

Appendix XI — Martin Luther on the Lord's Supper

The following paragraphs are taken from Martin Luther's *Small Catechism* and are a summary of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. Martin Luther would explain doctrines by utilizing a series of questions and answers.

HOLY COMMUNION IS A SACRAMENT

What is the sacrament of Holy Communion?

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ together with the bread and wine, instituted by Christ for us Christians to eat and to drink.

Where is this written?

The holy Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke and the Apostle Paul tell us: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, gave it to his disciples and said, "Take and eat. This is my body, which is given for you; do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way, after supper he took the cup, gave thanks, gave it to them and said, "Drink from it, all of you. This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

THE BLESSINGS OF HOLY COMMUNION

What blessing do we receive through this eating and drinking?

That is shown us by these words, "Given and poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins."

Through these words we receive forgiveness of sins, life and salvation in this sacrament. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

THE POWER OF HOLY COMMUNION

How can eating and drinking do such great things?

It is certainly not the eating and drinking that does such things, but the words, "Given and poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins."

These words are the main thing in this sacrament, along with the eating and drinking. And whoever believes these words has what they plainly say, the forgiveness of sins.

RECEIVING HOLY COMMUNION

Who, then, is properly prepared to receive this sacrament?

Fasting and other outward preparations may serve a good purpose, but he is properly prepared who believes these words, "Given and poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins."

But whoever does not believe these words or doubts them is not prepared, because the words "for you" require nothing but hearts that believe.