

Faith and Christian Living in Luther's Confession Concerning Christ's Supper (1528)

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I Introduction

Our theme, »Faith and Christian living«, is not in the focus of Luther's »Confession concerning Christ's Supper« (Von Abendmahl Christi. Bekenntnis). The Confession consists of three parts. The first and second parts contain a long discussion about the understanding of certain biblical verses which have been used in the dispute on Christ's presence in the Eucharist.¹ Its purpose is to answer to Zwingli's and Oecolampadius' arguments concerning the right understanding of the Gospel's words »He took bread, and gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples and said, Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you« and »this cup is the new testament in my blood, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins«. The third part is a confession of faith, which Luther wrote as a »testament« of his central teaching. The confession may be read independently, but it also has an inner connection with the discussion concerning the Eucharist.

As Wolfgang Schwab puts it in his study on the development of Luther's theology of the sacraments, Luther expresses his appreciation of the Eucharist more vividly in some other writings than in the theological disputes.² Nevertheless, the Confession refers time and again to the relation between Christ's Supper and the Christian way of life.³ And what is even

¹ For the Reformers' interpretations of biblical passages on the Eucharist see David C. STEINMETZ: *Luther in context*. Grand Rapids, Michigan 2002, 72-84.

² Wolfgang SCHWAB: *Entwicklung und Gestalt der Sakramententheologie bei Martin Luther*. F 1977, 299.

³ Luther's conception of the relation between the Lord's Supper and Christian life or his »Eucharistic ethics« has not received much attention in Luther research. For example Schwab: *Entwicklung und Gestalt ...*, 302, writes in the chapter »Lord's Supper in the

more important, the debate of the understanding of the Eucharist deals with the very foundations of Christian living. Many researchers have pointed out that the deep questions in this debate are the nature of God's word, the relation between spirit and matter and the role of creation and creatures in God's saving work. Zwingli followed the at least partly platonic ideals of Erasmian humanism in aiming toward a »spiritual and inward religion«.⁴ For him the Spirit and grace are totally independent of everything material and visible whereas Luther stressed God's commitment with his material creation and especially with word, water, bread and wine, and Christ's human nature in his saving work.⁵ For Luther it is important that in the Eucharist Christ's body and blood are really delivered to the recipients.

The main question of this study is, then, the relation of the delivering of Christ's body and blood with faith and Christian living. In order to fulfill the task we need to reconstruct Luther's views on the delivering of Christ's body and blood and of Christian living and its relation to faith. Because the Reformer deals with Christian living only cursorily in the »Confession concerning Christ's Supper«, I have taken leave to use other texts in addition: Luther's writings concerning the debate on the Lord's Supper, and the Large Catechism, for which the Large Confession forms an important background. The Confession will nevertheless be the main source and the other texts are used to explain thoughts that are either presupposed in the Confession or that follow from the ideas presented in it.

life of Christians« only that as Christ has received us in the Sacrament, we must also receive other human beings. Thus the Sacrament lives further in the active love of one's neighbor. For a more thorough presentation of the theme see Albrecht PETERS: *Sakrament und Ethos nach Luther*. LuJ 36 (1969), 41-79; Antti RAUNIO: *Summe des christlichen Lebens: die Goldene Regel als Gesetz der Liebe in der Theologie Martin Luthers*. MZ 2001, 345-354.

4 For Zwingli's relation to Erasmian humanism see W. P[eter] STEPHENS: *The theology of Huldrych Zwingli*. Oxford 1986, 9-17.

5 Kjell Ove NILSSON: *Simul: das Miteinander von Göttlichem und Menschlichem in Luthers Theologie*. GÖ 1966, 261-285; Leif GRANE: *Vision och verklighet: en bok om Martin Luther (Vision and Wirklichkeit: ein Buch über Luther)*/ übers. von Margareta Brandby-Cöster. Skellefteå 1994, 238-240; Steinmetz: *Luther in context*, 74f.

In what follows I will approach the relation between faith and Christian living from Luther's comments on spiritual and fleshly ways of regarding Christ and the neighbor. These statements may be considered Luther's most important remarks concerning Christian living in the Large Confession.

II Spiritual and fleshly manner of regarding Christ and the neighbor

I Seeking what is best for others as spiritual regarding of the neighbor
Luther also calls Christian living spiritual living. He describes the spiritual way of life when he interprets II Corinthians 5, 16f. He writes:

»[...] the text of St. Paul irresistibly forces us to conclude that this is his meaning: Because we all have died with Christ to the world and the flesh, from now on we should no longer live or think according to the flesh, or in a fleshly manner. So we should know no one in a fleshly but only in a spiritual manner [...]. Now the flesh has power only to seek its own from anyone else; it hates, envies, and does all manner of evil to its enemy, seeks pleasure, prestige, enjoyment and friendship from everyone for its own advantage, etc. This is the way men of the world regard one another. But we Christians regard no one so, for we are a new creation in Christ, and regard one another according to the Spirit, i. e. each seeks not his own advantage but what is best for others, as Paul teaches also in Romans 14 and Philippians 2.«⁶

Here Luther contrasts fleshly or worldly living and thinking with spiritual or Christian living. Fleshly living and thinking means that the flesh seeks its own from everyone else. Luther expresses the point very accurately here: he does not say that a human being seeks his own, but that the flesh seeks its own and does everything for its own advan-

6 WA 26, 310, 30 - 311, 24 ≙ StA 4, 73, 24 - 74, 4: »Weil wir alle mit Christo der welt vnd fleisch abgestorben sind / so sollen wir hinfurt nicht mehr nach dem fleisch odder fleischlich leben noch dencken / Vnd also niemand fleischlich / sondern allein geistlich kennen / Denn den andern fleischlich kennen / ist yhn nicht weiter kennen / denn fleisch vermag / Nu vermag fleisch nicht mehr / denn das es das seine an yderman sucht / hasset / neidet vnd thut alles vbel dem feinde / sucht aber lust / gonst / genies vnd freundschaft an yderman zu seinem nutz etcetera. Auff solche weise kennet die welt einander / Aber wir Christen kennen nu niemand also / Denn wir sind eine newe Creatur in Christo / vnd kennen einander nach dem geist / das ist / ein iglicher sucht nicht das seine / sondern was des andern ist / zu desselbigen besten / wie er auch Ro. 14. vnd Phil. 2. leret.«

tage. Then he goes on by stating that the men of the world regard each other in this fleshly way. Luther's view of fleshly and spiritual living presupposes the distinction between the old, fleshly man and the new, spiritual man.

This presupposition becomes clear when we look at Luther's explanation of the relation between flesh and spirit in his writing »That this word of Christ, ›this Is My Body‹, etc. still stands firm against the fanatics«. His theme there is the verse »Flesh is of no avail« (John 6, 63) and he argues for the view that these words do not refer to the flesh or body of Christ, but to the old, sinful man, which is born of flesh. The old Adam does not have the Spirit, which means that it is contrary to the Spirit and understands everything in a fleshly way. The flesh in this sense includes even the highest and best parts of the human nature: the intellect, reason, will, heart, and mind. If the flesh is of no avail, even all its capacities and works do not profit anything, i. e., the flesh cannot understand Christ's words correctly. All Christ's words are specifically spiritual and they have to be understood in a spiritual, not fleshly, manner.⁷

7 WA 23, 195, 17 - 197, 13: »Weil denn solchs war und unwiddersprechlich ist, das fleisch, wo es dem geist entgegen gesetzt wird, das daselbst nicht Christus leib heisst, sondern den alten Adam aus dem fleisch geboren: So ists gewislich, das auch hie Johan. vi. ›fleisch ist kein nütze‹ nicht kan von Christus leib verstanden werden, Weil Christus daselbst fleisch gegen dem geist helt. Denn also lauten klarlich seine wort: ›Der geist macht lebendig, fleisch ist kein nütze. Meine wort, die ich euch sage, sind geist und leben‹. Da sihestu offenbarlich, das er fleisch scheidet vom geist und setzt es widder den geist, Denn er leret ja, das leben und geist sey yn seinen Worten und nicht ym fleisch, Dem fleisch aber gibt er, es sey kein nütze, Und wie solts nütze sein, wenn widder leben noch geist drynnen ist? Ist kein leben noch geist drynnen, so mus eitel tod und sunde drinnen sein. [...]

