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Medieval Sourcebook:

John Wyclif: On the Sacrament of Communion

Wyclif's Trialogus is a long treatise in the Scholastic style on various subjects which he believed were being wrongfully taught in the Catholic Church. He cast the argument in the form of a classical dialogue between three people called Alithia, Pseudis and Phronesis. The argument against transubstantiation, a small part of which follows, is based on his logical proof that bread and body cannot be in the same place at the same time.

ALITHIA. I must request you, brother, to show still farther, from reason or Scripture, that there is no identification of the bread with the body of Christ... For I am no means pleased with the spurious writings which the moderns use, to prove an accident without a subject, because the church so teaches. Such evidence should satisfy no one.

PHRONESIS. As to identification, we must, in the first place, agree on what you mean by the term. It signifies, God's making natures, which are distinct in species or number, one and the same - as though, for instance, he should make the person of Peter to be one with Paul... For if A is identical with B, then both of them remain; since a thing which is destroyed is not made identical, but is annihilated, or ceases to be. And if both of them remain, then they differ as much as at first, and differ consequently in number, and so are not, in the sense given, the same...

PSEUDIS. In the first place, you cannot escape from this expository syllogism: First, This bread becomes corrupt, or is eaten by a mouse. Second, The same bread is the body of Christ. Third, Therefore the body of Christ does thus become corrupt, and is thus eaten; - and thus you are involved in inconsistency.

From: *Tracts and Treatises of John de Wycliffe*, ed. Robert Vaughan. London: Blackburn and Pardon, 1845, pp. 150, 152.

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Note: have mechanical shift to "separated" as sole source of authority

1330-84

95 Theses - Luther 1521

Messe Formula - 1523

Zwingli - "Attack" on Messe - 1523

by 1525 - he had arrived at his Receptivity

Martin Coligny - 1529

Phil. of Hesse Concord

Zwingli
Bucer
Oecumenicus

La Mar
v. Melanchthon

Zwingli

ON THE LORD'S SUPPER

For note well, good Christian, that in Christ there are two different natures, the divine and the human: and yet the two are only the one Christ. (50) According to his divine nature Christ never left the right hand of the Father, for he is one God with the Father, and that is why he says: "I and the Father are one" (John 10), and again, "No man hath ascended up to heaven: but the Son of man which is in heaven" (John 3). According to his divine nature he did not need to ascend up to heaven: for he is omnipresent. Even where two or three gather together in his name, he is there in the midst (Matt. 18). Again, according to this nature he is always at the right hand of the Father, for he says that he is in heaven even when in the body he is upon earth (John 3). That was possible only according to his divine nature. The other nature is Christ's human nature. For our sakes he took this upon him in the pure body of Mary by the receiving and fructifying of the Holy Spirit, and he carried it truly in this present time. According to this nature he increased and grew both in wisdom and stature. According to it he suffered hunger and thirst and cold and heat and all other infirmities, sin only excepted. According to it he was lifted up on the cross, and with it he ascended up

into heaven. This nature was a guest in heaven, for no flesh had ever previously ascended up into it. Therefore when we read in Mark 16 that Christ was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God we have to refer this to his human nature, for according to his divine nature he is eternally omnipresent, etc. But the saying in Matthew 28: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," can refer only to his divine nature, for it is according to that nature that he is everywhere present to believers with his special gifts and comfort. (51) If without distinction we were to apply to his human nature everything that refers to the divine, and conversely, if without distinction we were to apply to the divine nature everything that refers to the human, we should overthrow all Scripture and indeed the whole of our faith. For what can we make of a saying like: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" if we try to refer it to his divine nature? And the same is true of countless other Scriptures, although I know that by virtue of the fact that the two natures are one Christ, things which are said of only the one nature are often ascribed to the other. Nevertheless, the proper character of each nature must be left intact, and we ought to refer to it only those things which are proper to it. For instance, it is often said that God suffered on our behalf. This saying is tolerated by Christians and I myself do not object to it: not that the Godhead can suffer, (52) but because he who suffered according to his human nature is very God as well as very man. Yet strictly speaking, the suffering appertains only to the humanity. Similarly the Ascension can be ascribed properly only to his humanity.

But Luther wants to
do this →

Nestorius 2 Natures Remained
Separate - human attributes attributed
to human Nature, & divine
attributes according to
his own Nature -

So - Nestorianism = 2 persons
united by will
Monophysitism - 1 Nature

(Eutyches: "That Nature is not
Consubstantial")

(Origenism tends to
Nestorianism)

Apollinarianism -
Xp has no human
"spirit"

Chalcedonian Formula:
Communicatio Idiomatum

In view of the unity of Xp's
person, the attributes of the
Two Natures are fully
communicated to each other
Simultaneously

Nazianzus: "2 Natures
(Soo phores) concerning
in unity" These are distinguish-
able in thought (αδιακριτο)
but they have been joined
together that overcome

Zwingli: goes on to argue (in 53 pages)

- ① "page" doesn't say: "This is X's Body" - He says "My Body" - a, T, K, F - No Transubstantiation
- ② It is IS X's Body, it's no longer bread - so no impenetration
- ③ clearly it is a metaphorical like: "I am the Vine"

Then expounds Eucharistic Symbolically -

& winds up w Receptionism - a p "Remembering" of history

Note - The loss of Augustine's words of twice references & emphasis on the Reality of the Church as the context of the Sacrament of Eucharist.

1484-1531 - Zwingli
1483-1546 - Luther

Martin Luther 1517-1546
Luther/Melanchthon vs. Zwingli, Decolomon Pedus - Zwingli
Calvin 1509-1564

these circumstances I thought it necessary to gather together from the Word of God the more essential texts and passages which point us to the basic meaning of this sacrament, and together with them some pronouncements of the primitive doctors and of the papal canons or decrees. (5) My purpose is that the ordinary and simple Christian may learn the truth for himself, so that those who are accounted preachers of the Gospel will not be able either to withhold or to misrepresent it: (6) for these latter plunged into deep water at the very outset, and they refuse to see that it is better to return to land than to press further and further into the deep, and consequent darkness. For what is darkness if not the delusion that the bread is flesh and the wine blood, and that we partake of the flesh and blood really or essentially? The transubstantiation of the bread has long been disputed. Some argue that we take the body and blood of Christ as they hung on the cross; (7) others that we take the resurrection body. (8) The Word of God shows us that all these opinions are erroneous. And yet in spite of that fact these false teachers claim that it is we who are in error, and that we constantly shift our ground. That that is not the case we shall make as clear as daylight in what follows. In the name of God, therefore, I warn all dignities, princes, lords, dominions and powers not to allow themselves to be embittered against the truth, but as is particularly fitting in rulers to do all things advisedly and quietly, and indeed to restrain all wicked and violent action and to weigh the matter with a serious and mature judgment. For in this matter they are confronted by the articles of our Christian Creed: "He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead." Therefore they must either abandon the false doctrine of the presence of the essential body of Christ in this sacrament, or else they must at once renounce these three articles, which God forbid that anyone should ever dream of doing. In all justice, then, we ought not to yield to that papal arrogance which orders princes to protect the Christian faith under the guise of flesh and blood. For those who think that in so doing they are safeguarding the faith are really jeopardizing it, as we shall see. And I also warn scholars not to handle this matter with craftiness and subtlety, but if they desire to dispute, let them come out boldly and openly, for it is our aim to avoid all sophistry, philosophizing and rhetoric, except in so far as we are forced to give answer along such lines. And let them also

6b R.C.
9-ERASMUS

Note - he is
Tied to his
Ad. Sc. 1. 1. 1.
6c P. 1. 1. 1.

cease from unworthy tirades, and the pouring out and heaping up of abusive words. Not that we quake before such storms. I am used to them, thank God, and I stand upon a rock which does not shake under me and prevents me from being swept away. But I would rather see the truth standing by itself than see it despoiled by unmeasured words which necessarily suggest arrogance. I know well how Christ himself spoke sharply and administered severe rebukes. But I am speaking only of those who at the very first glimpse of truth and irrespective of all reasoning take to themselves blustering and deceitful words and smite their way in, misleading the simple by crying: They are agitators—to whom we are as little partial as to Lucifer. If the matter were only investigated, it would soon appear who were the instigators of past tumults—or, They root about in Scripture merely out of a spirit of mischief or the desire for notoriety—if it were notoriety we were after we should have to seek it some other way—or, They have no faith—but if we had no faith we should never have discovered that the flesh profiteth nothing—and so on. With these and similar words they cause the simple people to flee from the truth before they have ever even considered it. But I know that the ordinary Christian will listen more readily to the truth when it comes to him in its own garb and without over-much adornment or arrogant noise. And I know too that the blame for the wicked speeches which meet us in all quarters is due in no small measure to the writings of certain scholars who have presented the whole matter in the most bad-tempered and shameless fashion. (9) If it were merely a matter of a rebuke, I should have no cause for complaint. However little I might expect such a rebuke, either from God or from true believers, I realize that there is a controversy in this matter, and that that controversy will not be settled in a day. But if we blacken our opponents with rough words, the stain may well become so great that the truth is lost, as in the old saying: In the multitude of strife, the truth is forfeit. For that reason I ask scholars not to overload the matter with their hostile clamour, but to conduct themselves with sobriety. Otherwise as much evil will issue from the roughness of the words as good is wrested from their meaning and force.

9-14th

The whole question has its source in the misunderstanding of the text: "This is my body." Therefore our first task will be to consider these words in the light of the various misinterpretations and to see what errors result.

