

Lutheranism 101

THE LORD'S SUPPER

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Lutheranism 101: THE LORD'S SUPPER

Introduction

Making Connections

Study Questions

1. How did Lutheran pastor C. F. W. Walther describe the Lord's Supper?

As the new tree of life planted in His kingdom of grace.

By this description, what types of blessings was he attributing to the Sacrament?

Our redemption, and other eternal blessings through union with Christ—union that Jesus continues to bestow as He feeds us with His body and blood.

2. Has the ascended Christ stopped doing and teaching on earth?

No, what He began to do and teach (Acts 1:1–3), He continues to do and teach.

Is the risen and ascended Christ still doing and teaching in weekly worship?

Yes. He clothes us with His righteousness and gives us a foretaste of the feast to come. Indeed, understanding His presence to teach us and to feed us is central to understanding the nature of worship.

3. What do the angels guarding the way to the tree of life show us?

That reconciliation with God must be a gift of God. Discuss. (See 2 Corinthians 5:16–21.)

4. How is a revealed mystery unlike a secret?

Even when a mystery is revealed, it remains a mystery, that is, it remains beyond full human comprehension and explanation.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss how the Lord's Supper is a mystery. Discuss also the service of a pastor as a steward (house manager) of this holy mystery and its relation to the liturgy (see 1 Corinthians 4:1–2 and Ap XXIV 80).
2. Discuss the paradox that we will no longer have the desire to seek after food and drink in heaven (Revelation 7:16) and yet there will be feasting at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:9). *See the beautiful expression in the Post-Communion Collect that trumpets this truth: "That . . . we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end" (LSB, p. 166).*
3. Discuss Holy Communion as a miracle of love in bread and wine.

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Chapter 1

A Gift Spoken into Reality

Study Questions

1. What service does God need from man? (See Acts 17:25.)

It is not as though He needs anything.

2. Just before the Reformation, how often did most people commune?

Only once a year—at Easter—under papal threat of excommunication if they did not. They had come to fear taking the Lord's Supper and saw Jesus as a stern judge much more readily than as their Savior and Brother. False teachings about the Mass had very harmful effects on the frequency of people communing.

3. Jesus was the host at the Last Supper. He gave the heavenly food in bread and wine. Who is the host as the Lord's Supper is celebrated in worship today?

It is still Jesus. The living Christ is present to serve His people. The Lord's Supper is not something we do. It is God's pure gift for you.

4. By rearranging God's words, whose place did Adam and Eve seek?

God's place.

In what ways are we still tempted to seek God's place?

5. Was Holy Communion celebrated only occasionally in the Early Church?

No, a Sunday without the Lord's Supper was inconceivable in the Church of the New Testament (see TLSB, p. 2231, "The Sacrament and the Church").

6. Can you describe the opportunity to receive the new testament of Christ's body and blood throughout Church history in relationship to the presence and use of the written New Testament?

Right from the beginning there was the opportunity to receive the Lord's Supper in weekly worship—even before the New Testament books were written. The widespread availability of Bibles for Christians to have in their homes has occurred only in recent centuries.

7. If we use the word *covenant* and not *testament* in speaking of the Sacrament, what is important to remember?

That it is the kind of covenant that is a given by a king to his subjects. It is a pure gift, like a last will and testament. It is not a two-way deal that we have hammered out with God or agreed to in order for the covenant to be given.

8. Is our certainty of faith based on our faith?

No, it is based on God's promises, on God's Word. Among all the uncertainties of life and the shifting of our feelings, Jesus' lips will never lie to us. His promises in the Lord's Supper are eternally good because they are true.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss three ways that Luther's following scriptural confession of the Sacrament were fighting words at the time of the Reformation: "It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink."
2. The Lord's Supper is not something we do. Discuss how this truth is denied by both the Roman Catholic view of the Mass as a sacrifice and the Protestant view of the Lord's Supper as primarily our obedient act of remembrance.
3. Discuss what Jesus did at *this* Passover (on Maundy Thursday) that had never occurred before.
4. Discuss the Last Supper as Jesus' ultimate and final act in the presence of the Twelve before His arrest and sacrificial death.
5. Luther describes the Words of Institution as "the sum and the substance of the Gospel." Since God's Word always does what He says, we know with certainty that the Words of Institution cannot be separated from the actual gift of the Lord's Supper.