Haben wir denn nu, das an diesem ort ›fleisch‹ nicht Christus leib heissen müge, sondern gewislich den alten Adam und das da widder den geist ist odder yhe on geist und nicht geist ist (welchs gleich so viel gilt als widder der geist), so hoffe ich, das wir armen sunder nicht so gar weyt gefeylet haben, da wir fleisch gedeutet haben, Es sey fleischlicher verstand. Denn ym fleisch, da nicht geist ist, da ist freylich das aller hõhest und beste der verstand, synn, wille, hertz und mut. Ist nu fleisch kein nütze, so ist auch sein synn, verstand, wille und alle sein thun und vermügen kein nütze, und mus die meinung Christi an diesem ort die sein: Lieben jünger, die yhr murret und last euch meine wort ergern, yhr verstehet mich nicht recht, Denn yhr fallet auff das werck: leiblich fleisch essen, und verstehets, wie mans mit zeenen zu reysset und ym leibe

The Christians are spiritual because, with Christ, they have died to the world and the flesh and they are a new creation in Christ. Since they live and think in the spiritual manner they do not seek their own advantage but what is best for others. Now Luther says that the Christians, who are new creatures, do not seek their own advantage. But were he to apply the differentiation between flesh and spirit consistently, he would say that the spirit is not seeking its own advantage. However, there may be a purpose behind Luther's change in reasoning. The reason for this is the reference of the term »own« in this context. Does Luther speak of the »own« of the old, fleshly man here, or of the new, spiritual man? Or is it so, rather, that the spiritual man does not have anything of his »own«. If this holds true, the seeking of one's own refers always to the efforts of the fleshly and sinful man. The proper meaning of »own« is crucial for the understanding because for Luther the Apostle Paul's saying »love does not seek its own« is one of the most important foundations of Christian living.

Another difficulty in this passage is that Luther seems to ignore the understanding of a Christian as *simul iustus et peccator*, and speak about Christians as if they were totally spiritual men, who live in a spiritual way. Of course, this is not the only occasion where Luther speaks without referring to the remaining sin in the Christians. In any case this should not be understood as a complete description of the factual condition of a Christian person. Luther does not suppose that Christians seek only what is best for others in their daily lives. When speaking about the concrete believers Luther uses the synecdoche, so that one aspect of being a Christian represents the whole being.⁸ In other words we can say that the spiritual

verdewet als fleisch aus den scherren [Fleischerladen]. Das ist ein fleischlicher tödlicher verstand, Solch fleisch geb ich euch nicht so zu essen, Es mus geist hie sein, nicht fleisch, Geistlich müssen meine wort verstanden werden, vom geistlichem fleisch, Alle meine wort sind geist, drum ist beide, fleisch und essen vnd alles davon ich rede, auch geist und geistlich zuverstehen und zubrauchen, Denn der geist macht lebendig, Fleisch ist kein nütze &c.«

⁸ This aspect of the biblical way of speaking is often ignored when the so-called real-ontic interpretation of Christ's presence in faith is criticized of diminishing the reality of sin in a Christian. For example Jens WOLFF: *Metapher und Kreuz: Studien zu Luthers Christusbild*. Tü 2005, 573, maintains as a truism that the real-ontic understanding of the participation in Christ as well as some other interpretations underestimate the weight

way of regarding other people characterizes the believers to the extent that they are real Christians. Luther's idea of spiritual living in which one does not seek his or her own also includes the spiritual regarding of Christ. Understanding his theological conception of the term »own« presupposes examination of both the relation with God and the relation with other creatures.

*2 Seeing the true life and glory in his death and suffering
as spiritual regarding of Christ*

In the same context Luther even writes about the fleshly and spiritual ways to regard Christ: But just as we regard our brothers in a spiritual, no longer a fleshly manner, so much the less do we regard Christ in a fleshly manner. Formerly, he means to say, when we were holy in Judaism and in the works of the law [...], we knew nothing spiritually about Christ, but what we sought was merely fleshly. For we »had hoped that he would redeem Israel« (Luke 24, 21) and would regard our holiness and glorify us according to the flesh. Now, all who regard and know Christ from a fleshly point of view are inevitably offended at him [...]. For since flesh and blood thinks no further than it sees and feels, and since it sees that Christ was crucified as a mortal man, it inevitably says, »This is the end; neither life nor salvation is to be found here; he is gone; he can help no one; he himself is lost.«

But he who is not offended at him must rise above the flesh and be raised by the Word so that he may perceive in the Spirit how Christ precisely through his suffering and death has attained true life and glory. And

of sin. This critique seems to presuppose that Christ's presence and the sinfulness of a Christian are understood in a habitual sense. This, however, has never been the point of the real-ontic understanding. The main concern has been to reject all kinds of idealistic interpretations of Luther's conception of faith and to stress Christ's ontic (»ontic« in this sense does not presuppose any specific philosophical understanding of being) real presence in the believer through faith. As Luther himself says, this means that in Christ the believer is righteous and without sin because Christ takes all his sins upon himself. In himself the believer is still a sinner and only begins to become righteous. The intentions of the real-ontic understanding introduced by Tuomo Mannermaa have been presented correctly in Bengt HÄGGLUND: *Tro och verklighet: tre studier i 1900-talets teologihistoria* (Glaube und Wirklichkeit: drei Studien zur Theologiegeschichte des 20. Jahrhunderts). Skellefteå 2007, 119-121.

whoever does this properly, whoever is able to do it, is a new creation in Christ, endowed with new spiritual knowledge.⁹ The spiritual knowledge sees the hidden reality that is quite the opposite to its appearance.

One who regards Christ in a fleshly manner expects that Christ regards and glorifies the »holiness in the works of the law«. But also those who say that only bread and wine are offered in the Lord's Supper are regarding Christ according to the flesh. They are offended at him when he says, »This is my body.« But they who regard Christ in a spiritual manner understand that true life and glory are attained through suffering and death, not through works of law. This is spiritual knowledge which is given by the Word of God. Furthermore, spiritual knowledge is to believe and understand that the bread is not mere bread but the true body of Christ.¹⁰ Exactly they who have this spiritual knowledge and understanding are a new creation in Christ.

In the text concerning the spiritual knowledge of Christ, Luther does not mention faith explicitly but it is clear that he speaks about the content of faith. In faith one sees the true life and glory in Christ's suffering and death, that is, one sees them beneath their counterparts. Simultaneously, even though Luther doesn't explicitly mention love, he speaks about the Christian love, *agape*, which does not seek its own. The spiritual man does not seek his own glory, but sees the real glory in Christ. The spiritual

9 WA 26, 311, 29 - 312, 19 $\cong$ StA 4, 74, 8-16: »Aber gleich wie wir vnser brüder geistlich vnd nicht mehr fleischlich kennen / also kennen wir auch viel weniger Christum fleischlich / Vorhin aber (wil er sagen) da wir ym Iſdentum vnd ynn des gesetzs wercken heilig waren (dahin itzt die falschen Apostel widder treiben) wusten wir nichts von Christo geistlichs / sondern eitel fleischlichs suchten wir dazumal / Denn wir hoffeten / er solt Israel erlösen Luce vltimo vnd vnser heilickeit ansehen / vnd vns nach dem fleisch herlich machen. Das war freylich Christum nach dem fleisch kennen / vnd ein rechter fleischlicher synn.«

WA 26, 312, 23-32 $\cong$ StA 4, 74, 20-29: »Alle nu die Christum fleischlich ansehen vnd kennen / müssen sich an yhm ergern / [...] Denn weil fleisch vnd blut nicht weiter dencket / denn es sihet vnd fulet / Vnd sihet / das Christus als ein sterblich mensch gekreuzigt wird / mus es sagen / Das ist aus / da ist widder leben noch selickeit / Der ist dahin / der kan niemand helffen / Er ist selbs verloren. Wer sich aber nicht sol an yhm ergern / der mus vber das fleisch faren / vnd durchs wort auffgericht werden / das er ym geist erkenne / wie Christus eben durch sein leiden vnd sterben / recht lebendig vnd herlich wird / Vnd wer das recht thut vnd thun kann / der ist ein neue Creatur ynn Christo / mit newem geistlichem erkenntnis begabt.«

10 StA 4, 74, 29-36 $\cong$ WA 26, 312, 32 - 313, 20.

understanding of Christ is also the basis for the spiritual regarding of other human beings. Luther's view of Christian living may thus be described in a preliminary way as follows. One who does not seek his or her own glory from Christ does not seek his or her own advantage from other men either. Or, as we can also say, one who sees the true glory in Christ's suffering and death seeks what is best for others. Luther's conception of the spiritual regarding of Christ and fellow human beings contains the aspects of faith and love. Faith sees the true glory and life in Christ's suffering and death and love seeks the glory of Christ and what is best for others.