As our second article we will turn to the Scriptures and the

THE BLESSED SACRAMENT OF THE HOLY AND TRUE BODY OF CHRIST, AND THE BROTHERHOODS

1. The holy sacrament of the altar, or of the holy and true body¹ of Christ, also has three parts² which it is necessary for us to know. The first is the sacrament, or sign. The second is the significance of this sacrament. The third is the faith required with each of the first two. These three parts must be found in every sacrament. The sacrament must be external and visible, having some material form or appearance. The significance must be internal and spiritual, within the spirit of the person. Faith must make both of them together operative and useful.

2. The sacrament, or external sign, consists in the form or appearance of bread and wine, just as baptism has water as its sign; only the bread and wine must be used in eating and drinking, just as the water of baptism is used by immersion or pouring. For the sacrament, or sign, must be received, or at least desired, if it is to work a blessing. Of course at present both kinds are not given to the people daily, as in former times.³ But this is not necessary since the priesthood partakes of it daily in sight of the people. It is enough

¹Waren *Leichnams* is the actual body which was given into death. MA¹, Er 2, 540, n. 382, 2.

²Cf. *The Sacrament of Penance* (1519), LW 35, 11, and *The Holy and Blessed Sacrament of Baptism* (1519), LW 35, 29-30.

³The custom of giving only the bread but not the wine to the laity was enacted into canon law by the Council of Constance which burned an earlier advocate of both kinds, John Huss, as a heretic, even though the council itself admitted the custom's divergence from the institution of Jesus and the practice of the early church. Denzinger, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*, No. 628.

The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ

that the people desire it daily and at present receive one kind, as the Christian Church ordains and provides.⁴

3. For my part, however, I would consider it a good thing if the church should again decree⁵ in a general council that all persons be given both kinds, like the priests. Not because one kind is insufficient, since indeed the desire of faith is alone sufficient, as St. Augustine says, "Why do you prepare stomach and teeth? Only believe, and you have already partaken of the sacrament."⁶ But it would be fitting and fine that the form, or sign, of the sacrament be given not in part only, but in its entirety, just as I said of baptism: it would be more fitting to immerse in the water than to pour with it, for the sake of the completeness and perfection of the sign.⁷ For this sacrament [of the Body of Christ], as we shall see, signifies the complete union and the undivided fellowship of the saints; and this is poorly and unfittingly indicated by [distributing] only one part of the sacrament. Nor is there as great a danger in the use of the cup as is supposed,⁸ since the people seldom go to this sacrament. Besides Christ was well aware of all future dangers, and yet he saw fit to institute both kinds for the use of all his Christians.

4. The *significance* or effect of this sacrament is fellowship of all the saints. From this it derives its common name *synaxis* [Greek] or *communio* [Latin], that is, fellowship. And the Latin *communicare* [commune or communicate], or as we say in German, *zum sacrament*

⁴Later Luther continued to allow for the voluntary use of one kind, but he soon expressed himself more forthrightly on the propriety of both kinds and the wickedness of forbidding both kinds. Cf. *A Treatise on the New Testament, that is, the Holy Mass*, in this volume, pp. 106-107. LW 36, 19-28.

⁵The Council of Basel had concluded the *Compactata* of Prague (November 30, 1433), which reversed the decision of Constance to the extent of allowing the followers of Huss to administer the sacrament in both kinds. Cf. LW 36, 27 and 13.

⁶*Sermo* 112, cap. 5. Migne 38, 645.

⁷Cf. *The Holy and Blessed Sacrament of Baptism*, 1519. LW 35, 29.

⁸The danger, readily conceded by pious laity who trembled at the thought of it, was that a drop of the consecrated wine might fall to the floor. Since the bread was regarded as the more important anyway—and could be placed in the mouth of the communicant without his even having to touch it it seemed possible, by expending with reception of the wine, to avoid the danger of desecrating the sacrament. Cf. Albert Hauck (ed.), *Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche* 3rd ed., 24 vols., Leipzig, Hinrichs, 1896-1913), XII, 721.

gehen [go to the sacrament], means to take part in this fellowship. Hence it is that Christ and all saints are one spiritual body,⁹ just as the inhabitants of a city are one community and body, each citizen being a member of the other and of the entire city. All the saints, therefore, are members of Christ and of the church, which is a spiritual and eternal city of God.¹⁰ And whoever is taken into this city is said to be received into the community of saints and to be incorporated into Christ's spiritual body and made a member of him. On the other hand *excommunicare* [excommunicate] means to put out of the community and to sever a member from this body; and that is called in our language "putting one under the ban"—though a distinction [is to be made in this regard] as I shall show in the following treatise concerning the ban.¹¹

To receive this sacrament in bread and wine, then, is nothing else than to receive a sure sign of this fellowship and incorporation with Christ and all saints. It is as if a citizen were given a sign, a document, or some other token to assure him that he is a citizen of the city, a member of that particular community. St. Paul says this very thing in I Corinthians 10[:17], "We are all one bread and one body, for we all partake of one bread and of one cup."

5. This fellowship consists in this, that all the spiritual possessions of Christ and his saints¹² are shared with and become the common property of him who receives this sacrament. Again all sufferings and sins also become common property; and thus love engenders love in return and [mutual love] unites. To carry out our homely figure, it is like a city where every citizen shares with all the others the city's name, honor, freedom, trade, customs, usages, help,

⁹ Cf. Rom. 12:5; I Cor. 12:5.

¹⁰ Cf. Isa. 60:14; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 3:12.

¹¹ See *A Treatise Concerning the Ban* (1520) (PE 2, 35-54), where Luther distinguishes between the external ban (excommunication) which excludes from the church's sacramental fellowship and the internal ban (sin and unbelief) which excludes from the fellowship with Christ.

¹² As early as 1515-1516 in his lectures on Romans [12:13] Luther distinguished between the contemporary understanding of "saints" as those who "are blessed and participating in glory" and the biblical understanding of "saints" as "all those who believe in Christ." WA 56. 469; MA³, Er 2, 398. This second sense is implicit in his use of the term here and throughout this treatise.

support, protection, and the like, while at the same time he shares all the dangers of fire and flood, enemies and death, losses, taxes, and the like. For he who would share in the profits must also share in the costs,¹³ and ever recompense love with love.¹⁴ Here we see that whoever injures one citizen injures an entire city and all its citizens; whoever benefits one [citizen] deserves favor and thanks from all the others. So also in our natural body, as St. Paul says in I Corinthians 12[:25-26], where he gives this sacrament a spiritual explanation, "The members have [the same] care for one another; if one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together." This is obvious: if anyone's foot hurts him, yes, even the little toe, the eye at once looks at it, the fingers grasp it, the face puckers, the whole body bends over to it, and all are concerned with this small member; again, once it is cared for all the other members are benefited. This comparison must be noted well if one wishes to understand this sacrament, for Scripture uses it for the sake of the unlearned.

6. In this sacrament, therefore, man is given through the priest a sure sign from God himself that he is thus united with Christ and his saints and has all things in common [with them], that Christ's sufferings and life are his own, together with the lives and sufferings of all the saints. Therefore whoever does injury to [the believer], does injury to Christ and all the saints, as he says through the prophet [Zech. 2:8], "He who touches you touches the apple of my eye." On the other hand whoever does him a kindness does it to Christ and all his saints; as he says in Matthew 25[:40], "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." Again, man must be willing to share all the burdens and misfortunes of Christ and

¹³ Cf. the English aphorism, "What's none of my profit shall be none of my peril" (Vincent Stuckey Lean, *Lean's Collectanea* [Bristol: Arrowsmith, 1904], IV, 178) with its German equivalents in Karl F. Wander (ed.), *Deutsches Sprichwörter-Lexikon* (5 vols.; Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1867-1880), I, 1557, "Geniessen," Nos. 3, 4, 10, 14.

¹⁴ Cf. the English aphorism, "Love is love's reward" (*Lean's Collectanea*, IV, 39), with its German equivalents in Wander (ed.), *Sprichwörter-Lexikon*, III, 136ff., "Liebe," Nos. 146, 386, 388, 635, 661, and especially No. 410 which also cites the English, "Love can neither be bought nor sold, its only price is love."

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The medieval
"fellowship"

his saints, the cost as well as the profit. Let us consider more fully these two [sides of the fellowship].

7. Now adversity assails us in more than one form. There is, in the first place, the sin that remains in our flesh after baptism: the inclination to anger, hatred, pride, unchastity, and so forth. This sin assails us as long as we live.¹⁵ Here we not only need the help of the community [of saints] and of Christ, in order that they might with us fight this sin, but it is also necessary that Christ and his saints intercede for us before God, so that this sin may not be charged to our account by God's strict judgment. Therefore in order to strengthen and encourage us against this same sin, God gives us this sacrament, as much as to say, "Look, many kinds of sin are assailing you; take this sign by which I give you my pledge that this sin is assailing not only you but also my Son, Christ, and all his saints in heaven and on earth. Therefore take heart and be bold. You are not fighting alone. Great help and support are all around you." King David speaks thus of this bread, "The bread strengthens a man's heart" [Ps. 104:15]. And the Scriptures in numerous places ascribe to this sacrament the property of strengthening, as in Acts 9[:18-19] [where it is written] of St. Paul, "He was baptized, and when he had received the food, he was strengthened."

In the second place the evil spirit assails us unceasingly with many sins and afflictions. In the third place the world, full of wickedness, entices and persecutes us and is altogether bad. Finally our own guilty conscience assails us with our past sins; and there is the fear of death and the pains of hell. All of these afflictions make us weary and weak, unless we seek strength in this fellowship, where strength is to be found.