Discuss what it means for something to be the "sum."

Discuss what it means for something to be the "substance."

Discuss what it means for this gift to be "the sum and substance of the Gospel."

6. Discuss why, in the Lutheran Church, the Words of Institution are recited in the hearing of all the communicants.

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Chapter 2

A Gift as Real as the Incarnation

Study Questions

1. Give some examples of God's use of ordinary means to do extraordinary things in the Old Testament. Give some examples of the same in the New Testament.

Answers are numerous and will vary. Answers may include marching and the blowing of horns to topple the walls of Jericho, and the stone and sling used by a shepherd boy to fell Goliath.

2. Explain the statement that God came closer to save us than the devil did to ruin us.

The Son of God, the eternal Word, became flesh (John 1:1, 14). He, through whom all things were created (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2), was conceived and knit together as a human baby in the womb of the Virgin Mary. He was made man for our salvation. This is the miracle of the ages—the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. In the New Testament account of the Lord's Supper, is there a word present that could possibly be translated as "symbolizes"?

No.

What word in these accounts is the linguistic version of an equal sign?

The word "is."

4. After Pentecost what two things did the Holy Spirit lead the Church to be devoted to equally?

The teaching of God's Word (the apostles' teaching) and the Lord's Supper (the breaking of bread). The fellowship and the prayers flowed from and were framed by these holy means (see Acts 2:42).

5. What was the full meaning of the word *church* in the earliest centuries of the New Testament Church?

The word "church" initially identified neither a building nor Christians in general wherever they were and whatever they were doing. Instead, it identified Christians specifically gathered together around Word and Sacrament—that is, receiving Jesus' gifts to them in the Divine Service of weekly worship.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss how you might confess the real presence of Jesus' body and blood to be received orally in Communion to someone who proclaims faith in God's Word but believes Jesus' body and blood are only symbolized?

Answers may vary. One tact would be talking about God clearly saying what He means, as in His words at creation. "Let there be light." "There was light." His words are equally clear and effective when He says, "This is My body." (That settles it.)

2. In understanding the Divine Service, discuss why it is crucial to know that it is Jesus in action who is bodily (though not visibly) present in our midst.
3. Closely related to this foundational truth, discuss why Christians need to be taught the meaning of the liturgy in every generation and throughout a lifetime.

Worship of the one true God is countercultural and not something we naturally understand. Arthur Just's introduction to Heaven on Earth: The Gifts of God in the Divine Service (CPH, 2008), pages 9–15, could be a useful resource.

4. Discuss the statement "we cannot go back to the cross" in relationship to the means by which Christ brings the fruits of His cross to us today.
5. Discuss the manner of Jesus' service to His Emmaus disciples on this side of His cross and open tomb.

Fresh from the grave the risen Christ proclaimed a seven-mile sermon to them and broke bread with them.

What was the specific content of His sermon? Who was the host of this meal, and when did they recognize Him?

Jesus was the host and was recognized in the breaking of bread.

Once they recognized Him, does the text say He left them?

No, but He did vanish from their sight.

6. Talk about Luther's hymn stanza on the Third Commandment as a summarizing statement for what happens in weekly worship (see p. 48).

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Chapter 3

A Gift of God's Forgiveness

Study Questions

1. What is now the root and source of all our sin?
Unbelief.
Who convicts the world of this sin and unbelief?
The Holy Spirit (see John 16:8–9).
Are human hearts naturally aware of this as their chief sin? Discuss.
No, apart from the work of the Holy Spirit this is unknown.
2. Our true position before God is one of spiritual beggary (Matthew 5:3). Is this a status of woe or a status of blessedness? React to this.
Blessedness.
Do we grow out of this beggary of faith, or as faith grows do we see our great need all the more?
All the more.
3. In his tract "Against the Heavenly Prophets," where he distinguishes between what God did on the cross "for our forgiveness" and where God "gives this forgiveness to us," Luther says, "we treat of the forgiveness of sins in two ways" (AE 40:213). What is the first way?
"How it is achieved and won."
What is the second way?
"How it is distributed and given to us."
4. Is Christ's promise that He gives forgiveness in His Supper well understood and received according to human ideas of spirituality?
The Lord's Supper and the other specific means through which God promises to forgive our sins are often not valued as Means of Grace in many confessions.
What are the Means of Grace, the means through which God now distributes His forgiveness?
God's Word, His Absolution, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper.
5. Relate Luther's description of a sheep in wolf's clothing to the phrase "you are what you eat" as it applies to the Lord's Supper received in faith.
The Lord's Supper is so powerful that it transforms those who eat in faith into members of Christ's Body. By eating His body, we become His Body and gain the gifts that are by right His. We still look the same to the world around us, but we have been fundamentally changed.
6. In speaking of Jesus' crucifixion is it correct to say, "God died for us?"
Yes.
7. What is the highest worship of Christ?
To seek the forgiveness of sins from Him.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss what is meant by self-scoring spirituality and why it is deadly.