Luther stresses that the Word of God raises the believers above the flesh so that they perceive in the Spirit how Christ attains true life and glory through his suffering and death.¹¹ In fact, he allots a considerable part of the text to explaining the nature of the Divine Word. Although the discussions on the Word of God and its grammar and metaphorical nature are partly quite technical and theoretical, his aim is still practical: his purpose is to give an argument for the belief that Christ is present in the elements of the Lord's Supper and delivers his merit there to the believers. Receiving the Lord's Supper is thus essential for Christian living, regarding Christ and the neighbor in the spiritual way.

III Delivering Christ's Merit through the Word and Sacrament

1 God's Creative and Metaphorical Word

In order to understand how Christian living actualizes through the Word and Sacraments, we investigate Luther's understanding of the divine Word's nature first. Luther deals with the nature of the Word from different points of view. His starting point can be expressed for example with the words from the Sermon on the Sacrament: »If the Word of God is present, it will soon happen as the words say.«¹² One important aspect

¹¹ See the text in footnote 8.

¹² WA 19, 501, 3-9: »Si velimus mirari, quomodo veniat Christus in panem, virginem miremur, quomodo in ventre. Augustinus: venit adferens verbum. Hoc verbo audito statim venit Christus, et fit praegnans. Hic non aliter possum dicere quam gravidam factam per verbum. Sicut hic non potes negare per verbum tantum concepisse, sic hic, quando dicitur ›Hoc est‹, adest ex vi verborum. Si verbum adest, so ist bald da, wie die wort lauten.« See also Schwab: *Entwicklung und Gestalt ...*, 269f.

of this understanding of the Word of God as creative and effective is its metaphorical nature which Luther explains in the Large Confession. It is also a presupposition of the delivering of Christ's merit in the Eucharist. The main problem is, of course, the correct understanding of the words by which the Lord's Supper is instituted. Luther's intention is to show that both Zwingli and Oecolampadius are wrong in their interpretations of these words. It is well known that Zwingli had adopted the view of the Dutch humanist Cornelius Hoen († 1524), who stated that the words »this bread is my body« and »this cup is the new testament in my blood« should be understood in the sense that the bread signifies Christ's body and the wine signifies Christ's blood. For Zwingli such understanding is necessary, since Christ's body is in heaven and can't be present in the physical elements. For Luther this is a fatal misunderstanding of the biblical way of speaking. In fact, it shows that Zwingli ignores even the teaching of the common grammar. The critique against Oecolampadius deals with the same theme from a slightly different point of view. In Luther's opinion Oecolampadius has understood the biblical language incorrectly so that the new, metaphorical words are symbolizing the old meanings. For example the bread of the Supper is a symbol of Christ's physical body.

When the Bible uses a trope, it refers to a new, real thing or essence but not to any symbol of that thing. In Luther's opinion the verb »is« has to be taken literally in tropes of this kind.¹³ The tropes or metaphors¹⁴ are able to make two or many words of one word by giving them new meanings. If two or more different things are named by the same literal name, they have to possess some similarity. Then there are actually at least two words, the old and the new, and they differ through power, use and meaning even though they have the same letters.¹⁵

13 WA 26, 380, 32 f ≅ StA 4, 129, 30 f: »[...] alle tropi ynn der schrift / deuten das rechte newe wesen / vnd nicht das gleichnis desselbigen newen wesen.«

14 In Luther's time it was common to identify the trope with the metaphor. So does, for example, Melancthon in his Rhetoric. See Hartmut HILGENFELD: Mittelalterlich-traditionelle Elemente in Luthers Abendmahlsschriften. ZH 1971, 161. 168. For Luther's use of the term »trope« in the Large Confession see Hilgenfeld: Mittelalterlich-traditionelle Elemente ..., 167-169, and Anna VIND: Latomus og Luther: striden om, hvorvidt enhver god gerning er synd; en teologihistorisk afhandling. København 2001, 235. (Handschrift)

15 WA 26, 272, 8 - 273, 27 ≅ StA 4, 40, 7 - 41, 4: »Gar fein ists geredt / wenn du ein gemeyn

The Bible often uses these kinds of metaphorical, new words. One example of the biblical way of speaking is Christ's words »I am the true vine«. According to Luther all the biblical metaphors are formed so that the old meaning or thing is a symbol (Gleichnis) of the new things. The metaphors refer to the new things or essences, but no longer back to the old things. The true vine is thus Christ himself, who does not signify the natural vine, but the natural vine signifies or symbolizes Christ.¹⁶ Luther also makes a distinction between the essence of a thing and its meaning. He stresses that in all languages the word »is« speaks about the essence

wort kanst wol vernewen. Daraus man hat / das einerley wort / zwey odder vielerley wort wird / wenn es vber seine gemeyne deutunge andere neue deutunge krieget / Als blume / ist ein ander wort / wenn es Christum heist / vnd ein anders / wenn es die natürliche rosen vnd der gleichen heist / Item ein anders / wenn es eine gülden / sylbern odder höltzern rosen heist. Also wenn man von einem kargen man spricht / Er ist ein hund. Hie heist hund den kargen filtz / vnd ist aus dem alten wort ein new wort worden / nach der lere Horatij / Vnd mus nicht hie (Ist) eine deuteley sein / denn der karge bedeutet nicht einen hund. Also redet man nu ynn allen sprachen vnd vernewet die wörter / als / wenn wir sagen / Maria ist eine morgenröde / Christus ist eine frucht des leibes / Der teuffel ist ein Gott der welt / Der Bapst ist Iudas / Sankt Augustin ist Paulus / Sankt Bernhard ist eine taube / Daudid ist ein holtzwürmlin / Vnd so fort an / ist die schrifft solcher rede vol / vnd heist tropus odder Metaphora ynn der grammatica / wenn man zweyerley dingen / einerley namen gibt / vmb des willen / das ein gleichnis ynn beiden ist / Vnd ist denn de selbige name nach dem buchstaben wol einerley wort / aber potestate ac significatione plura / nach der macht / brauch / deutunge / zwey wort / ein altes vnd neues / wie Horatius sagt vnd die kinder wol wissen.«

- ¹⁶ WA 26, 379, 8 - 380, 26 ≙ StA 4, 129, 8-26: »Wo ein tropus odder vernewet wort wird ynn der heiligen schrifft / Da werden auch zwo deutunge / eine neue / vber die ersten alte odder vorige / wie droben gesagt ist / als / das wort / weinstock / ynn der schrifft hat zwo deutunge / ein alte und neue / Nach der alten odder ersten / heist es schlecht den strauch odder gewexse ym weinberge / Nach der neuen heist es Christum / Johan. 15. [...]