8. Whoever is in despair, distressed by a sin-stricken conscience or terrified by death or carrying some other burden upon his heart, if he would be rid of them all, let him go joyfully to the sacrament of the altar and lay down his woe in the midst of the community [of saints] and seek help from the entire company of the spiritual body—just as a citizen whose property has suffered damage or misfortune at the hands of his enemies makes complaint to his town council and

¹⁵Cf. Introduction, *The Blessed Sacrament of the Holy and True Body and Blood of Christ*, 1519. LW 35, 30-34.

fellow citizens and asks them for help. The immeasurable grace and mercy of God are given us in this sacrament to the end that we might put from us all misery and tribulation [*anfechtung*] and lay it upon the community [of saints], and especially on Christ. Then we may with joy find strength and comfort, and say, "Though I am a sinner and have fallen, though this or that misfortune has befallen me, nevertheless I will go to the sacrament to receive a sign from God that I have on my side Christ's righteousness, life, and sufferings, with all holy angels and the blessed in heaven and all pious men on earth. If I die, I am not alone in death; if I suffer, they suffer with me. [I know that] all my misfortune is shared with Christ and the saints, because I have a sure sign of their love toward me." See, this is the benefit to be derived from this sacrament; this is the use we should make of it. Then the heart cannot but rejoice and be strengthened.

9. When you have partaken of this sacrament, therefore, or desire to partake of it, you must in turn share the misfortunes of the fellowship, as has been said. But what are these? Christ in heaven and the angels, together with the saints, have no misfortunes, except when injury is done to the truth and to the Word of God. Indeed, as we have said, every ban and blessing of all the saints on earth affects them. Here your heart must go out in love and learn that this is a sacrament of love. As love and support are given you, you in turn must render love and support to Christ in his needy ones. You must feel with sorrow all the dishonor done to Christ in his holy Word, all the misery of Christendom, all the unjust suffering of the innocent, with which the world is everywhere filled to overflowing. You must fight, work, pray, and—if you cannot do more—have heartfelt sympathy. See, this is what it means to bear in your turn the misfortune and adversity of Christ and his saints. Here the saying of Paul is fulfilled, "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" [Gal. 6:2]. See, as you uphold all of them, so they all in turn uphold you; and all things are in common, both good and evil. Then all things become easy, and the evil spirit cannot stand up against this fellowship.

When Christ instituted the sacrament, he said, "This is my body

which is given for you, this is my blood which is poured out for you. As often as you do this, remember me."¹⁶ It is as if he were saying, "I am the Head. I will be the first to give himself for you. I will make your suffering and misfortune my own and will bear it for you, so that you in your turn may do the same for me and for one another, allowing all things to be common property, in me, and with me. And I leave you this sacrament as a sure token of all this, in order that you may not forget me, but daily call to mind and admonish one another by means of what I did and am still doing for you, in order that you may be strengthened, and also bear one another in the same way."

10. This is also a reason, indeed the chief reason, why this sacrament is received many times, while baptism is received but once. Baptism is the taking up or entering upon a new life,¹⁷ in the course of which boundless adversities assail us, with sins and sufferings, both our own and those of others. There is the devil, the world, and our own flesh and conscience, as I have said. They never cease to hound us and oppress us. Therefore we need the strength, support, and help of Christ and of his saints. These are pledged to us here, as in a sure sign, by which we are made one with them—incorporated into them—and all our woe is laid down in the midst of the community [of saints].

For this reason it even happens that this holy sacrament is of little or no benefit to those who have no misfortune or anxiety, or who do not sense their adversity. For it is given only to those who need strength and comfort, who have timid hearts and terrified consciences, and who are assailed by sin, or have even fallen into sin. How could it do anything for untroubled and secure spirits, who neither need nor desire it? For the Mother of God¹⁸ says, "He fills only the hungry [Luke 1:53], and comforts them that are distressed."

11. In order that the disciples, therefore, might by all means be worthy and well prepared for this sacrament, Christ first made them

sorrowful, held before them his departure and death, by which they became exceedingly troubled. And then he greatly terrified them when he said that one of them would betray him. When they were thus full of sorrow and anxiety, disturbed by sorrow and the sin of betrayal, then they were worthy, and he gave them his holy body¹⁹ to strengthen them.²⁰ By which he teaches us that this sacrament is strength and comfort for those who are troubled and distressed by sin and evil. St. Augustine says the same thing, "This food demands only hungry souls, and is shunned by none so greatly as by a sated soul which does not need it."²¹ Thus the Jews were required to eat the Passover with bitter herbs, standing and in haste [Exod. 12:8, 11]; this too signifies that this sacrament demands souls that are desirous, needy, and sorrowful. Now if one will make the afflictions of Christ and of all Christians his own, defend the truth, oppose unrighteousness, and help bear the needs of the innocent and the sufferings of all Christians, then he will find affliction and adversity enough, over and above that which his evil nature, the world, the devil, and sin daily inflict upon him. And it is even God's will and purpose to set so many hounds upon us and oppress us, and everywhere to prepare bitter herbs for us, so that we may long for this strength and take delight in the holy sacrament, and thus be worthy (that is, desirous) of it.

12. It is Christ's will, then, that we partake of it frequently, in order that we may remember him and exercise ourselves in this fellowship according to his example. For if his example were no longer kept before us, the fellowship also would soon be forgotten. So we at present see to our sorrow that many masses are held and yet the Christian fellowship which should be preached, practiced, and kept before us by Christ's example has virtually perished. So much so that we hardly know any more what purpose this sacrament serves or how it should be used. Indeed with our masses we frequently destroy this fellowship and pervert everything. This is the fault of the preachers who do not preach the gospel or the sacra-

¹⁶ *A Treatise on the New Testament*, 1520, LW 35, 52, n. 5.
¹⁷ Cf. Introduction, LW 35, 30.

¹⁸ Luther often called the Virgin Mary by this term of veneration which was common in Western Christendom. Cf. his discussion of the name in *The Magnificat* (1521), LW 21, 326-327.

¹⁹ *Leuchnam*, cf. p. 49, n. 1.

²⁰ Following Matt. 26:20-25 and Mark 14:17-21, Luther places the announcement of the betrayal prior to the institution of the Lord's Supper.

²¹ Cf. Augustine's commentary on Ps. 22:26 (Vulgate 21:27) in *Migne* 36, 178.

ments, but their humanly devised fables about the many works [of satisfaction]²² to be done and the ways to live aright.

But in times past this sacrament was so properly used, and the people were taught to understand this fellowship so well, that they even gathered food and material goods in the church, and there—as St. Paul writes in I Corinthians 11²³—distributed among those who were in need. We have a vestige of this [practice] in the little word “collect” in the mass,²⁴ which means a general collection, just as a common fund is gathered to be given to the poor. Those were the days too when so many became martyrs and saints. There were fewer masses, but much strength and blessing resulted from the masses; Christians cared for one another, supported one another, sympathized with one another, bore one another’s burdens and affliction. This has all disappeared, and now there remain only the many masses and the many who receive this sacrament without in the least understanding or practicing what it signifies.

13. There are those, indeed, who would gladly share in the profits but not in the costs. That is, they like to hear that in this sacrament the help, fellowship, and support of all the saints are promised and given to them. But they are unwilling in their turn to belong also to this fellowship. They will not help the poor, put up with sinners, care for the sorrowing, suffer with the suffering, intercede for others, defend the truth, and at the risk of [their own] life, property, and honor seek the betterment of the church and of all Christians. They are unwilling because they fear the world. They do not want to have to suffer disfavor, harm, shame, or death, although it is God’s will that they be thus driven—for the sake of the truth and of their neighbors—to desire the great grace and strength of this sacrament. They are self-seeking persons, whom this sacrament does not benefit. Just as we could not put up with a citizen who wanted to be helped, protected, and made free by the community, and yet in his turn would do nothing for it nor serve it. No, we on our part must make the evil of others our own, if we desire Christ and his

²² Cf. *The Sacrament of Penance*, 1519. LW 35, 12-18.

²³ I Cor. 11:21, 33, cf. Acts 2:44-46.

²⁴ Cf. *The Holy and Blessed Sacrament of Baptism*, 1519. LW 35, 95.

saints to make our evil their own. Then will the fellowship be complete, and justice be done to the sacrament. For the sacrament has no blessing and significance unless love grows daily and so changes a person that he is made one with all others.

14. To signify this fellowship, God has appointed such signs of this sacrament as in every way serve this purpose and by their very form stimulate and motivate us to this fellowship. For just as the bread is made out of many grains ground and mixed together, and out of the bodies of many grains there comes the body of one bread,²⁵ in which each grain loses its form and body and takes upon itself the common body of the bread; and just as the drops of wine, in losing their own form, become the body of one common wine and drink—so it is and should be with us, if we use this sacrament properly. Christ with all saints, by his love, takes upon himself our form [Phil. 2:7], fights with us against sin, death, and all evil. This enkindles in us such love that we take on his form, rely upon his righteousness, life, and blessedness. And through the interchange of his blessings and our misfortunes, we become one loaf, one bread, one body, one drink, and have all things in common. O this is a great sacrament,²⁶ says St. Paul, that Christ and the church are one flesh and bone. Again through this same love, we are to be changed and to make the infirmities of all other Christians our own; we are to take upon ourselves their form and their necessity, and all the good that is within our power we are to make theirs, that they may profit from it. That is real fellowship, and that is the true significance of this sacrament. In this way we are changed into one another and are made into a community by love. Without love there can be no such change.

²⁵ The figure is very ancient, going back at least into the second century as attested by a document unknown to Luther, *The Didache* 9:4, “As this piece [of bread] was scattered over the hills [the reference is likely to the sowing of wheat on the hillsides of Judea] and then was brought together and made one, so let your church be brought together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.” Cyril C. Richardson (trans., ed.), *Early Christian Fathers* (“The Library of Christian Classics,” Vol. I [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953]), p. 175.

