians 2:1, 3:10; "fellowship," Galatians 2:9; "contribution," II Corinthians 8:4, Philippians 1:5. In this specific connection "It is, of course, a spiritual participation in the blood of Christ which [p. 155] is symbolized by the cup."²

¹Archibald Thomas Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament (New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1930), pp. 154-155.

²Ibid., pp. 154-155.

Hauck³ says that the word always has two meanings, one gemeinsam and one profan. In secular Greek comes to be associated with a common eating and drinking in which a sacred godly power is gained. This is particularly applicable to the mystery religions which thrived around and shortly after the time of Christ. Israel had a type of communion through the sprinkling of the blood and the burning of the sacrifices upon the altar. But this was at best an imperfect kind of communion. This word is also especially connected with the Verba Testamenti in the Lord's Supper.

Das Teilhaben an Christus, das grundsätzlich und vollständig im Glauben erlebt wird, wird in gesteigelter Form--ohne dass eine dogmatische Abgleichung erfolgt--im Sakrament verwirklicht und erlebt, I K. 10:16ff.⁴

The whole familiar idea of the horizontal and vertical communion at the altar is connected with the use of this word. The communicants not only share in the participation of the visible elements of the body and blood of Christ. They also constitute the body of Christ and therefore have a common union with one another as members of the body of Christ. These two are very closely related concepts, yet they cannot be substituted for each other nor interchanged.

³Friedrich Hauck, "κοινωνία," Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, edited by Gerhard Kittel (Stuttgart: Verlag von W. Kohlhammer, 1933), III, 789-810.

⁴Ibid., p. 805.

This communion is a giving and a sharing.

. . . und das wird durch das Wort *κοινωνία* selber gefordert, das mit dem Genitiv der Sache immer eine wirkliche Anteilnahme ausdrückt (z. B. Phil. 3:10; mit dem Gen. der Person z. B. I Kor 1:9).⁵

The thought of the visible communion linked to the invisible had its parallel in the Old Testament also.

The Passover was celebrated by families, typifying an unbroken fellowship of those who formed one body, with God who had passed by the blood-sprinkled doors.⁶

Throughout the history of the Christian Church the Lord's Supper has been understood to be the closest bond of union between believers and their Lord as well as the mark of fellowship one with another which distinguished them as a Church. It is a serious yet joyful rite. In most Churches it is only for people who have reached the age of discretion and who have been instructed in the truths and benefits underlying participation in this Sacrament. The error which so often underlies a proper understanding here stems from the Reformed Church which lays such emphasis upon the fellowship of the Sacrament as a mark of Church membership that it forgets Christ's sacrificial death which undergirds it and the means of grace thereby established by which the participants receive forgiveness

⁵M. Reu, Die Gnadenmittellehre: Eine dogmatische Skizze (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House, 1917), p. 55.

⁶Marvin R. Vincent, Word Studies in the New Testament (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), III, 242.

of sins, life, and salvation. Althaus tries to point this out, though leaning toward the Reformed view.

Verstehen wir "Leib und Blut" streng und ausschliesslich als die Opferhingabe zur Gemeinschaft der Stellvertretung, dann kommt das Abendmahl von selber als Mahl der Gemeinschaft zur Geltung. Dann wird neu verstanden: das Abendmahl begründet die Gemeinde--nicht im äusseren Sinne als nota professionis, Bekenntniszeichen, sondern wesentlich, von Christus her; sein uns zugewendetes Lebensopfer begründet seine Gemeinschaft mit uns und dadurch die Gemeinde.⁷

In explaining the communion Reu gets literalistic but fails to be realistic in connecting with it the fellowship of believers.

Whatever *κοινωνία* may mean, it can be used only when the relation between two objects is to be expressed. So here bread and body of Christ are the two objects that mutually participate. It is bread, but bread that has part in the body of Christ; it is body of Christ, but the body of Christ that has part in the bread; by taking the one we at the same time take the other. And the body of Christ, in which the disciples received part by receiving the bread, was the body that that night, when Jesus was betrayed,⁸ was about to be given into death for their sake.

The inferred horizontal communion is here neglected and the vertical is emphasized. The Lutheran Church has tended to emphasize the vertical to the exclusion of the horizontal. Even though in practice many Lutheran groups discourage private communions, they, nevertheless, hold that

⁷Paul Althaus, Die lutherische Abendmahlslehre in der Gegenwart (München: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1931), p. 61.