Nu sind die selbigen tropi ynn der schrifft also gethan / das die wort nach der alten odder ersten deutunge / zeigen das ding / so des neuen gleichnis ist / Vnd nach der neuen deutunge / zeigen sie das neue rechte ding odder wesen selbs / vnd nicht widderumb zurück / Als ynn diesem spruch / Ich bin der rechte weinstock / Hie ist das wort / Weinstock / ein tropus odder neue wort worden / welchs nicht kan zu rück deuten / den alten weinstock / der des neuen gleichnis ist / sondern deutet fur sich / den rechten neuen weinstock selbs / der nicht ein gleichnis ist / Denn Christus is nicht ein gleichnis des weinstocks / sondern widderumb der weinstock ist ein gleichnis Christi etcetera.«

of a thing and not about its meaning.¹⁷ To speak about the essence of a thing and to speak about its meaning are two different propositions and it is erroneous to assimilate them into one proposition. Even in the case of the new words there has to be the essence before we can ask what they signify or symbolize.¹⁸ When the essence of a thing is defined, it becomes possible to say what it means. For example, a wooden rose is first a certain kind of rose and not only a symbol or mark of a natural rose. When this is clear, we can also say that it means or symbolizes some other rose or that it is made according to a model.¹⁹

Applied to the words »this is my body« of the Eucharist,²⁰ the metaphorical way of speaking means that the old meaning of these words is the natural body of Christ, but the new meaning is another, new body

17 WA 26, 19-27 $\hat{=}$ StA 4, 132, 6-14: »Denn das ist eine gewisse regel ynn allen sprachen / Wo das woertlin ›Ist‹ ynn einer rede gefurt wird / da redet man gewislich vom wesen des selbigen dinges vnd nicht von seim deuten / Das mercke dabey / Ich neme eine hültzin odder sylbern Rose fur mich / vnd frage / Was ist das? So antwort man mir / Es ist eine rose / Hie frage ich nicht / was es bedeute / sondern nach dem wesen was es sey / so antwortet man mir auch / was se sey vnd nicht was es bedeute / Denn es ist viel ein ander frage / wenn ich sage / Was bedeutet das? Vnd wenn ich sage / Was ist das? Ist / gehet ymer auffs wesen selbs / das feylet nimer mehr.«

18 WA 26, 383, 27-35 $\hat{=}$ StA 4, 132, 14-22: »Ja sprichstu / Es ist ia nicht eine rose / sondern ein holtz. Antwort / Das ist gut / Dennoch ists eine Rose / Obs nicht eine gewachsen natürliche rose ist ym garten / dennoch ists auch wesentlich eine Rose auff seine weise / Denn es sind mancherley Rosen / als sylbern / gülden / tũchern / papyren / steinern / hültzen. Dennoch ist ein igliche fur sich wesentlich eine rose ynn yhrem wesen / Vnd kann nicht ein blos deuten da sein / Ia wie wolte ein deuten da sein / das nicht zuuor ein wesen hette? Was nichts ist / das deutet nichts / Was aber deutet / das mus zuuor ein wesen vnd ein gleichnis des andern wesens haben.«

19 WA 26, 383, 36 - 384, 2 $\hat{=}$ StA 4, 132, 23 - 133, 1: »Darumb ist an einer hültzen rosen /beides von einander zu scheiden / Das wesen vnd das deuten / sicut actum primum et secundum / sicut verbum substantium et actium / Nach dem wesen / ists warhafftig eine Rose / nemlich eine hültzerne rose / Darnach / wenn das wesen also stehet / mag man denn sagen / Diese Rose bedeutet odder ist nach einer andern Rosen gemacht / Denn dis sind zwo vnterschiedliche rede odder propositiones / Das ist eine Rose / vnd das bedeutet eine Rose / Vnd wer ein rede draus machet / der thet so viel / als der propositionem Hypotheticam vnd Catheticam fur eine proposition hielte / quod est impossibile /«

20 For the metaphorical nature of the words of institution see also Wolff: Metapher und Kreuz, 557-569.

of Christ.²¹ The same holds true also of Luther's conception of unity and love as the signification of the Eucharist. The bread that consists of ground grains and the wine that is made from pressed grapes are symbols of the Christian unity. Luther criticizes Oecolampadius for turning the correct order of symbols the other way round. The new words are then marks or symbols of the old things.²² In the Bible the order is always from the marks or symbols to the real essences and the fulfilment of the symbols. This is true both of God's work and of the biblical way of speaking. The new words are formed so that there is an old word and symbol first, which then becomes the new meaning which is its real essence.²³

The words with the new meaning are theological words that refer to such entities in which the created and the divine reality are somehow united. These new metaphorical words belong to God's way of speaking. Christ himself is using the new words and, as Luther likes to say, the divine speaking follows the grammar of the Holy Spirit. The new words are biblical words which are given in order to enable human beings to speak

21 WA 26, 381, 35 - 382, 14 $\hat{=}$ StA 4, 130, 22 - 131, 8: »Aber nu der text also stehet / Das ist mein leib / vnd er wil einen tropum da machen / mus er der schrifft nach also sagen / Das wort »leib« nach der alten deutunge heist den natürlichen leib Christi / Aber nach der neuen deutunge mus es einen andern neuen leib Christi heissen / welchem sein natürlicher leib / ein gleichnis ist / Das were nach der schrifft weise / das wort recht vnd wol vernewet / das der newe text also stunde / Das ist mein rechter newer leib / der nicht ein gleichnis ist / gleich wie ich sage von Christo / Das ist vnser weinstock / das ist / ein newer rechter weinstock / welches gleichnis ist der alte weinstock ym weinberge.«

22 WA 26, 380, 34 - 381, 21 $\hat{=}$ StA 4, 130, 1-6: »Solchs aber keret Ecolampad vmb / vnd macht ein solchen tropum odder vernewet wort / das zu rücke deutet / die gleichnis des neuen wesen vnd spricht »leib« solle leibs zeichen odder gleichnis heissen / ynn dem spruch / Das ist mein leib / so er doch / wo er der schrifft nach folgen wolt / viel mehr solt das wort »leib« also vernewen / das es den rechten neuen leib heisse / welchen der natürliche leib Christi / ein gleichnis were / Denn die Schrifft troppet nicht also zu rücke /«

23 WA 26, 382, 25 - 383, 3 $\hat{=}$ StA 4, 131, 19-25: »Denn die heilige Schrifft helt sich mit reden / wie Gott sich helt mit wircken / Nu schafft Gott alle wege / das die deutung / odder gleichnis zuuor geschehen vnd darnach folge / das rechte wesen vnd erfollunge der gleichnissen / Denn also gehet das alte testament / als ein gleichnis furher / vnd folget das neue testament hernach als das rechte wesen / Eben also thut sie auch wenn sie tropos odder neue wort macht / das sie nympt das alte wort / welches die gleichnis ist / vnd gibt yhm ein neue deutunge / welche das rechte wesen ist.«

about things which exceed the capacities of human natural understanding and language. Since they provide the possibilities for speaking about spiritual things, they are the grammatical rules that regulate Christian speaking. But at the same time they have an ontological reference. In fact, these new words not only refer to the reality but they contain and give the reality that they are speaking about.²⁴ They are also creative and effective words which realize what they say. Already for this reason Christ's words cannot be only marks of symbols which refer to something else.

Applying a differentiation used by Zwingli, Luther speaks about two arts of divine speaking in the Confession, which he names »action-words« and »command-words«.²⁵ When Christ speaks action-words, what he says also takes place. The action-word is a powerful word which creates what is spoken. In the same way as God creates the sun and the moon by speaking, Christ also created something new by saying »this bread is my body« and »this cup is my blood«. These action-words were spoken when the Lord's Supper was celebrated for the first time.²⁶

24 For a clear exposition of Luther's conception of the »new words and of the »theological grammar« see Reijo TYÖRINOJA: *Nova vocabula et nova lingua: Luther's conception of doctrinal formulas*. In: *Thesaurus Lutheri: auf der Suche nach neuen Paradigmen der Luther-Forschung*/ hrsg. von Tuomo Mannerman, Anja Ghiselli, Simo Peura. Helsinki 1987, 221-236.

25 Difference between the two arts of speaking is not the same for Luther as for Zwingli. For Zwingli there is also a third way of speaking which he calls promising word. Luther doesn't speak about promising word in this context. For Zwingli's and Luther's understanding of the different ways of speaking see Rolf SCHÄFER: *Zum Problem der Gegenwart Christi im Abendmahl*. *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* 84 (1987), 202-204; Hilgenfeld: *Mittelalterlich-traditionelle Elemente ...*, 123-128. As Nilsson: *Simul*, 278, remarks, Luther rejects the distinction in the Zwinglian sense because for him God's action in his word is always creative and incarnatory. Consequently, both the command-words and the action-words are creative words.