²⁶ In the Vulgate of St. Jerome, the Greek word *mysterion* (“mystery”) in Eph. 5:32 is translated *sacramentum*. Cf. Luther’s later discussion of the term in LW 36, 93-95.

15. Christ appointed these two forms of bread and wine, rather than any other, as a further indication of the very union and fellowship which is in this sacrament. For there is no more intimate, deep, and indivisible union than the union of the food with him who is fed. For the food enters into and is assimilated by his very nature, and becomes one substance with the person who is fed. Other unions, achieved by such things as nails, glue, cords, and the like, do not make one indivisible substance of the objects joined together. Thus in the sacrament we too become united with Christ, and are made one body with all the saints, so that Christ cares for us and acts in our behalf. As if he were what we are, he makes whatever concerns us to concern him as well, and even more than it does us. In turn we so care for Christ, as if we were what he is, which indeed we shall finally be—we shall be conformed to his likeness. As St. John says, "We know that when he shall be revealed we shall be like him" [1 John 3:2]. So deep and complete is the fellowship of Christ and all the saints with us. Thus our sins assail him, while his righteousness protects us. For the union makes all things common, until at last Christ completely destroys sin in us and makes us like himself, at the Last Day. Likewise by the same love we are to be united with our neighbors, we in them and they in us.

16. Besides all this, Christ did not institute these two forms solitary and alone, but he gave his true natural flesh in the bread, and his natural true blood in the wine, that he might give a really perfect sacrament or sign. For just as the bread is changed²⁷ into his true natural body²⁸ and the wine into his natural true blood, so truly are we also drawn and changed into the spiritual body, that is, into the fellowship of Christ and all saints and by this sacrament put into possession of all the virtues and mercies of Christ and his saints,

²⁷ *Vorwandelt*. While this term and the imagery involving change are associated with the doctrine of transubstantiation, it is clear that, through rejecting all scholastic speculation concerning substance (see p. 63), Luther is already beginning to call into question that very doctrine which within a year he was to condemn as "the second captivity of the sacrament" (LW 36, 28-35). Cf. Charles E. Hay (trans.) Reinhold Seeberg's *History of Doctrines* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1952), II, 286, n. 1. "Literally, transubstantiation is here retained, but really Luther is only concerned to hold fast the idea that the body is 'in' the bread."

²⁸ *Leibnam*; cf. p. 49, n. 1.

as was said above²⁹ of a citizen who is taken and incorporated into the protection and freedom of the city and the entire community. For this reason he instituted not simply the one form, but two separate forms—his flesh under the bread, his blood under the wine—to indicate that not only his life and good works, which are indicated by his flesh and which he accomplished in his flesh, but also his passion and martyrdom, which are indicated by his blood and in which he poured out his blood, are all our own. And we, being drawn into them, may use and profit from them.

17. So it is clear from all this that this holy sacrament is nothing else than a divine sign, in which are pledged, granted, and imparted Christ and all saints together with all their works, sufferings, merits, mercies, and possessions, for the comfort and strengthening of all who are in anxiety and sorrow, persecuted by the devil, sins, the world, the flesh, and every evil. And to receive the sacrament is nothing else than to desire all this and firmly to believe that it is done.

Here, now, follows the third part of the sacrament,³⁰ that is, the *faith* on which everything depends. For it is not enough to know what the sacrament is and signifies. It is not enough that you know it is a fellowship and a gracious exchange or blending of our sin and suffering with the righteousness of Christ and his saints. You must also desire it and firmly believe that you have received it. Here the devil and our own nature wage their fiercest fight, so that faith may by no means stand firm. There are those who practice their arts and subtleties by trying [to fathom] what becomes of the bread when it is changed into Christ's flesh and of the wine when it is changed into his blood and how the whole Christ, his flesh and blood, can be encompassed in so small a portion of bread and wine. It does not matter if you do not see³¹ it. It is enough to know that

²⁹ See pp. 243-248.

³⁰ The three parts are listed on p. 242.

³¹ *Suchist*, literally "seek." WA 2, 750, n. 1 and MA³ 1, 390, 17 both suggest that *siehest* may have been intended. There need not have been a typographical error here, however. The Indogermanic antecedent of *suchen* in meaning was close to the Latin *sagire*, to perceive. Luther may have been using the term with its early connotations, in the sense of tracing a thing down or ferreting it out until you fathom or grasp it. Cf. Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm (eds.), *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (16 vols.; Leipzig: Hirzel, 1854-1954), X, 835.

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it is a divine sign in which Christ's flesh and blood are truly present. The how and the where, we leave to him.³²

18. See to it that here you exercise and strengthen your faith, so that when you are sorrowful or when your sins press you and you go to the sacrament or hear mass, you do so with a hearty desire for this sacrament and for what it signifies. Then do not doubt that you have what the sacrament signifies, that is, be certain that Christ and all his saints are coming to you with all their virtues, sufferings, and mercies, to live, work, suffer, and die with you, and that they desire to be wholly yours, having all things in common with you. If you will exercise and strengthen this faith, then you will experience what a rich, joyous, and bountiful wedding feast your God has prepared for you upon the altar. Then you will understand what the great feast of King Ahasuerus signifies [Esther 1:5]; and you will see what that wedding feast is for which God slew his oxen and fat calves, as it is written in the gospel [Matt. 22:2-4]. Then your heart will become truly free and confident, strong and courageous against all enemies [Ps. 23:5]. For who will fear any calamity if he is sure that Christ and all his saints are with him and have all things, evil or good, in common with him? So we read in Acts 2[:46] that the disciples of Christ broke this bread and ate with great gladness of heart. Since, then, this work is so great that the smallness of our souls would not dare to desire it, to say nothing of hoping for it or expecting it, therefore it is necessary and profitable to go often to the sacrament, or at least in the daily mass to exercise and strengthen this faith on which the whole thing depends and for the sake of which it was instituted. For if you doubt, you do God the greatest dishonor and make him out to be a faithless liar; if you cannot believe, then pray for faith, as was said earlier in the other treatise.³³

19. See to it also that you give yourself to everyone in fellowship and by no means exclude anyone in hatred or anger. For this sacrament of fellowship, love, and unity cannot tolerate discord and disunity. You must take to heart the infirmities and needs of others, as if they were your own. Then offer to others your strength, as if

2. Wüßte hat
ein Fromme
Geist!

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it were their own, just as Christ does for you in the sacrament. This is what it means to be changed into one another through love, out of many particles to become one bread and drink, to lose one's own form and take on that which is common to all.³⁴

For this reason slanderers and those who wickedly judge and despise others cannot but receive death in the sacrament, as St. Paul writes in I Corinthians 11[:29]. For they do not do unto their neighbor what they seek from Christ, and what the sacrament indicates. They begrudge others anything good; they have no sympathy for them; they do not care for others as they themselves desire to be cared for by Christ. And then they fall into such blindness that they do not know what else to do in this sacrament except to fear and honor Christ there present³⁵ with their own prayers and devotion. When they have done this, they think they have done their whole duty. But Christ has given his holy body for this purpose, that the thing signified by the sacrament—the fellowship, the change wrought by love—may be put into practice. And Christ values his spiritual body, which is the fellowship of his saints, more than his own natural body. To him it is more important, especially in this sacrament, that faith in the fellowship with him and with his saints may be properly exercised and become strong in us; and that we, in keeping with it, may properly exercise our fellowship with one another. This purpose of Christ the blind worshipers do not perceive. In their devoutness they go on daily saying and hearing mass, but they remain every day the same; indeed every day they become worse but do not perceive it.

Therefore take heed. It is more needful that you discern the spiritual than the natural body of Christ; and faith in the spiritual body is more necessary than faith in the natural body. For the natural without the spiritual profits us nothing in this sacrament; a change must occur [in the communicant] and be exercised through love.

20. There are many who regardless of this change of love and faith rely upon the fact that the mass or the sacrament is, as they

³² See *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, LW 36, 32-35.

³³ Cf. *The Sacrament of Penance*, 1519, LW 35, 3-22.

³⁴ See pp. 252-253.

³⁵ *Kegenwertig*, i.e., present in the consecrated host.

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say, *opus gratum opere operato*,³⁶ that is, a work which of itself pleases God, even though they who perform it do not please him. From this they conclude that however unworthily masses are said, it is nonetheless a good thing to have many masses, since harm comes [only] to those who say or use them unworthily. I grant everyone [the right to] his opinion, but such fables do not please me. For, [if you desire] to speak in these terms, there is no creature or work that does not of itself please God, as is written in Genesis 1[:31], "God saw all his works and they pleased him." What is the result if bread, wine, gold, and all good things are misused, even though of themselves they are pleasing to God? Why, the consequence of that is condemnation. So also here: the more precious the sacrament, the greater the harm which comes upon the whole community [of saints] from its misuse. For it was not instituted for its own sake, that it might please God, but for our sake, that we might use it right, exercise our faith by it, and through it become pleasing to God. If it is merely an *opus operatum*,³⁷ it works only harm everywhere; it must become an *opus operantis*.³⁸ Just as bread and wine, no matter how much they may please God in and of themselves, work only harm if they are not used, so it is not enough that the sacrament be merely completed (that is, *opus operatum*); it must also be used in faith (that is, *opus operantis*). And we must take care lest with such dangerous interpretations the sacrament's power and virtue be lost on us, and faith perish utterly through the false security of the [outwardly] completed sacrament.