It is comparing ourselves with others, excusing our actions, and finding security in statistics. It is deadly because such efforts deny the holiness of God and that we are by nature objects of God's wrath (Ephesians 2:3). If any record is kept for us except the record of Christ who covers us, we are damned (Psalm 130:3). Our record before God apart from Christ is a total failure (James 2:10). We all fall short (Romans 3:22–23).

2. Discuss some of Jesus' actions that were included in His active obedience. Discuss also the actions of His passive obedience for us. Did He satisfy the penalty for our sin in full—including the eternal punishment our sins merited?

Yes—in full. "It is finished."

3. The judgment rendered by Pontius Pilate (declaring Jesus to be innocent but handing Him over to be crucified) was at the same time an injustice and perfect justice. Discuss.
4. We cannot bottle up the forgiveness of sins nor can our neighbor. That is why Luther said, "In short, if God does not forgive without stopping, we are lost" (LC III 91). In light of this truth and in love for our neighbor,

discuss the need for sensitivity for those who hunger and thirst for the blessed rest of Christ's forgiveness in weekly worship.

5. We readily seek treatment for infections and other health threats that we cannot feel but that are detected through medical means. We encourage others to do so as well. We are also infected with sin that is hidden from our senses (Psalm 19:12). Our Lutheran Confessions state that most sins are in this category (Ap XI 65). In this light, discuss seeking the healing medicine Christ provides in Holy Communion for us and encouraging others to do the same—even perhaps when our feelings are telling us nothing is wrong.
6. In light of our spiritual beggary (study question 2) and Luther's statement about the need for God forgiving us without stopping (discussion question 4) and our need for forgiveness for sins we are not even aware of (discussion question 5), can we receive in faith the forgiveness of sins too much? Discuss this in light of providing for ourselves or for our fellow members the opportunity to receive the forgiving and healing medicine of Christ's holy body and His holy blood.

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Chapter 4

God's Abounding Treasure

Study Questions

1. When God appeared to the prophet Isaiah, the angels sang, "The whole earth is full of His glory" (Isaiah 6:3). What word did the Early Church in worship add to this text when they sang the Sanctus?

Heaven.

Why was this addition made?

To signal that where Jesus was bodily present to serve His Church, there heaven meets earth.

When are these words sung in the liturgy?

Immediately before Jesus' Words of Institution.

2. What is the essence of the definition of heaven?

The presence of God (Psalm 73:25).

As the living Christ is bodily present to serve us in the Sacrament, is it right to speak of heaven touching earth there?

Yes. This understanding is seen interwoven in the history of the Church.

3. What is it that natural man and woman cannot understand that describes God's being and power and wrath and grace? What is it that causes the angels to call out to one another in praise of God? What is it

that means God is totally other and set apart?

God's holiness. His holiness is so much more than what God lacks—that is sin. He is sinless, but He was holy before sin entered the world. His holiness is beyond our understanding.

4. In the Old Testament, God gave access to His holiness through the high priest and the sacrifices that He appointed. Only the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place once a year on the Day of Atonement. How does God give us access to His holiness now?

Through the Man, Jesus Christ in His Word and His flesh and blood. The Holy Spirit bestows His gifts and the life they give.

5. When Jesus (the Head) comes bodily to serve us in the Lord's Supper, who is also with Him?

His Body, the Church—all believers.

Does this include those who have died in the faith whose souls are with Him in paradise?

Yes.

Does this include your loved ones who have died in the faith?