26 WA 26, 282, 39 - 283, 7 ≙ StA 4, 51, 16-23: »Denn es sind thetel wort / die Christus auff's erste mal redet vnd leuet nicht / da er spricht / Nemet / esset / das ist mein leib etcetera eben so wol / als son vnd mond da stund / da er sprach Gen. 1. Es sey sonn vnd mond / vnd war kein lügen wort / So ist sein wort freylich nicht ein nachwort / sondern ein machtwort / das da schaffet / was er lautet. Psalm. 33. Er spricht / so stehets da / sonderlich weil es hie am ersten gesprochen wird vnd ein thetel wort sein sol. Also haben wir das erste einig abendmal erhalten / da sie selbs auch geben vnd bekennen.

2 *Divine Words and Human Speaking in the Institution of the Eucharist*

The question is now how the relation between the first Lord's Supper and the Holy Communions celebrated later by the Church should be understood. Luther explains this relation with the help of the second way of divine speaking. In addition to action-words Christ speaks command-words as well. This means that our speaking or acting is bound with Christ's commands. As an example Luther compares two ways of saying to a mountain that it should be pulled up and thrown into the sea. If somebody only said so, nothing would happen. But because Christ has combined it with a command-word by saying »If you have faith say to this mountain, be pulled up and thrown into the sea«, it will be done as the words say if they are spoken according to Christ's order.²⁷

When a human being speaks such words without the order of Christ, they are mere action-words. This implies a differentiation between divine and human action-words. In fact, the English translation of Luther's Works has chosen different words for the two cases. The latter action-word is translated into »declarative«. The human action-words or declaratives do not create what they say. Only when the human words are combined with Christ's command-word, it will be done as they say.²⁸ This holds true of the words which institute the Lord's Supper, baptism and absolution.²⁹ Since Christ has ordered his followers to say the words »take and eat, this bread is my body«, and »this cup is the new testament in my blood«, the bread will be his body and the wine will be his blood. Christ's effective order is the link between the first and all other Lord's Suppers.³⁰ Human

²⁷ WA 26, 284, 5-10 ≙ StA 4, 53, 9-14: »Als Matthei .21. stehet ein thattel wort / das die Iünger sprechen solten / Heb dich und wirff dich ynns meer / Welchs so yemand schlecht da her redet / folgete freylich nichts draus vnd bliebe ein thetel wort / Aber da es Christus yns heissel wort fasset vnd spricht / So yhr werdet sagen mit glauben zu diesem berge / heb dich etcetera so mus warlich nicht mehr ein thetel wort sein / sondern geschicht wie es lautet / so mans nach seinem befehl spricht.«

²⁸ WA 26, 3-7 ≙ StA 4, 54, 15-19: »Wenn sie nu fragen / Wo ist die krafft / die Christus leib ym abendmal mache / wenn wir sagen / das ist mein leib? Antwort ich / Wo ist die krafft / das ein berg sich hebe vnd ynns meer werffe / wenn wir sagen / Heb dich vns wirff dich ynns meer? freylich ist sie nicht ynn vnserm sprechen / sondern ynn Gottes heissen / der sein heissen an vnser sprechen verbindet.«

²⁹ StA 4, 53, 14-22.

³⁰ StA 4, 54, 6-14: »[...] / fragen wie nu weiter / ob Christus habe vns liegen heissen / da er

words are creative words because of Christ's effective order which he has combined with the human words of doing.³¹ That is why the words of institution are needed to unite the bread and Christ's body as well as the wine and Christ's blood.

IV The Presence of Christ's Person

1 Three Ways of Being and Christ's Omnipresence

Luther gives another argument for Christ's dwelling in the elements by describing three different ways how something can be present in a place. The three ways of being somewhere which Luther has learned from his philosophical teachers are called: circumscriptive or localiter, diffinitive or immeasurable, and repletive or supernatural.³² According to Luther, Christ is able to use all these ways of being somewhere and probably some others,

beflhet vnd vns heist diese thetel wort sprechen / Nemet / Esset / das ist mein leib / weil sie allzu mal ynn seiner person vnd als seine eigene wort gesprochen werden? Heist er vns liegen / so sehe er zu / Heist er vns aber war reden / so mus freylich sein leib da sein ym abendmal / aus krafft / nicht vnsers sprechens / sondern seines befehls / heissens vnd wirckens / Vnd also haben wir denn nicht allein das erst einig abendmal / sondern alle andere / so gehalten werden nach befelh vnd einsetzunge des Herrn Christi.«

31 WA 26, 285, 7-18 $\hat{=}$ StA 4, 54, 19-30: »Item / Wo ist die krafft / das wasser aus dem fels gehet / weil Moses nichts dazu thut / denn schlegt drauff? Solt schlagen gnug sein / so wolten wir auch wol alle steine zu wasser machen / Aber dort ist Gottes heissen / vnd Mose hat nichts denn mag das thetel wort sprechen / Ich shlahe den fels / welchs ich auch wol sprechen k nd / vnd folget dennoch kein wasser / denn das heisselwort ist bey Mose vnd nicht bey mir / Also hie auch wenn ich gleich vber alle brod spreche / das ist Christus leib / w rde freylich nichts draus folgen / Aber wenn wir seyner einsetzunge vnd heissen nach ym abendmal sagen / das ist mein leib / So ists sein leib nicht vnsers sprechens odder thettel worts halben / sondern seines heissens halben / das er vns also zu sprechen vnd zu thun geheissen hat / vnd sein heissen vnd thun an vnser sprechen gebunden hat.«

32 For the background of these concepts in the theological tradition see Hilgenfeld: *Mittelalterlich-traditionelle Elemente ...*, 183-232. Thomas OSBORNE: Faith, philosophy, and the nominalist background to Luther's defense of the real presence. *Journal of the history of ideas* 63 (2002), 63-82, discusses Luther's understanding of the three modes of being somewhere and its relation to nominalist tradition. His conclusion is somewhat ambiguous; either Luther misunderstood the nominalist meaning of these concepts or he used them deliberately in another sense. In any case it is clear that his conception of Christ's presence in the Eucharistic elements differs from the nominalist position.

too. The first, local way refers to the »normal« situation where the place or room and the entity which is in it pass together. For example wine is in this way in a barrel or water in a glass. In the second, definitive way the entity is in a place or room so that it can't be measured. It may take only little room, but it may also take much room. For example the angels are in this way in places or areas. One angel may be in a whole house or town, but it may also be in a nut's cover. This means that the place or room has certain measures, length, breadth and depth but the entity which is in the room has no measures at all. This was the way of Christ's being when he came out of his grave and moved through the closed doors. The third, supernatural or repletive way of being somewhere belongs to God only. In this way God is everywhere and fills all places and rooms.³³

Luther accentuates that Christ can be in a place in all these three ways because he is both God and man, and his two natures are united into one person so that they cannot be separated. Christ is thus there wherever God is in the third, supernatural way. Luther emphasizes furthermore that Christ is supernaturally present both in his divinity and humanity. If we say that God is somewhere, we have to say that the man Christ is there as well.³⁴ Luther stresses that the humanity of Christ cannot be God by essence, but it has to be at least personally God.³⁵ This differentiation presupposes the Chalcedonian solution to the Christological question. The divine and human nature in Christ do not change or lose their own essences, but they are inseparably united in Christ's person. In the Confession Luther stresses the incarnation of the Son of God and the communication idiomatum as presuppositions for Christ's omnipresence, which entails also His human nature and body.³⁶ Luther understands God's and Christ's presence in a definitely different way from Zwingli, who accepts the ubiquity of Christ's divine nature, but denies the omnipresence of his human nature.

According to Luther, from the fact that Christ is in God or by the Father follows that he is present as a divine and human person everywhere in the repletive way. The supernatural, repletive way of being

³³ StA 4, 87, 21 - 90, 1.

³⁴ StA 4, 91, 14-34.

³⁵ StA 4, 103, 16-31.