⁸M. Reu, Can We Still Hold to the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper? (Columbus, Ohio: The Wartburg Press, 1941), p. 55.

the vertical is the important relationship. Well-balanced thought must find the proper mixture of the two emphases.

The Real Presence

In starting the discussion of such an involved question as the "how" of the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, it might be well to draw a small diagram even though it oversimplifies the whole matter. Stump gives this diagram in a popular work on dogmatics.⁹

Reformed
Bread-~~Body~~
Wine-~~Blood~~

Lutheran
Bread-Body
Wine-Blood

Roman Catholic
~~Bread-Body~~
Wine-Blood

This diagram is an over-simplification because the Reformed doctrine can not be said to be unified on the matter. Roman Catholic doctrine although stating transubstantiation would also resent being so characterized. In the diagram the Lutheran position is correct even though vague. A clear picture is vital at this point.

An examination of the writing of some contemporary Lutheran thinkers reveals various shades of opinions; yet an attempt is also made to adhere to the basic fundamentals of the Lutheran Church. Althaus thinks the old-Lutheran doctrine of the Presence (whatever that may be) is the best interpretation of the Words of Institution.

⁹Joseph Stump, The Christian Faith: A System of Christian Dogmatics (Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, c.1942), p. 352.

Mit diesem alles beherrschenden Interesse ergriff Luther nun den ihm von der Tradition dargebotenen, biblisch begründeten Gedanken der Realpräsenz. Die Realpräsenz bedeutet: hier handelt es sich wirklich um eine Gabe, hier ist sie, in ihrer Leiblichkeit, am offenkundigsten unabhängig von aller menschlichen Haltung, von allem "geistlichen" Vermögen da.¹⁰

Althaus here definitely shows the real presence to be a gift from God. He goes on to show that, although Christ is now exalted, He must be remembered in the Sacrament as One who lived and died.

Man sieht: Luther vergisst, wenn er von der verklärten Leiblichkeit des Herrn redet, nie, dass es seine in den Tod gegebene Leiblichkeit ist. Der Erhöhte bleibt der Gekreuzigte.¹¹

The Calvinistic misconception in localizing the "Right Hand" of the Father which made spiritual ascent into heaven necessary for communion is also treated by Althaus. Yet Christ is even now incarnate though not in our corruptible frame of reference.

Noch einmal erinnern wir uns an das Wichtigste: den erhabenen Gedanken der Rechten Gottes, die Bedeutung der Menschheit Christi, der Leiblichkeit in Gottes Handeln mit den Menschen. Sie sind von bleibender, unvergänglicher Bedeutung.¹²

Yet, it is hard to reconcile a purely spiritual presence with what the "old" Lutheran Church taught when one reads

¹⁰Althaus, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 34.

such a statement.

Gewiss hat die sakramentale Identität bei uns einen anderen Sinn als im alten Luthertum; von der Gegenwart einer himmlischen Substanz im Brot und Wein ist keine Rede--"Leib und Blut Jesu," die uns gegeben werden, sind die Macht seines Gehorsams, die Kraft seiner Todeshingabe, oder besser, da es keine von ihm, dem lebendigen Herrn loslösbaren Heilskräfte gibt, "Leib und Blut" ist er selbst als der für uns Gekreuzigte, dessen Hingabe für uns, weil er der Auferstandene, Lebendige ist, unmittelbare Gegenwart hat und in dieser Gegenwartigkeit im Brot und Wein ergriffen werden darf.¹³

The most thorough-going conservative analysis of the real presence is presented by Reu. He connects the idea to a parallel one in the mystery religions. Mana or power of some person or animal which has died can be received through sacramental eating and drinking. The idea is thus familiar to Jesus' and the apostles' contemporaries.

By eating holy food, by drinking holy drink, especially by eating of the sacrificial animals or their equivalents, the deity, his life and powers are assimilated.¹⁴

The Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation to many people seems the easiest and most logical solution to the problem, yet Reu very pointedly shows its literal impossibility.

While at first sight the thought might seem worthy of consideration that the bread had suddenly been transformed into Christ's body, this thought is forever excluded by the immediately following

¹³Ibid., p. 46.

¹⁴M. Reu, Can We Still Hold to the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper?, op. cit., p. 27.

statement: "This cup is the new covenant by virtue of my blood"--how could the cup or its contents, the wine, have been transformed into the new covenant?¹⁵

Reu shatters the whole reformed view with one very easy blow so readily delivered on the basis of language. It is impossible to call the bread and wine symbols because "Symbols are to be observed, examined, and understood, but they are not to be eaten and drunk."¹⁶

The possibility of Jesus' doing this miraculous act cannot be questioned according to Reu. He was ever omnipotent. He quotes Zahn, the great New Testament scholar, in elaborating this point.