Yes. The Sacrament of the Altar is the closest meeting point between us and all the saints.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the very first petition that Jesus teaches you to pray aloud each day to your heavenly Father: "Hallowed be Thy name." What does this mean? How is this done?

See the Small Catechism.

2. Discuss how God's holiness is so much more than His sinlessness.

3. What does the word *saint* mean?

Holy one.

Discuss the paradox that a Christian is a saint and sinner at the same time.

4. Does God's holiness become something we possess and can bottle up?

No, we have a need to continually receive God's holiness.

Discuss how Jesus addresses this need, especially as He comes so close to us as to feed His holy body and give us to drink of His holy blood.

5. Discuss what is meant by the phrase "there are no Lone Ranger Christians."

Christ gives us communion with Himself and with His whole Church. He binds us as one in His Body. There is no closer relationship than what Christ gives us as brothers and sisters in Him.

6. Discuss the difference between human ideas of love and God's agape love for us in Christ?

God's agape love in Jesus is active and doing (Jesus' perfect doing for us), moving from His sacrifice for us into His ongoing service to us of the fruits of His sacrifice.

In this regard, how did Luther describe the Sacrament?

A "fountain of love."

7. Discuss your deep, daily need for what Luther expresses in this phrase of His Post-Communion Collect: "strengthen us through the same in faith toward you and in fervent [intense and abiding and unfailing] love toward one another."

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Chapter 5

God's Gift *for You*

Study Questions

1. From your reading in this chapter complete the following: Faith _____ with God.

Agrees

Faith sets no _____ for God.

Conditions

Faith is not our doing but is the gift of God's _____.

Grace (See Ephesians 2:8–9.)

2. True or False? All those who receive the Sacrament celebrated according to Christ's institution receive Jesus' true body and true blood whether they believe it or not.

True. These gifts are given by the Word of Christ. It is not our receiving of them or our faith that make the bread His body and the wine His blood. This is one of the reasons for the loving practice of closed Communion.

3. True or False? All those who receive the Sacrament celebrated according to Christ's institution receive the forgiveness of sins whether they believe it or not.

False. The forgiveness of sins is received only by God's grace through faith.

4. What does Jesus seek for you to give Him at His Table?

Nothing.

What does He lovingly invite you to receive?

His holy body and His holy blood, and with these gifts also the forgiveness of sins with all the treasures He won for you.

5. When Luther wrote that the Sacrament was something more than the sermon, did he mean that the Sacrament was more important than the sermon?

No. Luther stated that the same thing is present in the sermon as in the Sacrament. By "more" he meant that in the Sacrament the advantage is that it is directed at definite individuals.

6. Are Word and Sacrament in the Divine Service liturgy-dividing competitors, or are they life-giving complements?

They do not compete with one another. The sermon is not elevated over the Sacrament, nor is the Sacrament elevated over the sermon. Rather, the living Christ is present as the real preacher and as the real celebrant. He is present with His gathered people to teach them and to feed them.

7. Is the devil a true lion?

No, he only mimics a lion, prowling about and roaring as if he were a lion (1 Peter 5:8).

Who is the real Lion of the tribe of Judah (Revelation 5:5)?

Jesus Christ.

What does He conquer with?

His blood by which He ransomed us for God (Revelation 5:9).

Describe the roar of the conquering Lion as He is present in the Lord's Supper to give you to drink of His blood.

Here the risen Christ roars with words that make present the body and blood He sacrificed on Calvary—the very payment made for the sins of the world. In His roar is the might to silence all of Satan's accusations.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss why *faith* is a very slippery word as it is commonly used in phrases such as “we are people of faith” and “you just have to have faith.”

The crucial matter is the object of one's faith. The faith worked by the Holy Spirit is faith in Jesus Christ through which we receive the free forgiveness of sins He has purchased for us by His perfect sacrifice. He delivers this faith to us in His Means of Grace.

2. Discuss two meanings of Jesus' words “for you” as He gives you His body and His blood in Holy Communion.

(a) “For you” has the meaning of “in the place of you,” that is, “as your substitute.” Jesus' body and blood were given “for you” under the punishment for your sin. (b) “For you” also has the meaning of a gift now given specifically and personally to you.