All this comes from the fact that they pay more attention in this sacrament to Christ's natural body than to the fellowship, the spiritual body. Christ on the cross was also a completed work which was well pleasing to God. But to this day the Jews have found it a stumbling block because they did not construe it as a work that is made use of in faith. See to it, then, that for you the sacrament is an *opus*

³⁶ Literally, a work (that is) acceptable by (virtue of) the work (having been) performed.

³⁷ *Opus operatum* is an action that is done, completed, finished, considered as such without reference to the doer of it.

³⁸ *Opus operantis* is an action considered with reference to the doer of it, the action of the one acting.

NOTE Ref. to
SCOTUS who argued the
Thomas, omitted the
Necessity of Faith.

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operantis, that is, a work that is made use of, that is well pleasing to God not because of what it is in itself but because of your faith and your good use of it. The Word of God too is of itself pleasing to God, but it is harmful to me unless in me it also pleases God. In short, such expressions as *opus operatum* and *opus operantis* are vain words of men,³⁹ more of a hindrance than a help. And who could

³⁹ *Opus operatum* and *opus operantis* were terms used generally in discussion of the difference between the sacraments of the old law and those of the new. The latter, according to Alexander of Hales (d. 1245), are in their own right signs and causes of invisible grace, and hence superior to the former which were merely signs but not causes. "Otherwise," added Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274), "they would have obviated the necessity of Christ's passion (Gal. 2:21)." Thus the sacraments of the Old Testament signified the passion of Christ and its effects; but they had no power to justify—their effect depended rather on the faith they were able to stimulate in the believer. The sacraments of the New Testament, on the other hand, in and of themselves effectively impart grace *ex opere operato*, i.e., simply through the use of them, apart from any act of the soul. Thomas, however, still presupposed faith; not as the cause of the sacrament's effect to be sure, but as the receptivity for the sacrament's effect. Bonaventura (d. 1274) also included faith as a factor in the justification of the New Testament sacraments, only he regarded it as something supplementary to the *opus operatum*, the external action in and of itself, to which the justifying grace and its effect were inseparably attached.

From this reduction of faith to something supplementary, it was only a step to the elimination of it as something altogether expendable. The step was taken by Duns Scotus (d. 1308) and Gabriel Biel (d. 1495) when they defined the subjective condition for the sacrament's effecting a blessing no longer in terms of a positive disposition, but in terms of the negative absence of any impediment. Reception of the sacrament in and of itself invariably imparts grace so long as man does not "interpose an obstacle," such as positive disbelief or mortal sin. Thus the scholastics all agreed that the sacraments impart grace *ex opere operato*. They differed as to whether faith was necessary for the reception of that grace. According to Duns Scotus and Gabriel Biel the necessity of faith is expressly denied and a purely passive receptivity is held to be sufficient. Intended originally to affirm that the power and effect of the sacrament are caused not by any disposition on man's part but solely by God and the sufferings of Christ, the concept *ex opere operato* thus came ultimately to mean that the proper disposition on the part of the recipient need not be one of positive faith but of merely negative passivity. It was this latest, fullest, and perhaps logical development of the scholastic view that Luther is attacking. F. Kattenbusch in Hauck (ed.), *Realencyklopädie*, XVII, 363-365.

The concept of the *opus operatum* also proved useful for guaranteeing the validity of the sacrament irrespective of the personal worthiness of the celebrating priest (see LW 35, 102 and LW 36, 47, 55). Ultimately Luther's solution lay not in the preference for *operantis* over *operatum* but in the rejection of the *opus* altogether. The sacrament is not a good work or sacrifice on the part of man, but a testament or promise on the part of God, to be received by man in faith—not an *officium* but a *beneficium* (see LW 35, 93 and LW 36, 35-37).

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tell of all the abominable abuses and misbeliefs which daily multiply about this blessed sacrament, some of which are so spiritual and holy that they might almost lead an angel astray?

Briefly, whoever would understand the abuses need only keep before him the aforesaid use and faith of this sacrament; namely, that there must be a sorrowing, hungry soul, who desires heartily the love, help, and support of the entire community—of Christ and of all Christendom—and who does not doubt that in faith [all these desires] are obtained, and who thereupon makes himself one with everyone. Whoever does not take this as his point of departure for arranging and ordering his hearing or reading of masses and his receiving of the sacrament is in error and does not use this sacrament to his salvation. It is for this reason also that the world is overrun with pestilences, wars, and other horrible plagues,⁴⁰ because with our many masses we only bring down upon us greater disfavor.

21. We see now how necessary this sacrament is for those who must face death, or other dangers of body and soul, that they not be left in them alone but be strengthened in the fellowship of Christ and all saints. This is why Christ instituted it and gave it to his disciples in the hour of their extreme need and peril. Since we then are all daily surrounded by all kinds of danger, and must at last die, we should humbly and heartily give thanks with all our powers to the God of all mercy for giving us such a gracious sign, by which—if we hold fast to it in faith—he leads and draws us through death and every danger unto himself, unto Christ and all saints.

Therefore it is also profitable and necessary that the love and fellowship of Christ and all saints be hidden, invisible, and spiritual, and that only a bodily, visible, and outward sign of it be given to us. For if this love, fellowship, and support were apparent to all, like the transient fellowship of men, we would not be strengthened or trained by it to desire or put our trust in the things that are unseen and eternal [II Cor. 4:18]. Instead we would be trained to put our trust only in things that are transient and seen, and would become so accustomed to them as to be unwilling to let them go; we would not

⁴⁰ Cf. I Cor. 11:30.

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follow God, except so far as visible and tangible things led us. We would thereby be prevented from ever coming to God. For everything that is bound to time and sense must fall away, and we must learn to do without them, if we are to come to God.

For this reason the mass and this sacrament are a sign by which we train and accustom ourselves to let go of all visible love, help, and comfort, and to trust in the invisible love, help, and support of Christ and his saints. For death takes away all the things that are seen and separates us from men and transient things. To meet it, we must, therefore, have the help of the things that are unseen and eternal. And these are indicated to us in the sacrament and sign, to which we cling by faith until we finally attain to them also with sight and senses.

Thus the sacrament is for us a ford, a bridge, a door, a ship, and a stretcher, by which and in which we pass from this world into eternal life. Therefore everything depends on faith. He who does not believe is like the man who is supposed to cross the sea, but who is so timid that he does not trust the ship; and so he must remain and never be saved, because he will not embark and cross over. This is the fruit of our dependence on the senses and of our untrained faith, which shrinks from the passage across the Jordan of death; and the devil too has a gruesome hand in it.

22. This was signified long ago in Joshua 3[:14-17]. After the children of Israel had gone dry-shod through the Red Sea [Exod. 14:21-22]—in which [event] baptism was typified—they went through the Jordan also in like manner. But the priests stood with the ark in the Jordan, and the water below them was cut off, while the water above them rose up like a mountain—in which [event] this sacrament is typified. The priests hold and carry the ark in the Jordan when, in the hour of our death or peril, they preach and administer to us this sacrament, the fellowship of Christ and all saints. If we then believe, the waters below us depart; that is, the things that are seen and transient do nothing but flee from us. The waters above us, however, well up high; that is, the horrible torments of the other world, which we envision at the hour of death, terrify us as if they would overwhelm us. If, however, we pay no attention to them,

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and walk over with a firm faith, then we shall enter dry-shod and unharmed into eternal life.

We have, therefore, two principal sacraments in the church, baptism and the bread. Baptism leads us into a new life on earth; the bread guides us through death into eternal life. And the two are signified by the Red Sea and the Jordan, and by the two lands, one beyond and one on this side of the Jordan. This is why our Lord said at the Last Supper, "I shall not drink again of this wine until I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" [Matt. 26:29]. So entirely is this sacrament intended and instituted for a strengthening against death and an entrance into eternal life.

In conclusion, the blessing of this sacrament is fellowship and love, by which we are strengthened against death and all evil. This fellowship is twofold: on the one hand we partake of Christ and all saints; on the other hand we permit all Christians to be partakers of us, in whatever way they and we are able. Thus by means of this sacrament, all self-seeking love is rooted out and gives place to that which seeks the common good of all; and through the change wrought by love there is one bread, one drink, one body, one community. This is the true unity of Christian brethren. Let us see, therefore, how the neat-looking brotherhoods, of which there are now so many, compare and square with this.

*The Brotherhoods*¹

1. First let us consider the evil practices of the brotherhoods.

¹Originally made up of monks and monasteries, later primarily of laymen, these sodalities ("fraternities," "confraternities") were associations for devotional purposes. Members were obligated to the recitation of certain prayers and the attendance upon certain masses at stipulated times. Each member was believed to participate—and, most important of all, even after death—in the benefits accruing from these "good works" of all the other members. In the case of most of the sodalities, membership (for which the fees ranged from one to twenty gulden) entitled the member to the enjoyment of certain indulgences. In 1520 little Wittenberg boasted of twenty such fraternities; Hamburg had more than one hundred. In 1519 Degenhard Peffinger, of Wittenberg, was a member of eight such fraternities in his home city and through their cartel relationships derived benefits from twenty-seven more in other places. The brotherhood of St. Peter in Salzburg was united in fellowship with eighty other fraternities. Hauck (ed.), *Realencyklopädie*, III, 434-437; Karl Benrath (ed.), *An den christlichen Adel deutscher Nation, von D. Martin Luther* (Halle: Verein für Reformationsgeschichte, 1884), pp. 106-107.

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opposition to us, they are united. It is the same among temporal princes and lords. Pilate and Herod become one over against Christ, though previously they were mortal enemies. But in this particular case, the error of the Anabaptists is more tolerable than that of the sacramentarians. For the sacramentarians altogether destroy baptism, while the Anabaptists give it another character. Still there is reason to hope that they will right themselves. It is enough to have demonstrated that the Anabaptists' faith is uncertain and deceptive and that they cannot prove their case.