³⁶ Osborne: Faith, philosophy ..., 70.

means, however, that Christ is at the same time inside and outside, very near and far away from all creatures. The creatures cannot measure nor grasp Christ, but they are present for him so that he can measure and grasp them.³⁷ In the repletive way Christ is present everywhere with the Father. Human beings cannot learn to know God and Christ through this common ubiquity. The repletive presence must be differentiated from Christ's real presence in the Word and Sacraments. There God is not only in his majestic essence, but as God for you, as God's incarnated Son and Word.³⁸

37 WA 26, 336, 8-19 ≙ StA 4, 96, 15 - 97, 2: »Zum dritten die Göttliche hymelische weise / da er mit Gott eine person ist / Nach welcher freylich alle Creaturn yhm gar viel durchleufftiger vnd gegenwertiger sein müssen / denn sie sind nach der andern weise / Denn so er nach der selbigen andern weise / kan also sein ynn vnd bey den Creaturn / da sie yhn nicht fulen / rüren [berühren] / messen noch begreifen / wie viel mehr wird er nach dieser hohen dritten weise / ynn allen Creaturn wündlicher sein / das sie yhn nicht messen noch begreifen / sondern viel mehr / das er sie fur sich hat gegenwertig / misset vnd begreiffet? Denn du must dis wesen Christi / so er mit Gott eine person ist / gar weit weit ausser den Creaturn setzen / so weit als Gott draussen ist / widerumb so tieff vnd nahe ynn alle Creatur setzen / als Gott drynnen ist / Denn er ist ein vnzer-trennete person mit Gotte / Wo Gott ist / da mus er auch sein / odder vnser glaube ist falsch /«

38 Nilsson: Simul, 275. Luther's speaking about »God in his essence« and »God for you« refers clearly to the Aristotelian categories of substance and relation. On the philosophical level Luther seems to think principally in the Aristotelian way about these categories. Using the Aristotelian categories in speaking about things doesn't imply that Luther accepts Aristotle's metaphysics as such. It is however questionable to speak about Luther's relational ontology in the sense that the philosophical concept of substance is wholly replaced by a theological one. In theology the problem is often that we are not able to know the natures of the things (res), for example, God's majestic nature or essence is unknown to human reason. God can be known only in the category of relation, namely through his Word or revelation, i. e., through Christ. This epistemological point does not presuppose that God is only in this relation. As Luther says in his lectures on Genesis, through the revealed God the believer also learns gradually to know the hidden God. This means that through faith one learns to understand what God is in his own nature; WA 43, 460, 23-25. See Antti RAUNIO: Speculatio practica: das Betrachten Gottes als Ursprung des aktiven Lebens bei Luther. In: Caritas Dei: Beiträge zum Verständnis Luthers und der gegenwärtigen Ökumene, Festschrift für Tuomo Mannermaa zum 60. Geburtstag/ hrsg. von Oswald Bayer, Robert W. Jenson, Simo Knuuttila. Helsinki 1997, 375 f.

2 *Christ's Presence in the Bread and Wine*

In the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper Christ is present not only in the supernatural repletive way but also in the definitive way, which Luther even calls spiritual.³⁹ Because Christ is present supernaturally in his divinity and humanity in any case, we may ask, does Luther mean that the pronouncement of the words of institution according to Christ's order brings forth the definitive presence of Christ in the elements? This seems to be his understanding even though he does not say it quite directly.⁴⁰ For him it is important that Christ, who is already present everywhere, is also in an immeasurable way present for human beings in certain concrete things or elements.⁴¹ With His Word God tells them where he is present for human beings so that they can receive him through faith.⁴² However, in order to know what the faith receives in the Holy Communion, it does not suffice to say that Christ is there; we also have to ask what kind of unity he forms with these created elements.

³⁹ WA 26, 327, 33 - 329, 26 ≡ StA 4, 88, 13 - 89, 26; Schwab: *Entwicklung und Gestalt ...*, 265 f.

⁴⁰ Schäfer: *Zum Problem der Gegenwart ...*, 205-207. Albrecht PETERS: *Realpräsenz: Luthers Zeugnis von Christi Gegenwart im Abendmahl*. B 1960, 87, accentuates that the words of testament (verba testamenti) do not bring the body of Christ into the bread, but the Lord who is bodily present reveals himself in them to the communicant. However, he does not take into account the possibility that the Word brings forth the definitive, immeasurable presence. Osborne: *Faith, philosophy, ...*, 76, also overlooks this when he states that in the Confession Concerning Christ's Supper Luther does not use the different modes of presence to distinguish between Christ's Eucharistic presence and Christ's omnipresence (Osborne refers here to Christ's presence in a cabbage).

⁴¹ See Erwin METZKE: *Sakrament und Metaphysik: eine Lutherstudie über das Verhältnis des christlichen Denkens zum leiblich-materiellen*. In: Ders.: *Coincidentia oppositorum: gesammelte Studien zur Philosophiegeschichte*. Witten 1961, 199. Metzke states that in His revelation God makes his omnipresence apparent in a concrete place

⁴² WA 23, 151, 10 - 153, 4: »Also auch Christus: ob er gleich allenthalben da ist, lesst er sich nicht so greifen und tappen. Er kan sich wol aus schelen, das du die schale davon kriegest und den kerne nicht ergreiffest. Warumb das? Darumb, das ein anders ist, wenn Gott da ist, und wenn er dir da ist. Denn aber ist er dir da, wenn er sein wort dazu thut und bindet sich damit an und spricht: Hie soltu mich finden. [...], Aber dis ist aber das rechte Tuto, das ›Das ist mein leib‹, Wenn du dis issest, so issest du meinen leib und sonst nicht. Warumb? Darumb das ich mich hie wil mit meym wort hefften, auff das du nicht mussest schwermen und mich wollen suchen an allen orten, da ich bin, [...]«, see LORENZ GRÖNVIK: *Die Taufe in der Theologie Martin Luthers*. Åbo 1968, 31-33.

In order to explain Christ's union with bread and wine Luther differentiates between four different kinds of unions. In theology one can speak, firstly, about the essential or natural unity between the divine persons who have one divine nature, and, secondly, about the personal unity between Christ's two natures which unite themselves in one person. Thirdly, Luther deals with the unity of the angels with a different natural phenomenon, for example with fire. For this kind of unity he suggests the name union of effect.

V The Sacramental Union

1 Bread and Christ's Body and Wine and Christ's Blood as United in Sacramental Elements

But the relation between Christ's body with the bread and his blood with the wine is still a fourth kind of unity. Luther calls it a sacramental unity, since Christ's body and blood are given to believers as sacraments.⁴³ In all these different unions the two or sometimes more entities form one new essence or being. Luther uses the German word »Wesen« here, which can be translated both »essence« and »being«. He strongly denies the understanding that the united entities would lose their own essences even though they form the new essence. For him this kind of union between different entities is beyond human reason and the rules of logic. This means that logic teaches quite correctly that two different entities like bread and body, a dove and the Spirit, or God and man, have different natures. However, the grammar shows that it is a common way of speaking in all human languages that two different beings become one being. It is also possible and acceptable to speak about two things as one being. For Luther this is not just a way of speaking without any correspondence in the reality. On the contrary, this kind of speaking refers to the reality and for this reason one should not speak about the new beings using the logical language which keeps the beings apart. However, Luther does not want to eliminate the logical differentiation between the essences.⁴⁴ We

⁴³ WA 26, 442, 8-28 ≙ StA 4, 182, 19 - 183, 12.

⁴⁴ WA 26, 443, 12-32 ≙ StA 4, 184, 9-30: »Die Logica leret recht / Das brod vnd leib / taube vnd geist / Gott vnd mensch vnterschiedliche natur sind / Aber sie solt zuuor auch

could say that the logic is still valid in the philosophical sense, but it does not suffice to describe these new beings, where two things are united into one new being. To be able to speak about them we need the theological grammar and way of speaking. This also applies to speaking about the new, spiritual man in whom Christ and his Spirit are present and who is united with Christ.