3. Ground zero in the battleground as Satan seeks to pull you away from Christ is your conscience. Discuss how Satan seeks to deaden your conscience. Discuss how he seeks to falsely stir up your conscience. What is His purpose?

To cause you to doubt God's full forgiveness of you in Christ, to doubt that you are God's holy child and that you even now possess eternal life. He desires to rob you of confidence and comfort.

4. Discuss the difference between a clean conscience and a good conscience.
5. Discuss our ongoing need for receiving God's Means of Grace delivered in church by pastors. Discuss the Lord's Supper as an inexhaustible fountain of grace “for you.”
6. Discuss the statement that the grace Christ gives to His gathered people in Holy Communion is to carry them into the week in a liturgy of life.
7. Discuss the paradox Luther identified when he said, “Human nature wants to feel and to be certain before it believes. Faith wants to believe before it feels.”
8. Discuss Luther's comment that God does not save pretended sinners. Is this good news or bad news?

Good news, for we are real sinners and need real forgiveness and we do not have to pretend otherwise when we come for weekly worship and when we take time for daily prayer. We are beggars—this is true—blessed beggars, for in Christ ours is the kingdom of heaven.

9. As the liturgy leads the pastor to say, "The true body of Christ, given for you," it leads you to respond, "Amen." Discuss the meaning of speaking "Amen" as Jesus' body and Jesus' blood are given to you in the Sacrament.

Yes, yes—it is true. That is to say, the risen Son of God is here serving me His very body and His very blood for the forgiveness of all my sins. My Lord is present right now bestowing His holiness on me and giving to me life and salvation. His Word does what it says—"for me." Amen.

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Chapter 6

**A Gift of Remembrance,
Proclamation,
and Christ's Second Coming**

Study Questions

1. When spoken by the pastor in the Communion liturgy, what is the meaning of "Do this in remembrance of Me"?

It as if Jesus is saying, "Believe that I am here to serve you," and "Receive in faith My body and My blood for the forgiveness of your sins." This remembrance is not calling to mind an absent Lord but receiving in faith the gifts of life the risen Christ is present to serve at His Table.

2. How did Luther understand this "remembrance" in the Lord's Supper?

As a sermon proclaiming the substance of the crucified and risen Christ present through His Word.

3. By God's design, what is the beautiful proclamation made by those receiving Holy Communion?

Together the communing congregation proclaims the death of Christ until He comes again (1 Corinthians 11:26). This is the sweetest Gospel that can be proclaimed.

Does the proclamation of Jesus' death in some way compete with or belittle His resurrection?

In no way. Instead, His open tomb throws beautiful light on His ultimate sacrifice.

4. While there was total distress among Jesus' followers on Good Friday, was there panic in heaven or fear that

His death might be the end?

No, it was impossible for death to keep its hold on Him (Acts 2:42). In His holy sacrifice, we see the magnitude of God's love in the flesh for us.

5. When will the last days begin?

We live in them now. They are the days from Christ's first coming until the day He comes again.

When will the end of the ages come?

It has already (1 Corinthians 10:11).

6. Does Jesus already know the day of your death?

Yes—and the hour.

Does He already know the manner of your death?

Yes. When He brings our last hour on the earth, He will take us from this valley of sorrow to Himself in heaven. This is what we ask Him to do daily in the Seventh Petition of the Lord's Prayer.

Does God's knowledge of the time and manner of your death bring comfort or concern?

It encourages us to cast our anxieties on Him, knowing that He cares for us. It gives us the purpose of "waiting for Him" who even now comes to banquet us with His love at His Table, rather than "just waiting" in this quickly passing world. We can leave our end-of-life matters in His hands. That is deeply comforting.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the astounding nature of the dying thief's request: "Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom." Discuss the "Remembering" with a capital R that Jesus blessed him with. Does our normal use of the word *remember* or *remembrance* convey the richness of this use of the word *remember*? Please discuss.
2. Because of the proclamation of the death of Christ that God has set in place here, Walther called the Sacrament "the pulpit of the laity." Discuss the richness of that description and the great value it holds for weekly worship and for outreach.
3. Does the clear congregational proclamation of Christ's death in receiving Holy Communion take away from the resurrection of our Lord?

Not in the least.

Discuss this and how it helps us understand Luther's treasuring of the symbolism of the crucifix.

