

the Lord's Body and Blood – and it's no wonder there were people getting sick and weak and even dying in Corinth!

Our Lutheran Confessions mention how St. Chrysostom tells of the priest standing before the altar daily, telling some to stay away and some to draw near. This is never because the Lord does NOT want all to be saved, but because He DOES! As a doctor wants all to be cured. So, after patients have examined themselves, the doctor examines them too! Wouldn't want to give them what would hurt instead of cure! Like any faithful physician, pastors examine, absolve and admit to what the Lord provides for healing! This is what our Confessions say. We aren't going up as far as priests did in the Old Testament and not as deep as doctors go with scopes and whatnot! We are administering the Medicine of Immortality, and that needs to be administered faithfully. To do less is malpractice as surely as it would be if a nurse or doctor gave a patient what he wanted just because he wanted!

The Medicine which Christ had given to His Church is higher than ALL! It is MEANT for all! The Testimony of the Scriptures are unanimous in that! So are our Confessions! What we have forgotten is that it isn't ours to treat with less respect or care than a bartender does the bar he tends! If a bartender, "*Hey, who am I to deny anyone just because they're under age?*" he won't be working long!

What we will hear over the next two days will bear further testimony to this: It is not OUR Table to serve as we like. It is the LORD'S Table, who desires all to come, not on THEIR terms, but on His, and His are so much more full of Jesus than are ours!

They are the ways of the One Who has been at this since the beginning, Who will not stop until He has gathered in all of His elect to the Marriage Feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom! There, we who were cast out of the Garden in Adam will at last, in Christ, partake of the Tree of Life in Paradise, of which we are partaking even now through Him!

## ACELC CONFERENCE INTRODUCTION

Greetings in the Lord and welcome to our second ACELC free conference. What a glorious theme we have before us and presentations on the same! *Christ For Us: The Lord's Supper!*

Can you GET more full of Jesus than that? The Lord giving His very Body and Blood to us Christians to eat and drink?!

Talk about THE Koinonia project – which is no project at all, but part of the Lord's *media salutis*! His means of salvation and faith and fellowship and grace through the forgiveness of sins. He was made one of us that He might have us home again – with Him – together with angels, archangels and all the company of heaven!

That was the union, the fellowship He had with us at first when He made Adam in His own image, and gave Adam His Word.

What happened when that first word of God was let go of? What happened when the devil suggested it wasn't GOD-sure, but needed somehow to be made sure by us? *Surely, you won't die simply if you partake where God has told you not to!*

Eve bit! Hook, line and sinker, she swallowed the lie! Where was her husband when she did that? Where was her pastor? The text simply says "*he was there with her!*" You mean, as she was being tempted?! As she communed where the Lord had forbidden?! Did the first pastor just stand there and say, "*Who am I to tell her she can't commune where she wants?*"

God gave His promise of a flesh and blood son to restore the broken fellowship. Through Communion in Him, fellowship is restored; we are brought back to His Table, where He wants us!

He wants EVERYONE at His Table. Sinners from east and west will sit down and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, says the Promised Seed! How sad when anyone is left out of that!

So, to Israel, when they were given the foreshadowing of the Lord's Passover, were told in Exodus 12 that no one is left out!

Not when the Lord desires ALL to be saved! So, if there are aliens and strangers residing amongst you, and if they want to join in the

Meal, let them be circumcised; every male in the household!

What a MISSIONAL thing to say! It's SO much more than urging all to belly up, as if the Meal were a community potluck!

Many see it that way! Like coffee and donuts! So, they get offended if they can't just come and go as they like! They do it all the time at McDonald's! If they put their buck fifty in the offering plate, why can't they have their Happy Meal from YOU!?

A fast food world mistakes the Lord's Table for a buffet line!

Our pastors forget how to teach them differently, and that the Lord has been teaching this for a long time! Of COURSE He wants all to come! He said so to Israel! Only, He wants them to come and STAY! He wants them united TRULY; together in the one true Faith! He wants them CUT OFF from their old beliefs and ways!

He wants them coming – not like pigs to the trough – but as CHILDREN! As those who are washed for dinner; who are taught the Lord's Table manners – humility – *“May I be served?”* not *“Serve me or I'll go somewhere else!”* – repentance – even of beliefs contrary to the Lord's Doctrine – faith – sure that not only this and that is for them, but that ALL the Lord commanded is theirs to hold fast as to a life preserver in the midst of an angry sea!

I have no way to prove this, but I dare say no alien or stranger became a partaker of the Passover lightly! No priest went under a man's skirt without instructing him as to WHY such was being done! If he didn't want that to happen, no one was held down or forced! But having heard that the Lord was cutting the man off from darkness and grafting him and his family into LIFE, if the man were willing, well – that's a bonafide miracle of God!

The Holy Spirit working faith when and where He pleases in those who hear the Gospel! The man was cut off and grafted in! You don't go through that and then the next week run off somewhere else where what you've consented to is denied!

Closed Communion for Israel was SO much easier than it is for us today! But the shadow resembles fulfillment as our own shadows have the form and shape of the bodies that cast them.

So, when the Promised Seed Who Would be Cut off For Us came, He taught His twelve. He cut them off from who and what they'd been before, no longer catching fish but men! New wine for which old wine skins aren't sufficient! The Lord taught them three years or so in that! Then, the night He was betrayed, He washed them! Just their feet, but if you don't want even that, Peter – I'm not even going up your skirt, since that was done to you already! I'm not even washing you the way you ask, since THAT was done for you in the circumcision done without hands, when you were baptized. I'm only cleansing your toes, Peter, since you've stepped in it over and over and you need to be absolved. If I don't serve you this way, you have no participation – no partaking – no communion with me!

Peter and the rest were washed! Even Judas! Maybe even Judas stuck around to be communed! I know he left at some point! When, I cannot say! But when he did, NO ONE knew that he was any different! NO ONE knew he was the alien and stranger! They thought he was going to take care of the poor! If Judas was communed, he was communed as all the rest – because he was instructed, and for all outward appearances, he was together in the same confession! The Lord, Who knows the hearts of all, does not teach any pastor to admit upon what's going on inside, but on this: As far as human ears can hear or eyes can see, this one is together with us in the Faith and Life of Jesus!

The Church, from its earliest, has stuck to that!

St. Paul warned the Corinthians that there is simply no communion with one who claims to be Christian but is openly living an unrepentant life. *“Do not even eat with such a man,”* he says!

But when the Law has done its work, *“Restore him!”* Hear his confession! Absolve him! Bring him back to the Table!

St. Paul addressed the dangers of forgetting what the Meal is – the Lord's Body and Blood which unite us with the Lord and with the members of His Body! Forget that it's the LORD'S Supper – treat it as our own, to muck around with, to take and do with as we like – as Nadab and Abihu did with incense, which is so much less that