Such events and experiences (Power going out from the touch of His garment), writes Zahn, might have assured the disciples that already before His final glorification Jesus possessed a power over His own body and over material nature which guaranteed the effectiveness of His words at the institution of the Lord's Supper.¹⁷

Jesus Christ had two natures--a divine and a human--in one body. They are often separated for dogmatic and pedagogic purposes, but at the moment of the Lord's Supper, when an old past gives way to a glorified and sanctifying future, both natures are present.

Between this past and this future they are not left alone, but possess in this Holy Supper a

¹⁵Ibid., p. 55.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 67.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 68.

substitute for His visible spiritual and physical presence. Here He is present not only according to His divine nature, but also with His human nature according to which alone we can speak of His body and blood.¹⁸

After having refuted the Roman Catholic and Reformed positions, Reu attempts a summary statement which includes the Lutheran view. New Testament scholars were convinced that the Verba Testamenti "demand the view that the elements of bread and wine were considered bearers of the heavenly gift."¹⁹ Reu does not answer the "how" of the real presence fully in this treatise. However, he stands among the leaders of conservative Lutheran thinking in the United States.

A contemporary writer in the Church of Sweden, Yngve Brilioth, felt that the whole doctrine and problem of the Lord's Supper needed a re-evaluation for the modern day and age. A very conservative and orthodox Lutheran would severely criticize him, but to prove him wrong on the basis of Scripture and on a confessional foundation would be more difficult. In fairness to the writer, the present author admits that Brilioth built a textual trilogy including also St. John 6 whereas this present author omits all references to St. John since he holds that there are no specific references to the Lord's Supper in his Gospel.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 69.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 85.

Brillioth sums up the records passed on by the Synoptic Evangelists in five points.

1. In the eucharistic meal there is the experience of the presence of the Lord and of communion with him.
2. The presence is associated with the bread and wine, and is defined by the way in which Jesus himself used these elements at the Last Supper.
3. Hence any physical identification of the bread and wine with the material flesh and blood of Jesus is impossible, even apart from the Jewish sentiment, which viewed the drinking of blood with abhorrence. The words, so interpreted, would be meaningless, since at the Last Supper Jesus was sitting at the table with the disciples; and the copula--*est*, is-- which has been taken in some later controversies as proof of corporeal identity, was certainly [p. 56] lacking in the original Aramaic. It is the form which the words take when translated that has contributed to the localising of the presence in the elements.
4. Yet since the presence is associated with the elements, the repetition of the Lord's action in the church's eucharist makes really present that which his action at the Supper symbolised--his self-oblation to death; and the elements thus guarantee the connection of the rite not merely with the historical Saviour, but with his finished work of redemption.
5. Hence the act of eating and drinking must express the receiving of the wholeness of his nature, and the fruits of his redemptive work.²⁰

In carrying forward the various aspects of the Lord's Supper such as commemoration, fellowship, memorial, sacrifice, sacrament, and mystery, Brillioth shows Paul to be in

²⁰Yngve Brillioth, Eucharistic Faith and Practice Evangelical and Catholic (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1930), pp. 55-56.

agreement with the Synoptics yet to emphasize points in a different way so as to give a fuller picture of the event.

The Pauline view stands in line with the Synoptic. There is somewhat more emphasis on the aspect of Commemoration ("Do this in remembrance of me"), and that of Memorial ("Ye do proclaim the Lord's death"); and the eschatological outlook ("till he come") shows that mystical sacramentalism does not occupy the whole field. At the same time the sacramental element is stronger here than in the Synoptists; the cup of blessing is the communion of the blood of Christ, the bread the communion of his body. . . . [p. 57] The specially Pauline thought is the union of the mystical fellowship of the church with a mystical incorporation into the crucified Saviour. We may say, then, that in the Pauline view the elements have much the same significance as in the Synoptic.²¹

No historical study of the type Brillioth makes would be complete without a consideration of Luther. Although the argument proceeds on the basis of philosophical terms, the end result is a repudiation of Roman Catholic and Reformed doctrines.