4. Discuss the relationship between the Lord's Supper and Judgment Day.
Each celebration of Holy Communion is notice to the Church and to the world that the ascended Lord will return in judgment. The risen Lord comes in the Sacrament to clothe us in His righteousness, the very wedding garments we need to stand in the judgment. There is great need for this notice every week of our lives and for readiness for His return every day of our lives.
5. Discuss Judgment Day as the proclamation of who you are in Christ Jesus. Is it true that you have already passed over from death to life (John 5:24)?

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Chapter 7

A Gift Lovingly Given, Worthily Received, and Reverently Treated

Study Questions

1. Old Testament worship was designed by God to bestow His _____.

Forgiveness.

Can you describe worship in the Old Testament?

Answers may vary.

Christian worship today is centered on receiving Christ's _____.

Forgiveness.

2. In the Divine Service what comes first, the sermon or the Sacrament?

The sermon. This pattern goes back two thousand years.

How does the sermon set the table for Holy Communion?

The sermon is Christ in action for us through His preached Word. He shows us our great need. He proclaims what He has done for us and what he is present to do for us in that very service.

3. What little word that God's gathered people speak and sing repeatedly in weekly worship bespeaks full participation and joyful certainty in recognizing Christ's presence and in receiving His gifts?

The word "Amen."

4. Does concern for confessional unity at the Lord's Table (asking for those who partake to share the confession

of faith taught at that Table) judge the heart of the person of another denomination who is not allowed to partake?

No! It lovingly speaks to their public confession of faith they are making by their membership in a church body.

5. In determining worthiness to commune, Luther valued _____ far above personal feelings.

God's Word.

6. Does the word *take* in "take, eat" signify that there is something of our doing in receiving the Sacrament?

No! This take is the same word Jesus used when He ordained His apostles by saying, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (John 20:22). It is a gifting word.

7. Should consecrated elements ever be mixed with unconsecrated elements?

No. Those elements set aside by the Word of Christ should not be treated in a common way.

What did Luther decree about a clergyman whose practice was to mix consecrated and unconsecrated elements?

Luther said that he should be expelled from the churches for despising God.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss the following thought concerning the Divine Service: The value of weekly worship depends on God's presence and God's service to us, not on our ability to feel a certain way about its value.

Rather than simply hearing about something in the past, the risen Christ is present to give us His gifts now. The liturgy is Christ in action. This is unlike earthly entertainment. We are primarily passive recipients of His life-giving gifts.

2. Discuss the following thought: "If our liturgies are to be Lutheran, they must be understood in the context of justification, and justification in the context of the liturgy."

It is precisely in the service that God bespeaks us righteous through His Word and Sacrament.

3. Discuss the pastoral responsibility at work in the loving practice of closed Communion. Relate this to Luther's teaching that we must not cast the Sacrament to crowds of people in the same way that the sermon is for everyone.

Luther's loving concern was not only about unbelief in general but also about unity in the confession of the truth of God's Word.

Relate this also to the reason our liturgy books note the pastor as the one distributing the host (the body of Christ).

This is because of the pastoral responsibility God gives pastors for admission to the Altar.

4. Which of the following is true?
 - (a.) Closed Communion is a religious statement of a pastor and congregation that they are better than others on some scale of religious goodness.
 - (b.) Closed Communion is the loving, scriptural, and historic practice of the Church that we are dying sinners and that our only hope is Jesus Christ and His words of life.

Statement (b.) is true. Discuss.

5. Discuss what Luther wrote in the Large Catechism concerning unworthiness to commune (a) for those who feel their weakness and unworthiness and (b) for those who feel no need for the Sacrament.

He taught that those who felt unworthy were correct in their feeling and should come and be helped. He taught that those who did not feel their need and unworthiness were even more in need of this gift and should come and be helped.

6. What did Luther describe as “the true voice of the Gospel announcing remission of sins, and therefore the one and most worthy preparation for the Lord’s Table, if faith holds to these words as coming from the mouth of Christ Himself.”

The Pax that the pastor speaks after the Words of Institution: “The peace of the Lord be with you always.”

Discuss the connection such an understanding of the Pax has with the true meaning of Jesus’ invitation “This do in remembrance of Me.”

Both are rich in comfort with the presence of Christ and the forgiveness of Christ to be received in faith.