For Satan needs do no more through the enthusiasts than always to produce doubt. He thinks it is enough where he can speak haughtily and contemptuously about us, as the rebel sacramentarians do. None of them take pains to make clear and to prove their arrogance, but their concern is to make our interpretation contemptible and uncertain. They teach doubt, not faith, calling this Scripture and the Word of God. The devil knows he can accomplish nothing in the bright light of truth, so he stirs up the dust, hoping to raise a cloud before our eyes so that we cannot see the light. In the cloud he dazzles us with will o' the wisps to mislead us. Having made up their minds concerning their peculiar notions, they attempt to make the Scriptures agree with them by dragging passages in by the hair. But Christ has faithfully stood by our side up to this point and will continue to trod Satan under our foot. He will protect you all against the seductions of your tyrant and Antichrist and mercifully help us to gain his freedom. Amen.

Martin Luther

1527-28

19.

CONFESSION CONCERNING
CHRIST'S SUPPER

* * *

Let this suffice to show that our interpretation is not contrary to Scripture or the Creed, as this mad spirit deludes himself into believing. Next he comes to the two principal points at which I have attacked most strongly, viz. that Christ is at the right hand of God, and that the flesh is of no avail,⁶¹ where he was to prove that these two propositions make it impossible for Christ's body to be present in the Supper. I had called attention to these passages with capital letters,⁶² so they might not skip over them. Now this dear spirit comes along with his figure, allocosis,⁶³ to make everything plain, and teaches us that in the Scriptures one nature in Christ is taken for the other, until he falls into the abyss and concludes that the passage, "The Word became flesh," John 1 [:14], must not be understood as it reads. but thus: "The flesh became Word," or, "Man became God." This is to give the lie to Scripture.

I cannot at this time attack all this spirit's errors. But this I say: Whoever will take a warning, let him beware of Zwingli and shun his books as the prince of hell's poison. For the man is completely perverted and has entirely lost Christ. Other sacramen-

⁶¹Christian Answer. C. R. 92, 914ff.; St. L. 20, 1189 ff.

⁶²See *That These Works of Christ, "This Is My Body,"* . . . (1527), LW 37, 144f.

⁶³A section in *Friendly Exposition* is entitled, "On the Interchange (*De alloesibus*) of the two natures in Christ." C. R. 92, 679 ff. (see footnotes there). A similar section is found in *Christian Answer*. C. R. 92, 922 ff.; St. L. 20, 1192 ff., and another in *Concerning Luther's Book Entitled "Confession,"* 1528, as printed in St. L. 20, 1309 ff. *Alloiosis*, a word which in Plato and Aristotle and the Septuagint meant change, alteration, difference, became a technical rhetorical term in Plutarch's *Moralia*, ch. 41. Zwingli defines it as "an exchange [*abtuschen*] or interchange [*gegenwechsslen*] of the two natures which are in one person, by which in naming one nature we mean the other, or name them both but mean only the one." C. R. 92, 925 f.; St. L. 20, 1194 f. Zwingli asserts that the patristic "communication of properties" concept involved just such a rhetorical *alloeosis*. Cf. *Clear Instruction*. LCC 24, 212 ff.

GK. "ALLOEOSIS" - Exchange of I a Exchange
 Referring to one thing in terms of another - i.e.
 Talk of "Body" (in Heaven) in terms of Bacchid (here)
 (Hammam in Heaven, D. V. a. c. all over -)

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 tarians settle on one error, but this man never publishes a book
 without spewing out new errors, more and more all the time.
 But anyone who rejects this warning may go his way, just so he
 knows that I warned him, and my conscience is clear.

u. R. a. c. r.
 Nestorianism
 You must not believe or admit that this figure, alloeosis, is
 to be found in these passages, or that you can put one nature of
 Christ in place of the other. The insane spirit dreamed this up
 in order to rob us of Christ, for he does not prove it to you nor
 can he do so. And even if this error of his were true and right,
 it still would not prove that Christ's body cannot be present in
 the Supper. I have pressed them to show conclusive grounds why
 these words, "This is my body," just as they read, are false, though
 Christ is in heaven. For the power of God is not known to us,
 and he can find a way to make both true, viz. Christ in heaven
 and his body present in the Supper. That was the principal ques-
 tion. What I demanded, writing in capital letters, was that they
 should show how the two were contradictory. But he is silent
 on this point, passes over it without one letter as if it did not
 concern him, and spouts meanwhile about his alloeosis.

See i. a. c. 5. 11
 When I proved that Christ's body is everywhere because the
 right hand of God is everywhere,⁶⁴ I did so—as I quite openly
 explained at the time—in order to show at least in one way how
 God could bring it about that Christ is in heaven and his body
 in the Supper at the same time, and that he reserved to his divine
 wisdom and power many more ways to accomplish the same
 result, because we do not know the limit or measure of his power.

Now if they had any intention or ability to answer, they
 should have proved incontrovertibly that there was no way within
 God's wisdom and power for Christ to be in heaven and at the
 same time for his body to be present in the Supper. Here is the
 difficulty over which these good fellows leap. For they did not
 need to teach us about the visible mode of existence, that accord-
 ing to our eyesight heaven is high above us and the Supper down
 here on earth. We know perfectly well that, to judge by our sight,
 what is here below cannot be above, and vice versa; for this is a
 human, visible mode of existence. But God's Word and works do

⁶⁴See LW 37, 47ff., 55ff.

Potentia vs absoluta
 Ordinata vs absoluta
 - Gebard Biel

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not proceed according to our eyesight, but in a way incomprehen-
 sible to all reason and even to the angels. So Christ is neither in
 heaven nor in the Supper in a visible manner, nor as fleshly eyes
 judge a thing to be at this place or that.

It certainly is a pitiful spirit who judges God's Word and
 works according to the eyes. For in this way God himself is not
 to be found wherever he may be, whether everywhere or some-
 where. My friend, why then does this spirit cling to the one
 specific mode of existence which I pointed out? In the first place,
 because he is worried that his stomach may burst with all his clever-
 ness. In the second place, because in this way he can fool the
 common people so that they will not see how he skips over ques-
 tions which he ought to answer and starts a different game in
 order to sidetrack us and make us forget the matters which tor-
 ment him. If I were to argue with them only over this one mode
 to which I referred, they would win the game. Why? Because
 then they would have an excuse to avoid answering the real prob-
 lem which presses them, and still they would write one book after
 another to spew their useless chatter into the world. For they
 regard much spewing and writing of useless books as fitting
 rebuttal. So they betray the poor people.

This, then, is what you should do to protect yourself against
 them. If they prove conclusively that God's power and wisdom
 extend no farther than the range of our sight, and that he is able
 to do no more than we can physically see and judge with our eyes
 or touch with our fingers, then you should join their side. Then
 I too will believe that God knows of no other way whereby Christ
 can be at the same time in heaven and his body in the Supper.
 Demand and insist on this. They are bound to do it. Their teach-
 ing cannot be established until they have made this clear and
 certain, for on this their teaching rests.

The devil is well aware that he cannot furnish this proof;
 therefore he blusters loudly with his useless twaddle so that we
 may not press him for it. Meanwhile he spreads his cleverness
 which no one is asking for. Even if he could overthrow the mode
 to which I have referred—which he cannot—he still would have
 accomplished nothing by it, because it still would by no means

have been proved a contradiction for Christ to be in heaven and his body in the bread. As I demanded in my previous book, he must prove not only that this mode of existence is impossible, but also that God himself cannot know or devise any other.⁶⁵ Since he does not do this, we now say: God is omnipotent; he can do more than we see; therefore I believe his words as they stand. See how these matters stand with this spirit and how he makes a fool of himself with all his learning!

To all his worthless spouting against the mode that I have mentioned, I answer with one little word: No! He brings in his *alloeosis*, which no one concedes him the right to do in this discussion; it is just as much in need of proof as the rest of his system of lies. But if he proved it, one could make further reply. So the mode of existence to which I have referred still stands absolutely firm, in spite of his *alloeosis*. Though he says it is an example of *alloeosis*, no one gives a rip about that; he might just as well say it was irony or some other trope. It simply won't do to play around with tropes⁶⁶ in the Scriptures. One must first prove that particular passages are tropes before one uses them in controversies. Oh, it is just as I have said: The devil has been hit so that he cannot answer, therefore he lashes about with vain words. God be praised and thanked that he knows how to arm us so well against the devil.

Dear brother, instead of *alloeosis* you should teach: Because Jesus Christ is true God and man in one person, in no passage of Scripture is one nature taken for the other. For he calls it *alloeosis* when something is said about the divinity of Christ which after all belongs to his humanity, or vice versa—for example, in Luke 24 [:26], "Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?" Here he performs a sleight-of-hand trick and substitutes the human nature for Christ. Beware, beware, I say, of this *alloeosis*, for it is the devil's mask since it will finally construct a kind of Christ after whom I would not want to be a Christian, that is, a Christ who is and does no more in his

⁶⁵See LW 37, 47ff., 60ff.