Following Ockham, he [Luther] defines three sorts of being: circumscriptive, as of wine in a jar; de finitive, as of the demons of the Gospel, dwelling in men, or as of angels and spirits; and repletive, as of God who fills all things, yet is not himself in any place. But while Ockham had defined the sacramental presence of Christ's body definitive, Luther goes one step further, from "multivolipresens" to "omnipresens," and defines it repletive. Is not this, at bottom, simply an effort to correct the local conception of the Divine being, and to lift the thought of the real presence from the sphere of mythology up to that of religion? Ubiquity is the omnipresence of the Incarnate God. Luther expresses this idea in a

²¹Ibid., pp. 56-57.

way which might appear to be pantheistic if it were isolated from its context and from the problem of the sacrament which the doctrine was intended to answer. But it is in the eucharist that the presence is to be apprehended, for there we have Christ's word.²²

The element of mystery and its connection with the real presence in the Lord's Supper is brought out on the basis of the incarnation and redemption of Jesus Christ. It gives a new slant to the real presence as being "at" but not "on" the altar.

It is not that the doctrine of the real presence in the elements says too much, but that it says too little. It does indeed guard the objectivity of the Divine operation in the sacrament, and bar the way to the subjectivism which makes all depend on the faith of the recipient; for it saves the connection of the sacrament with the Incarnation. The sacrament has a material basis because the Son of God became man, and the Divine redemption extends to the physical life of man as well as to his mental and spiritual life. The trouble is that the emphasis on the real presence in the elements shows a dangerous tendency to occupy almost the whole field of view. The result is, first, a materialising of that which is spiritual, when the consecration is fixed at a definite time-moment, and the presence localised as "on" the altar; for the Saviour was locally present in Galilee and at Calvary, but the heavenly reality of that which is given in the sacrament is beyond time and place. Secondly, the other two modes of apprehending the mystery, the personal presence of Christ as Priest and of his mystical Body, are in danger of being left out of sight.²³

At least one quotation should be cited by a Lutheran who tries to explain the Lord's Supper experientially.

²²Ibid., p. 106.

²³Ibid., p. 287.

Gohdes emphasizes the living Lord as present rather than metaphysical speculation as to how the body and blood are received and attempting to define what they are.

Christ present in the Holy Supper, as He is present in the Word and Baptism, and received savingly in faith, so that the Sacrament of the Altar becomes the means whereby the Kingdom is covenanted to the disciples, that is, to all poor sinners who grasp Him as the pardoner and the healer of sin: there is the essence of the sacrament. Thus explained, repentance is called for and faith, and Christian fellowship is the result. The heart is filled by grace through such teaching, and the mind is not burdened and confused with specious, metaphysical reasoning.²⁴

A very contemporary writer has analyzed Luther's thinking about the Lord's Supper and shows that it is not an incidental product of the Reformation, but it is connected with basic conceptions of faith and doctrine.

Thus we have seen that in his doctrines of Creation, Incarnation, time and space, and in his passion-mysticism, Luther finds a very concrete and vivid sacramentalism congenial. From the creation he deduces the goodness and worthiness of the bread and wine; from the doctrine of the Incarnation he deduces the congenial union of the natural and the supernatural; in his doctrine of time and space he presents divine love as unlimited, constantly self-sacrificing and passing freely from eternity into time; his passion-mysticism gives a central place to Christ's giving of His body and blood for the remission of sins. In passing, it has been implied that Luther's whole personality demanded and embraced the practical and concrete. Further evidence of the consistency p. 423 of this general

²⁴C. B. Gohdes, "A Review of the Traditional Lutheran Position on the Lord's Supper," The Lutheran Church Quarterly, XVII (October, 1944), 344.

attitude could be cited in Luther's appreciation of the arts, pictorial and musical, his tenacity in conserving certain religious ceremonials and rites and finally Luther's own devotional life.²⁵

This surely presents a keen analysis by a modern Lutheran of Luther's thought.

C. P. Krauth, one of America's outstanding theologians, is often sought for the last word on many topics. He also dealt with the real presence in the Lord's Supper. From the Tenth Thesis prepared by Andreae for the Wittenberg theologians Krauth cites this quote:

The MODE [sic] in which the body and blood are present is not expressed in Scripture; wherefore we can only affirm so much in regard to it that it is supernatural, and incomprehensible to human reason. . . . Therefore in this divine Mystery we lead our reason captive, and with simple faith and quiet conscience rest on the words of Christ.²⁶

Furthermore²⁷ many early Lutheran divines expressly deny a local inclusion or physical connection of body and blood. One cannot infer "locality" from "presence." "In, with, and under" imply presence, not locality. We do not know how much the disciples understood of the first institution, but the Holy Ghost later fully enlightened them.

²⁵William H. Baar, "Luther's Sacramental Thought," The Lutheran Quarterly, II (November, 1950), 422-423.