7. Discuss briefly when and why the little glasses were introduced for distributing the blood of Christ. Discuss also the value the chalice has and the great importance of not discarding it.
8. Do Lutherans fix a mathematical point at which the bread becomes the body and the wine becomes the blood of Christ?

No.

Do Lutherans fix a mathematical point at which the bread ceases to be the body of Christ and the wine ceases to be the blood of Christ?

No.

Have Lutherans historically taught that once the last person has received Communion what remains on the altar is no longer Christ’s true body and true blood?

No. The reverent treatment of consecrated elements continues until all is consumed. Please discuss.

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Chapter 8

Food for the Journey and Rest for the Weary

Study Questions

1. What is the meaning of the word *manna*, and what was manna in the Old Testament?

Manna was bread from heaven, the food God provided for His people during their pilgrimage in the wilderness.

Recall again Luther's answer to the question about the heavenly food God provides for our pilgrimage in the wilderness of this passing world. "What is the Sacrament of the Altar?"

"It is the . . ." (Can you say it by heart?)

2. What does Jesus teach us to expect in this brief earthly pilgrimage?

Struggle and suffering. Our cross.

As we fight the good fight of faith, how does Jesus come to us and what does He bring?

He comes to us in His Supper with His holy body and blood. He comes as our ally to bring us forgiveness, strength, and nourishment.

3. When the Creator entered the creation as true man, did He follow the Sabbath pattern for rest that He had initiated at creation? If so, how?

Yes. It was His holy habit (His ethos) to be refreshed by Sabbath rest by hearing the Word of God in the synagogue.

4. What must we bring to God in order to receive the beautiful rest He gives us in weekly worship?

Only our sins.

Do we have any greater need than the weekly rest that the risen Christ brings to us in His Word and Sacrament?

None at all.

5. Why couldn't the manna of old be gathered and stored up?

It would spoil from worms. They had to continue to receive it.

Can the heavenly food of our Savior's true body and true blood be stored up?

No. It is a gift our Lord invites us to "keep on" receiving.

Discussion Questions

1. When failures in our daily vocations accuse us (and they should), where can true rest be found?

In Christ's faithfulness to His vocation as our Redeemer and in the Holy Spirit's faithfulness to His vocation of bringing the risen Christ to us with His words and gifts to us.

2. Discuss why the Sabbath Day (Saturday) is no longer the only day of the week to receive rest and refreshment from God.

Because Christ actively fulfilled the Law in our stead and has released us from the Old Testament Sabbath obligation (see Colossians 2:16–17).

3. Will life in the new heavens and the new earth include full access to the tree of life?

Yes.

Will life in the new heavens and the new earth include feasting?

Yes, at the marriage feast of the Lamb.

Discuss the comfort in describing the Sacrament as a foretaste of the feast to come.

4. This chapter speaks of weekly worship as the magnificent moment of meeting with the risen Christ to receive His gifts, not the mundane matter of "going to church." Discuss the difference in these expressions.
5. Discuss the importance of the phrase "body and soul" in the Communion dismissal: "The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart + in peace" (LSB, p. 199).

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6. Look back to the introduction of this book. What were God's first words to Adam about?

What to eat and what not to eat.

Because Adam and Eve disobeyed God's will in this matter, what did they lose access to?

The tree of life.

What tree did the Son of God make use of to restore our access to God and to the life He gives?

The tree of the cross.

Review once again Walther's description of the Lord's Supper as the new tree of life planted by God in His kingdom of grace.

In this gift the risen Christ brings us the fruits of the life-giving tree on which His body was sacrificed and His blood was shed to ransom us.

7. Can you summarize why the rest and refreshment that Jesus gives you in weekly worship is incomparable to anything else in this passing world?

He comes with immeasurable grace for our immeasurable debt. He comes with love past searching out for our sins past searching out. He comes with peace the world cannot give. He comes with His holy body to nourish us body and soul. He comes with His cleansing blood to wash clean our conscience. He comes with forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation in this world of death.

Jesus comes bodily (though not visibly) to serve you and your fellow confessors of the faith in worship. There is bountiful scriptural reason and crying need to make available the opportunity for Him to serve His pilgrim Bride with the sum and substance of the Gospel that He offers at His Table.