Luther says somewhat unclearly that even though bread and body are different things when they are separated from each other, they lose their difference (Unterschied) as far as they have become such a new united being. He only seems to mean that the entities are no longer separated because it is possible to speak about them as one being without their merging into one and losing their own identity. Both bread and body remain, but because of the sacramental union there is no longer ordinary bread but »flesh-bread« or »body-bread«. The one sacramental essence and one being has come from the bread and Christ's body. The same holds true likewise of the wine and Christ's blood; as sacramental being there is now »blood-wine«. ⁴⁵

die Grammatica hören zur hülffe / Welche leret also reden ynn allen sprachen / Das wo zwey vnterschiedliche wesen ynn ein wesen komen / das fasset sie auch solche zwey wesen / ynn einerley rede / Vnd wie sie die einikeit beider wesens ansihet / so redet sie auch von beiden mit einer rede / als ynn Christo / ist Gott vnd mensch ein personlich wesen / darumb redet sie von beiden wesen also / Der ist Gott / der ist mensch. Item von der tauben Iohan .i. Das ist der heilige geist / das ist eine taube. Item von den Engeln / das ist ein wind / das ist ein Engel / das ist brod / das ist mein leib / Vnd widerumb auch zu weilen ein iglichs vom andern also / Der mensch ist Gott / der Gott ist mensch / Die taube ist der heilige geist / Der heilige heist ist die taube / Der wind odder diese flamme ist de Engel / der Engel ist die flamme / Das brod ist mein leib / Mein leib ist das brod / Denn hie mus man nicht reden nach dem die wesen vnterschieden vnd zweyerley sind an yhn selbs / [...] sondern nach dem wesen der einikeit / nach dem solche vnterschiedliche wesen / einerley wesen sind worden / ein iglichs auff seine weise / Denn es ist auch ynn der warheit also / das solche vnterschiedliche natur so zu samen komen ynn eins / warhafftig ein new einig wesen kriegen aus solcher zu samen fugung / nach welchem sie recht vnd wol einerley wesen heissen / ob wol ein iglichs fur sich sein sonderlich einig wesen hat.«

Luther's analysis of the theological language and its semantics is again an example of how he includes the philosophical concepts of substance / essence or nature in the theological way of speaking without confusing philosophy and theology.

⁴⁵ WA 26, 444, 39 - 445, 15 ≙ StA 4, 186, 9-25: »Weil dann nu solche weise zu reden beyde ynn

It is, thus, according to the theological grammar, correct to point to the bread and say: this is Christ's body. Because this is not only a way of speaking but corresponds to the reality, one who sees the bread, sees the body of Christ and one who eats the bread, eats the body of Christ. Because of the sacramental union everything that is done to the bread, concerns the body of Christ as well.⁴⁶

2 The Composition of a Sacramental Being

Luther also explains what kind of reality a sacramental essence or being is. First there is the Word, which embraces the remission of sins, the Spirit, grace, life and salvation. The Word unites all these with bread and wine, which were nothing without the Word. But bread and wine are also necessary, because without them Christ's body and blood could not be there. And they are needed for the presence of the New Testament which, according to St. Paul and St. Luke, is in the Lord's Supper. Without the New Testament the remission of sins would not be there, and life and salvation

der schrift vnd allen sprachen / gemein ist / so hindert vns ym abendmal die predicatio identica nichts / [...] / denn ob gleich leib vns brod zwo vnterschiedliche natur sind / ein igliche fur sich selbs / vnd wo sie von einander geschieden sind / freylich keine die ander ist / Doch wo sie zu samen komen / vnd ein new gantz wesen werden / da verlieren sie yhren vnterscheid / so fern solch new enig wesen betrifft / vnd wie se ein ding werden vnd sind / also heisst vnd spricht man sie denn auch fur ein ding / das nicht von nöten ist / der zweyer eins vntergehen vnd zu nicht werden / sondern beide brod vnd leib bleibe / vnd vmb der sacramentlichen einikeit willen / recht gered wird / Das ist mein leib / mit dem wörtlin ›Das‹ auff brod zu deuten / Denn es ist nu nicht mehr schelcht brod ym backofen / sondern fleischbrod odder leibs brod / das ist / ein brod mit dem leibe Christi / ein sacramentlich wesen vnd ein ding worden ist / Also auch vom wein ym becher / Das ist mein blut / mit dem wortlin ›Das‹ auff den wein gedeutet / Denn es ist nu nicht mehr schlechter wein ym kelle / sondern Blutswein / das ist ein wein / der mit dem blut Christi ynn ein sacramentlich wesen komen ist /«

⁴⁶ WA 26, 442, 29-38 = StA 4, 183, 13-22: »Darumb ist aller ding recht gered / das man so auff brod zeigt vns spricht / Das ist Christus leib / Vnd wer das brod sihet / der sihet den leib Christi / [...] / Also fort an ist recht gered / Wer dis brod angreiffet / der greiffet Christus leib an / Vnd wer dis brod isset / der isset Christus leib / wer dis brot mit zenen odder zungen zu drückt / der zu drückt mit zenen odder zungen den leib Christi / Vnd bleibt doch allwege war / das niemand Christus leib sihet / greiffet / isset odder zubeisset / wie man sichtbarlich ander fleisch sihet vnd zubeisset / Denn was man dem brod thut / wird recht vnd wol dem leibe Christi zugeeigent vmb der sacramentlichen einikeit willen.«

could not be present without the forgiveness of sins. The sacramental essence may be described as follows: The words form the bread and the cup into a sacrament first and then the elements embrace Christ's body and blood. Body and blood embrace the New Testament and it embraces the forgiveness of sins which then embraces eternal life and salvation. When describing the relation of the different contents of the sacramental essence the Reformer uses constantly the German term »fassen«, which has a quite a wide spectrum of meanings. He concludes by saying: »See, the words of the Holy Communion offer and give us all this and we embrace it by faith.« Again he uses the same word »fassen«, which above was mostly translated with the verb »to embrace«, and once with the verb »to form«. What does Luther actually mean when he says that »wir fassen es mit dem Glauben«?

VI Receiving and Embracing the Sacrament

1 Receiving and Embracing Christ, the Spirit, Forgiveness of Sins, Righteousness and Eternal Life through Faith

The Lord's Supper as an object of faith where bread is Christ's body and wine is Christ's blood is one important aspect of regarding Christ in a spiritual way. For Luther, the spiritual way of regarding Christ does not exclude matter and body. On the contrary, Christ's suffering and death cannot be regarded without his body and blood. For this reason Luther says that Christ uses the sacrament for the sake of the faith.

They who regard Christ spiritually are a new creation in Christ. They understand the content of the sacrament through word and faith. Luther stresses that the words have to be proclaimed in order to let the people know what the sacrament is. But in addition Christians have embraced the sacrament. The content of the sacrament, the merit of Christ, is also delivered to those who have received the sacrament. So the faith not only understands the words, but also receives and then embraces everything that is given with bread and wine which actually are »body-bread« and »blood-wine«.⁴⁷ Here is, thus, the connection between Christ's suffering

⁴⁷ WA 26, 78, 25 - 479, 8 ≙ StA 4, 222, 9-31: »Sankt Paulus vnd Lucas sagen. Das neue testament sey ym abendmal / vnd nicht das zeichen odder figur des neuen testaments /

and death, and the individual believer. By receiving bread and wine the believer becomes Christ's body and blood which means that he becomes Christ himself in a visible and concrete way, with his materiality and humanity. With Christ's body and blood one receives also the Spirit of Christ⁴⁸ and the New Testament, through which one receives the forgiveness of sins, righteousness, salvation and eternal life.