²⁶C. P. Krauth, The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology: As Represented in the Augsburg Confession and the History and Literature of the Evangelical Lutheran Church (Philadelphia: United Lutheran Publication House, c.1913), p. 766.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 766-768.

One can, with care, use the expression locutio exhibitiva at this point, which means (except when used in jest) the naming of that which is not seen while giving that which is seen, e. g., the grocer gives the woman shopper a sack, tied-up, saying, "Here are your apples." This can be said of the Lord's Supper if identity is not too closely pressed.²⁸

The mention of a presence in the Lord's Supper immediately raises the question as to which or what kind of presence came to the disciples by means of the bread and wine. The easiest answer is presented in terms of the two natures and states of Christ. It is the glorified state of the complete God-man which comes to us in the Lord's Supper. It was in that state that the redemption realized its completion. Good Friday would mean nothing without Easter and Ascension. The exaltation must give the stamp of validity to the humiliation. How, then, could Christ give His glorified body to the disciples at the first Lord's Supper before His humiliation was complete? It is interesting to note that at least three theologians attempt to come to grips with this problem.

Was nämlich vom ersten Mahl der Jünger nach dem Einsetzungsworten gilt, warum sollte das nicht

²⁸John Theodore Mueller, Christian Dogmatics: A Handbook of Doctrinal Theology for Pastors, Teachers, and Laymen (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1934), pp. 513, 522.

auch von der Wiederholung derselben gelten, zumal Jesu Intention auf eine bleibende Einrichtung ging, solange diese Wiederholung nur im vollen Einklang mit der Stiftung Jesu vollzogen wird? Der einzige Unterschied wird darin bestehen, dass dorten Christus kraft seiner Macht über sich selbst den Leib und das Blut den Seinen gab, die erst im Begriff waren, in den Tod gegeben zu werden, während er nun den schon in den Tod gegebenen Leib und das schon in Tod vergossene Blut darreicht, und zwar als der Erhöhte und nach seiner Gottmenschheit in die Herrlichkeit Eingegangene.²⁹

The account of the transfiguration is mentioned in connection with the above quotation. It is also mentioned in the two following.

There are therefore in the sacrament two substances equally real: bread and body, wine and blood. When we receive and eat the bread, we receive and eat Christ's body; when we accept and drink the wine, we accept and drink Christ's blood. Both elements are in the same degree "realiter" present. . . . We know that in the God-man, Jesus, His human nature was received into personal union with the Divinity and made a partaker of the attributes of the divine nature, so that, even prior to His death, resurrection, and ascension, it may be said that the Son of Man, while He walked on earth, was in heaven (John 3:13). We know that He who suffered His body to be transfigured on the mountain could also cause His physical form to be transformed that evening, even though [p. 666] the change were not visible to the disciples. Even after His resurrection, when He appeared in His glorified body, He was able to reveal Himself repeatedly before the eyes of His disciples in the form of an ordinary man and to eat material food without reverting to the physical domain.³⁰

²⁹M. Reu, Die Gnadenmittellehre: Eine dogmatische Skizze, op. cit., p. 54.

³⁰Joh. Ylvisaker, The Gospels: A Synoptic Presentation of the Text in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John with Explanatory Notes (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1932), pp. 665-666.

One wonders if Ylvisaker's statements were not influenced by those of a contemporary Norwegian or vice versa. They are so nearly alike.

Man har spurgt: hvorledes kunde Kristus allerede før sin Død meddele sine Disciple sit forherligede Legeme og Blod. Vi kan kun [p. 364] svare at det må være skeet ved en (momentan) Foregriben af den Tilstande, hvori han senere skulde intraide. At Kristus havde Magt til således at forgribe det Tilkommende, når det behøvedes for hans Gjerning, derpå har vi et lignende Eksempel i hans Forklarelse på Bjerget.³¹

Gohdes sees the problem also but tries to solve it in a different manner so as not to commit himself to the illustration of the transfiguration. He makes the first institution a type of "drastic prediction" similar to Ezekiel 4 and Jeremiah 19.

Breaking the bread, distributing the wine, the Saviour predicts by means of an act His atoning death, the blessings of which He communicates in the case of the apostles by anticipation.³²

The example of the transfiguration is a difficult one to use as an illustration of Christ's anticipating things to come if it is used as a parallel to the Lord's Supper. At the transfiguration Jesus momentarily lost His humble nature and was set forth as the exalted One. At the Lord's Supper, then, He would have to be present in both states at once, which, though admittedly possible by

³¹K. Krogh Tønning, Den Kristelige Troeslaere i dens Grundtraek (Anden Udgave; Bergen: C. Floors Forlag, 1874), pp. 363-364.