⁶⁶*Troppens odder troppelns*. The four chief kinds of trope were said to be metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche, and irony.

passion and his life than any other ordinary saint. For if I believe that only the human nature suffered for me, then Christ would be a poor Savior for me, in fact, he himself would need a Savior. In short, it is indescribable what the devil attempts with this *alloeosis*!⁶⁷

Indeed, this subject is an article of great importance and calls for a book itself, and should not come up in this matter at all. Briefly, however, a plain Christian should be satisfied with this: that the Holy Spirit knows quite well how to teach us the manner in which we should speak, and we need no trope-makers or crap-shooters.⁶⁸ The Holy Spirit speaks as follows, John 3 [:16], "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son"; Romans 8 [:32], "He did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all." In the same way all his works, words, sufferings, and whatever Christ does, he does, accomplishes, speaks, and suffers as the true Son of God, so that it may properly be said, "The Son of God has died for us," "The Son of God preaches upon earth," "The Son of God washes his disciples' feet"; as the Epistle to the Hebrews says, chapter 6 [:6], "They crucify the Son of God on their own account," or I Corinthians 2: [:8], "If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."

Now if the old witch, Lady Reason,⁶⁹ *alloeosis*' grandmother, should say that the Deity surely cannot suffer and die, then you must answer and say: That is true, but since the divinity and humanity are one person in Christ, the Scriptures ascribe to the divinity, because of this personal union, all that happens to humanity, and vice versa. And in reality it is so. Indeed, you must say that the person (pointing to Christ) suffers, and dies. But this person is truly God, and therefore it is correct to say: the Son of God suffers. Although, so to speak, the one part (namely, the divinity) does not suffer, nevertheless the person, who is God, suffers in the other part (namely, in the humanity).⁷⁰

⁶⁷Beginning with the second sentence of this paragraph, this passage is quoted in the *Formula of Concord*, Solid Declaration, VIII, 39 f.

⁶⁸*Keiner troppeler noch toppeler*.

⁶⁹Luther often referred to reason as the devil's bride or mother or grandmother, cf. LW 40, 174 f.

⁷⁰This paragraph is quoted in the *Formula of Concord*, Solid Declaration, VIII, 41 f.

Just as we say: the king's son is wounded—when actually only his leg is wounded; Solomon is wise—though only his soul is wise; Absalom is handsome—though only his body is handsome; Peter is gray—though only his head is gray. For since body and soul are one person, everything that pertains to the body or the soul, yes, to the least member of the body, is correctly and properly ascribed to the entire person. This is the way people speak throughout the world, not only in Scripture, and it is the truth. For the Son of God truly is crucified for us, i.e. this person who is God. For that is what he is—this person, I say, is crucified according to his humanity.⁷¹

Thus we should ascribe to the whole person whatever pertains to one part of the person, because both parts constitute one person. This is the way all the ancient teachers speak; so do all modern theologians, all languages, and the whole Scripture. But this damned alloecosis exactly inverts the matter and changes it so that it ascribes to the parts what Scripture assigns to the whole person. He fashions his own tropes to pervert Scripture and divide the person of Christ, as he has also done with the word "is," just so he may bring to light his new teaching and his foolish ideas.

Well, if he is so fond of tropes, why isn't he satisfied with the old trope which Scripture and all teachers up to now have used? viz. *synecdoche*,⁷² for example, "Christ died according to his humanity." But that would have been nothing new; no fame could have been won from it, and no new errors could have been produced. Therefore he had to bring forth alloecosis, and teach us that one nature is taken for the other. As if the apostles were so senseless and foolish that they could not speak of the divinity without calling it humanity, and vice versa. If John had wanted to use alloecosis, he could have said, "The flesh became Word," instead of saying, "The Word became flesh" [John 1:14].

Is this not a mischievous spirit, who blurts out his alloecosis in these passages? Who commanded him to do this? How does he prove there is an alloecosis here? No, this proof is not necessary;

⁷¹ These last two sentences are quoted in the *Formula of Concord*, Solid Declaration, VIII, 42.

⁷² Zwingli had actually cited the figure *synecdoche* in *On Baptism*. LCC 24, 147, *Friendly Rejoinder*. C. R. 92, 779; St. L. 20, 1111. and *Reply to Billican and Rhegius*. C. R. 91, 920.

it is enough if he says, "I, Zwingli, say there is an alloecosis here, therefore it is so. I was in the bosom of the Godhead yesterday and I have just come from heaven, therefore I must be believed!" He should prove first that there is an alloecosis here. This he fails to do, but assumes it as if he had established it a thousand years ago and no one may doubt it. But that there is an alloecosis here is much more in need of proof than that which he would like to establish with it. This is the principle of Zwinglian logic called "proving an uncertain proposition by something more uncertain, and an unknown by one more unknown." Oh, beautiful learning! The children should pelt it with dung and drive it away!

If it is proper for him to invent tropes and play around with figures as he pleases, and still be right in all he says, is it surprising that he ultimately makes a Belial out of Christ?⁷³ If anyone dares to assert whatever he pleases without being obliged to show his reasons, my friend, what conclusions may he not draw? It is no different from what I have complained of: this spirit appeals to Scripture to flatter people with fair words, and yet he produces nothing but his own dreams and his foolish imagination in opposition to Scripture. In this passage, however, we condemn and damn alloecosis right down to hell as the devil's own inspiration. We would like to see how he proposes to establish it. For what we want is Scripture and sound reasons, not his snot and slobber.

They raise a hue and cry against us, saying that we mingle the two natures into one essence.⁷⁴ This is not true. We do not say that divinity is humanity, or that the divine nature is the human nature, which would be confusing the natures into one essence. Rather, we merge the two distinct natures into one single person, and say: God is man and man is God. We in turn raise a hue and cry against them for separating the person of Christ as though there were two persons.⁷⁵ If Zwingli's alloecosis stands, then Christ

⁷³ Cf. II Cor. 6:15.

⁷⁴ *Christian Answer*. C. R. 92, 933 f.; St. L. 20, 1200. This is to accuse Luther of Monophysitism, which was condemned by the Fourth Ecumenical Council, at Chalcedon, in 451, and subsequently in the Athanasian Creed. For a discussion of the point at issue in another frame of reference see also Luther's *The Three Symbols or Creeds of the Christian Faith*, 1538. LW 34, 197 ff.

⁷⁵ Luther thus accuses the Zwinglians of Nestorianism, which was condemned by the Third Ecumenical Council, at Ephesus, 431, at Chalcedon as well,

will have to be two persons, one a divine and the other a human person, since Zwingli applies all the texts concerning the passion only to the human nature and completely excludes them from the divine nature. But if the works are divided and separated, the person will also have to be separated, since all the doing and suffering are not ascribed to natures but to persons. It is the person who does and suffers everything, the one thing according to this nature and the other thing according to the other nature, all of which scholars know perfectly well. Therefore we regard our Lord Christ as God and man in one person, "neither confusing the natures nor dividing the person."⁷⁶

Let this suffice as a treatment of an incidental matter which would serve no useful purpose here, except that this spirit is so full of errors that he seeks occasion everywhere to dupe the simple, and meanwhile sidetrack the real issue. We stand firm, because this chatterbox will not and cannot prove that the two propositions, "Christ is in heaven, and his body is in the Supper," are contradictory. So the words, "This is my body," remain to us just as they read, for one letter of them is better and surer to us than the books of all the fanatics, even if they should fill the world with the books they write.

Again, since they do not prove that the right hand of God is a particular place in heaven,⁷⁷ the mode of existence of which I

and subsequently in the Athanasian Creed. The Chalcedonian Formula carefully steered between Monophysitism, which fused or *confused* the two natures of Christ and converted the human nature into the divine, and Nestorianism, which *divided* and *separated* the natures virtually into two persons. Zwingli defended himself at length against the charge of Nestorianizing in the section on *Alloeosis* in *Christian Answer*. C. R. 92, 922 ff.; St. L. 20, 1192 ff.

⁷⁶ Beginning with "If Zwingli's *alloeosis* . . ." this passage is quoted in the *Formula of Concord*, Solid Declaration, VIII, 43, which retouches it at two points: (a) in the second from the last sentence the Formula reads ". . . ascribed . . . to the person"; (b) in the last sentence the grammatical form of the Latin expression is emended from *confundens* to *confundendo* (as Luther's manuscript also had read), in better parallelism with *dividendo*.
⁷⁷ Zwingli had not argued that "the right hand of God" is a particular place in heaven; he acknowledged that God's right hand is everywhere, but asserted that Christ is not at God's right hand according to his humanity as he is according to his divinity. Zwingli distinguished between "Christ is everywhere" and "Christ's body is everywhere." *Christian Answer*. C. R. 92, 929 f.; St. L. 20, 1198 f.

have spoken also stands firm, that Christ's body is everywhere because it is at the right hand of God which is everywhere, although we do not know how that occurs. For we also do not know how it occurs that the right hand of God is everywhere. It is certainly not the mode by which we see with our eyes that an object is somewhere, as the fanatics regard the sacrament. But God no doubt has a mode by which it can be somewhere and that's the way it is until the fanatics prove the contrary.

Even if the *alloeosis* concept were valid, so that one nature could be taken for the other, still it would pertain only to the works or functions of the natures, and not the essence of the natures. For although in reference to his works—as when we say, "Christ preaches, drinks, prays, dies"—Christ might be taken as a designation for the human nature, the same could not be true in reference to his essence—as when we say, "God is man or man is God." Here there can be no *alloeosis*, indeed no *synecdoche* or other trope either, for here God must be taken as a designation for God, and man as a designation for man. Now when I write, "Christ's body is everywhere," I am treating not of the works of the natures, of course, but of the essence of the natures. Therefore neither *alloeosis* nor *synecdoche* can refute my argument, for essence is essence, each for itself and none for the other. Whoever wishes to refute my argument must not bring forth *alloeoses* or *synecdoches* or other tropes—these are good for nothing here—but he must refute my reasons on which my argument is based.