³²Gohdes, op. cit., p. 354.

means of a great miracle, is contradictory to understanding in the human frame of reference. To interpret two such controversial passages by each other certainly leads the careful and cautious student nowhere.

The idea of a "drastic prediction" is appealing when one admits that it is a possibility. Successive institutions of the Lord's Supper after the crucifixion and resurrection could have been different from the first. The disciples did not fully understand the meaning of the Lord's Supper until after Christ left them after the ascension. No analogy exists in regard to baptism since Jesus never baptized yet gave the command and promise for it. Here He gave a testament. The promise of a last will and testament can be received at the time that the testament is made even though it depends for its validity in reception of the benefits upon the death of the testator. This could be used as an illustration in connection with the "drastic prediction" as applied to the Lord's Supper.

Krauth mentions the word "mode" in connection with the body of Christ. Here the Lutheran Church tries to make a solid basis for its interpretation of the real presence in the Lord's Supper. According to the Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord there are three modes in which the body of Christ is manifested. First there is the comprehensible, physical, historical mode in which Christ existed

from His conception through His burial. In this mode He was a man much as other men, yet a divine God-man. A second mode is the heavenly mode which fulfills the condition, "Lo, I am with you always." By this mode Christ is present everywhere always in a godly and spiritual sense. The third mode is one which must be necessary to fulfill the demand of a presence in the Lord's Supper. It can be called the sacramental mode. Jesus Christ is present according to this mode wherever the earthly elements are used according to His word and promises, that is wherever the sacrament is properly celebrated. This mode may be said to be a more specific application of the second mode, yet in such a manner as to be a limitation thereof. It is a mode which only communicants may experience and which is specially reserved for them.³³ That is one of the great joys and blessings of participation in the Lord's Supper. Only here do we contact that special sacramental presence and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ which is the most intimate relation we can have with Divinity during the days of our earthly sojourn.

³³Triglot Concordia: The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), pp. 1005-1009.

CONCLUSION

It is always unfair to consummate a study with the word "conclusion." The end is really the beginning. No study is ever the last word on any subject. It merely sets the stage upon which someone else may present another play. However, a short summary will help a succeeding student use this contribution in a more intelligent way.

The words of institution for the Lord's Supper can be taken absolutely literally. The only words which require any interpretation are "body" and "blood." These can be interpreted only in the light of the concept of "communion." On the basis of the text and in harmony with the Lutheran confessions this leads to three points, often called the Shibboleths of the doctrine.

First there is the unio sacramentalis. This sacramental union describes the sacramental mode which has been previously discussed. It means briefly that the body and blood of Christ are present as well as the bread and wine.

The second point is the manducatio oralis. Here a little difficulty arises. The body and blood are received by way of mouth though not Capernaitically eaten, that is, they are not tasted, chewed, or digested. This interpretation on the basis of the confessions is designed to protect the connection of the elements with the body and blood and

St. Paul never speaks of "unworthy" communicants, but of unworthy eating and drinking, referring to abuses like those of the Corinthians, e. g., each going ahead with his own meal, with the result that one is hungry, and another gets drunk. Also, the offenders were not necessarily unbelievers, as consideration of the text & context reveals.

must be carefully guarded.

The communio indigenorum guards the objective validity of the whole sacrament. If it is taught that the unworthy also receive the body and blood even unto ~~damnation~~, then the sacrament is not made to depend upon the personal faith and attitude of the recipient or communicant.

Keep
judgment
I Cor. 11:27
a temper
chastise
from God
(27-32)

The Lutheran doctrine of the real presence means that a real presence must be posited which is objective yet not local. The local presence would lead to some form of statement of the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. An objective presence is necessary to avoid the error of the Reformed Church which tends to emphasize the subjective condition of the recipient.

Johann Franck in 1649 wrote a stanza which best illustrates the true exposition of the Lord's Supper. The great mystery is known to God alone and man can only attempt to fathom this mystery as far as the gift is given to him. This has been the humble effort of this thesis. (The stanza is found in The Lutheran Hymnal, 305:6).

Human reason, though it ponder,
Cannot fathom this great wonder
That Christ's body e'er remaineth
Though it countless souls sustaineth
And that He His blood is giving
With the wine we are receiving.
These great mysteries unsounded
Are by God alone expounded.

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