My grounds, on which I rest in this matter, are as follows: The first is this article of our faith, that Jesus Christ is essential, natural, true, complete God and man in one person, undivided and inseparable. The second, that the right hand of God is everywhere. The third, that the Word of God is not false or deceitful. The fourth, that God has and knows various ways to be present at a certain place, not only the single one of which the fanatics prattle, which the philosophers call "local."⁷⁸ Of this the sophists⁷⁹

⁷⁸ This much of the paragraph is quoted in the *Formula of Concord*, Solid Declaration, VII, 93 ff., and (with an interpolation) *Epitome*, VII, 11 ff.
⁷⁹ Meaning in this case the Occamist Scholastics, from whom Luther adapted this analysis of the modes of existence or presence. Aquinas had recognized the first two modes. See Sasse, *This Is My Body*, pp. 155 ff.

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properly say: There are three modes of being present in a given place: locally or circumscriptively, definitively, repletively.

Let me translate this for the sake of clearer understanding. In the first place, an object is circumscriptively or locally in a place, i.e. in a circumscribed manner,⁸⁰ if the space and the object occupying it exactly correspond and fit into the same measurements, such as wine or water in a cask, where the wine occupies no more space and the cask yields no more space than the volume of the wine. Or, a piece of wood or a tree in the water takes up no more space and the water yields no more than the size of the tree in it. Again, a man walking in the open air takes up no more space from the air around him, nor does the air yield more, than the size of the man. In this mode, space and object correspond exactly, item by item, just as a pewterer measures, pours off, and molds the tankard in its form.

In the second place, an object is in a place definitively,⁸¹ i.e. in an uncircumscribed manner, if the object or body is not palpably in one place and is not measurable according to the dimensions of the place where it is, but can occupy either more room or less. Thus it is said that angels and spirits are in certain places. For an angel or devil can be present in an entire house or city; again, he can be in a room, a chest or a box, indeed, in a nutshell. The space is really material and circumscribed, and has its own dimensions of length, breadth, and depth; but that which occupies it has not the same length, breadth, or depth as the space which it occupies, indeed, it has no length or breadth at all. Thus we read in the gospel that the devil possesses men and enters them, and they also enter into swine. Indeed, in Matthew 8⁸² we read that a whole legion were in one man. That would be about six thousand devils. This I call an uncircumscribed presence in a given place, since we cannot circumscribe or measure it as we measure a body, and yet it is obviously present in the place.

⁸⁰ *Begreiflich* could also be translated "comprehensible" or "determinate" in the sense of measurable.

⁸¹ This is the more familiar spelling, cf. Aquinas. With the late medieval Occamists, Luther spelled the word *diffinitive*.

⁸² Matt. 8:28 ff. relates the incident of the Gadarene (or Gerasene) demoniacs, but Luther's reference is to the parallel in Mark 5:9 ff. The Roman military legion numbered up to six thousand men.

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This was the mode in which the body of Christ was present when he came out of the closed grave, and came to the disciples through a closed door, as the gospels show.⁸³ There was no measuring or defining of the space his head or foot occupied when he passed through the stone, yet he certainly had to pass through it. He took up no space, and the stone yielded him no space, but the stone remained stone, as entire and firm as before, and his body remained as large and thick as it was before. But he also was able, when he wished, to let himself be seen circumscribed in given places where he occupied space and his size could be measured. Just so, Christ can be and is in the bread, even though he can also show himself in circumscribed and visible form wherever he wills. For as the sealed stone and the closed door remained unaltered and unchanged, though his body at the same time was in the space entirely occupied by stone and wood, so he is also at the same time in the sacrament and where the bread and wine are, though the bread and wine in themselves remain unaltered and unchanged.

In the third place, an object occupies places repletively, i.e. supernaturally, if it is simultaneously present in all places whole and entire, and fills all places, yet without being measured or circumscribed by any place, in terms of the space which it occupies. This mode of existence belongs to God alone, as he says in the prophet Jeremiah [23:23 f.], "I am a God at hand and not afar off. I fill heaven and earth." This mode is altogether incomprehensible, beyond our reason, and can be maintained only with faith, in the Word.

All this I have related in order to show that there are more modes whereby an object may exist in a place than the one circumscribed, physical mode on which the fanatics insist. Moreover, Scripture irresistibly forces us to believe that Christ's body does not have to be present in a given place circumscriptively or corporeally, occupying and filling space in proportion to its size. For it was in the stone at the grave, but not in that circumscribed mode; similarly in the closed door, as they cannot deny. If it could be present there without space and place proportionate to

⁸³ Cf. Matt. 28:2 and John 20:19, 26.

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its size, my friend, why can't it also be in the bread without space and room proportionate to its size? But if it can be present in this uncircumscribed manner, it is beyond the realm of material creatures, and is not grasped or measured in their terms. Who can know how this takes place? Who will prove it false if someone declares that, since Christ's body is outside the realm of creation, it can assuredly be wherever he wishes, and that all creatures are as permeable and present to him as another body's material place or location is to it?

Consider our physical eyes and our power of vision. When we open our eyes, in one moment our sight is five or six miles⁸⁴ away, and simultaneously present everywhere within the range of those six miles. Yet this is only a matter of sight, the power of the eye. If physical sight can do this, do you not think that God's power can also find a way by which all creatures can be present and permeable to Christ's body? "Yes," you say, "but by this you do not prove that it is so." Thank you, I prove this much by it, that the fanatics also cannot refute me and prove that this is impossible to the divine power, which they should and must do. They should prove, I say, that God knows no other way by which the body of Christ can exist in a given place than corporeally and circumscriptively. If they cannot do this, their system stands disgraced. Of course, they cannot do it.

Because we prove from Scripture, however, that Christ's body can exist in a given place in other modes than this corporeal one, we have by the same token sufficiently argued that the words, "This is my body," ought to be believed as they read. For it is contrary to no article of faith, and moreover it is scriptural, in that Christ's body is held to have passed through the sealed stone and the closed door. Since we can point out a mode of existence other than the corporeal, circumscribed one, who will be so bold as to measure and span the power of God, as if He knows of no other modes? Yet the position of the fanatics cannot be maintained unless they can prove that the power of God can be thus measured and spanned, for their whole argument rests on the

⁸⁴ In terms of today's measurements this would be a distance of approximately twenty to twenty five miles.

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assertion that the body of Christ can exist in a given place only in a corporeal and circumscribed manner. But here they are not answering but leaping over the question while they chatter about Lady Alloecosis.

And now to come to my own position: Our faith maintains that Christ is God and man, and the two natures are one person, so that this person may not be divided in two; therefore, he can surely show himself in a corporeal, circumscribed manner at whatever place he will, as he did after the resurrection and will do on the Last Day. But above and beyond this mode he can also use the second, uncircumscribed mode, as we have proved from the gospel⁸⁵ that he did at the grave and the closed door.

But now, since he is a man who is supernaturally one person with God, and apart from this man there is no God, it must follow that according to the third supernatural mode, he is and can be wherever God is and that everything is full of Christ through and through, even according to his humanity—not according to the first, corporeal, circumscribed mode, but according to the supernatural, divine mode. Here you must take your stand and say that wherever Christ is according to his divinity, he is there as a natural, divine person and he is also naturally and personally there, as his conception in his mother's womb proves conclusively. For if he was the Son of God, he had to be in his mother's womb naturally and personally and become man. But if he is present naturally and personally wherever he is, then he must be man there, too, since he is not two separate persons but a single person. Wherever this person is, it is the single, indivisible person, and if you can say, "Here is God," then you must also say, "Christ the man is present too."

And if you could show me one place where God is and not the man, then the person is already divided and I could at once say truthfully, "Here is God who is not man and has never become man." But no God like that for me! For it would follow from this that space and place had separated the two natures from one another and thus had divided the person, even though death and all the devils had been unable to separate and tear them apart.

⁸⁵ Cf. LW 37, 66.

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This would leave me a poor sort of Christ, if he were present only at one single place, as a divine and human person, and if at all other places he had to be nothing more than a mere isolated God and a divine person without the humanity. No, comrade, wherever you place God for me, you must also place the humanity for me. They simply will not let themselves be separated and divided from each other. He has become one person and does not separate the humanity from himself⁸⁶ as Master Jack takes off his coat and lays it aside when he goes to bed.

Let me give a simple illustration for the common man. The humanity is more closely united with God than our skin with our flesh—yes, more closely than body and soul. Now as long as a man lives and remains in health, his skin and flesh, body and soul are so completely one being, one person, that they cannot be separated; on the contrary, wherever the soul is, there must the body be also, and wherever the flesh is, there must the skin be also. You cannot indicate a special place or space where the soul is present alone without the body, like a kernel without the shell, or where the flesh is without the skin, like a pea without a pod. On the contrary, wherever the one is, there must the other be also. Thus you cannot shell the divinity from the humanity and lay it aside at some place away from the humanity. For thereby you would be dividing the person and making the humanity merely a pod, indeed, a coat which the divinity put on and off according to the availability of place and space. Thus the physical space would have the power to divide the divine person, although neither angels nor all creation can do so.

Here you will say with Nicodemus, "How can this be?" [John 3:9]. Must all places and space now become one space and place? Or, as this dolt dreams according to his crude, fleshly sense, must the humanity of Christ stretch and extend itself like a skin as wide as all creation? I answer: Here you must with Moses take off your old shoes, and with Nicodemus be born anew.⁸⁷ According to your old notion, which perceives no more than the first, corporeal, circumscribed mode, you will understand this as little

⁸⁶ The entire two paragraphs down to this point are quoted in the *Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration*, VIII, 81 ff.

⁸⁷ Cf. Exod. 3:3, John 3:3.