2 Receiving the Communion of Christ's Body and the Spiritual Body of Christ

The bread that we break is the communion of Christ's body. For Luther it is undeniable that this is said about the physical bread, not about the communion of faith in the hearts. The communion or koinonia of Christ's body is a common good, which means that it is delivered to all and everyone who receives the broken bread and the blessed cup receives the body of Christ. Because the body of Christ is a common good, it is received and enjoyed by both the worthy and the unworthy. In Luther's view from this fact follows that the body of Christ has to be received and enjoyed in a physical manner. The broken bread is Christ's body to

Denn figur odder zeichen des newn testaments haben gehört yns alle testament vnter die Iuden / Vnd we bekennet / das er die figur odder zeichen des neuen testaments habe / der bekennet damit / das er da newe testament noch nicht habe / [...]. Denn Christen sollen das newe testament an yhm selbs / on figur odder zeichen haben. Verborgen mügen sie es wol haben vnter frembder gestalt / Aber warhafftig vnd gegenwertig müssen sie es haben. Ist nu das newe testament ym abendmal / so mus vergebung der sunden / geist / gnade / leben vnd alle seligkeit drynnen sein / Vnd solchs alles ist yns wort gefasset / Denn wer wolt wissen / was ym abendmale were / wo es die wort nicht verkündigten? Darumb sihe / welch ein schön / gros / wunderlich ding es ist / wie es alles ynn einander henget vnd ein sacramentlich wesen ist. Die wort sind das erste / Denn on die wort were der becher vnd brod nichts / Weiter / on brod vnd becher / were der leib vnd blut Christi nicht da / On leib vnd blut Christi were das newe testament nicht da / On das newe testament / were vergebung der sunden nicht da / On vergebung der sunden / were das leben vnd seligkeit nicht da / So fassen die wort erstlich das brod vnd den becher zum sacrament / Brot vnd becher fassen den leib vnd blut Christi / Leib vnd blut Christi fassen das newe testament / Das newe testament fasset vergebung der sunden / Vergabung der sunden fasset das ewige leben vnd seligkeit. Sihe / das alle reichen vnd geben vns die wort des abendmals / vnd wir fassens mit dem glauben.«

⁴⁸ WA 26, 468, 39-42 ≙ StA 4, 210, 18-20.

all who receive it, not only to those who believe that it is Christ's body. The unbelievers cannot receive Christ spiritually, but nevertheless they receive his body, not just bread.⁴⁹

Luther would thus show that even though all who receive the Lord's Supper receive the body of Christ and become one body, they do not all belong to Christ's spiritual body. The word »body« is grammatically a new word and it refers to a new body, which is constituted by the Word of God. It is also a proper trope or metaphor in the biblical sense. This one body consists of all those who take part of the one bread.⁵⁰ However, the body of Christ, which in itself is physical, may be received in a bodily or spiritual manner. Luther does not see these two ways of receiving Christ as alternatives. In other words, we should not say that we could receive the body of Christ either bodily or spiritually. The alternatives are rather as follows: some receive Christ only in the bodily manner without the Spirit, but others receive him both bodily and spiritually. We could even say that the spiritual receiving includes the physical receiving of Christ's body. Luther explains this in his writing »That these words of Christ still hold fast«. He combines physical and spiritual eating there. Physical eating means that the body of Christ is eaten with the bread and spiritual eating means that the heart believes that it is the body which he gives for my sake and for the forgiveness of sins.⁵¹

Both physical and spiritual eating is needed for the salvation and eternal life of the human being. Christ has instituted both ways of eating by the word of God »take and eat, this is my body«. Not all pay attention to these words, but Christians receive them by their faith.⁵² A mouth that eats Christ's body physically can neither understand the words nor know what it eats. But the heart embraces and understands the words; from them it knows what the mouth is eating and eats thus spiritually what the mouth eats physically. It is one and the same body of Christ that is eaten in two different ways. Because the mouth can't eat spiritually, the heart does this for the body. So the mouth, which is a member of the heart,

49 WA 26, 490, 19-38 ≙ StA 4, 237, 27 - 238, 13.

50 WA 26, 491, 37 - 492, 19 ≙ StA 4, 240, 3-24.

51 WA 23, 179, 10-32.

52 WA 23, 183, 5-10.

lives at last eternally because of the heart which lives eternally through the Word. The mouth takes part in the eternal life, because it eats physically the same eternal food that its heart eats spiritually. But the mouth's physical eating takes place also for the heart, which cannot do it by itself. As a result both the body and the heart become satisfied and blessed from the one meal.⁵³ Body and soul are thus receiving and enjoying the Lord's Supper for the sake of each other. This is one dimension of the spiritual way of life where one does not seek his or her own advantage. In Christian life the body works for the spirit and the spirit for the body.

Spiritual eating, drinking or acting does not presuppose that the object of action as such is a spirit or a spiritual thing. Even the natural physical flesh may be used in a spiritual way: »Obiectum non est semper spirituale, Sed vsus debet esse spiritualis.«⁵⁴ When the Word of God is added to something that our body is doing outwardly and in a bodily manner and it also happens through faith, it is called a spiritual action. What happens in the Word and in faith is spiritual regardless of the corporeal or spiritual nature of the object. The spirit is primarily in the use of things, not inevitably in the things themselves. The spiritual use of a thing may be, for example, seeing, hearing, speaking, touching, bringing, eating, or drinking. Serving the neighbor is also a certain kind of using.

The whole life of a Christian is spiritual so that, without any doubt, one who eats the body of Christ physically in faith also eats the same body in this physical eating spiritually and lives and wanders spiritually. Also, the fruits and works of the Spirit such as the feeding and strengthening of the new man or the soul⁵⁵, love, joy, patience and the like are spiritual because they are born of the Spirit.⁵⁶

Christ's body or flesh which is received in the Supper is of a quite special nature. It is in fact flesh, but not in the sense which the Scripture calls »fleshly« as contrary to the Spirit. Christ's flesh does not belong together with the verse »flesh is of no avail«, but it should be understood in the light of the verse »That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.« His flesh is specifically born

⁵³ WA 23, 181, 7-15; 191, 10-28.

⁵⁴ WA 23, 183, 34 - 185, 6.

⁵⁵ WA 30 I, 25, 1-4.

⁵⁶ WA 23, 193, 22-28.

of the Holy Spirit as the Creed and the Scripture say. Christ is the only man of whom the Scripture says that his flesh is born of the Spirit. Christ's body or flesh is thus wholly compatible with the Spirit. Christ is also the Spirit's bodily dwelling place, and through him the Spirit comes into all others.⁵⁷ Consequently, eating Christ's spiritual body both by the body through the mouth and by the soul through faith is the source of a Christian's spiritual life.

3 *The Transforming Power of Christ's Spiritual Body*

Because the flesh of Christ is the only spiritual flesh for all born of the Spirit, it is also a spiritual food. And since it is a spiritual food, it is an eternal meal which cannot perish. It is also the true, living and eternal food which makes alive and sustains all who eat of it. But all who do not eat of it must die. The eternal and imperishable food is so powerful that it transforms the fleshly and mortal person who eats it into what it is itself and makes her like itself, namely spiritual, alive, and eternal.⁵⁸ In other words, this spiritual food feeds the new man, who needs continuous strengthening in the battle against the fleshly and furious old Adam. As we see, Luther adheres clearly to the patristic understanding of the Eucharist as a medicament of immortal and eternal life.

Since Christ's flesh is a spiritual flesh, the eating of it brings forth only spirit. Since the human body has been given the hope of the resurrection of the dead and of everlasting life, it must also become spiritual.

⁵⁷ WA 23, 193, 36 - 195, 5; 201, 13-28.

⁵⁸ WA 23, 203, 14-30: »Ist nu Christus fleisch aus allem fleisch ausgesondert und allein ein geistlich fleisch fur allen, nicht aus fleisch, sondern aus geist geboren, so ists auch eine geistliche speyse. Ists eine geistliche speyse, so ists ein ewige speyse, die nicht vergehen kann, Wie er selbst sagt Johan. vi. Wirckt die speyse, die nicht vergenglich ist, welche euch des menschen son geben wird [J 6, 27], Und abermal ›Ich bin das lebendig brod vom hymel komen [J 6, 41]. Item ›wer mich isset, der lebt ewiglich [J 6, 51]. Und so fort an durchs gantze Capitel leret er, wie sein fleisch sey die rechte lebendige ewige speyse, die da lebendig mache und behalte alle die sie essen, Und wer sie nicht isset, der musse sterben &c. Warumb das? Darumb: sein fleisch ist nicht aus fleisch noch fleischlich, sondern geistlich, darumb kan es nicht verzeret, verdewet, verwandelt werden, denn es ist unvergenglich wie alles was aus dem geist ist, Und ist eine speise gar und gantz ander art denn die vergengliche speise. Vergengliche speise verwandelt sich ynn den leib, der sie isset, Diese speise widderumb wandelt den, der sie isset, ynn sich und macht yhn yhr selbs gleich, geistlich, lebendig und ewig, wie sie ist, als er sagt: ›Dis ist das brod vom hymel / das der welt leben gibt.«

This happens when the body eats the spiritual food physically; this food digests the body's flesh and transforms it so that it too becomes spiritual. It will also become blessed and live eternally. In fact, the Christians who eat Christ's flesh physically by their mouth and spiritually by their heart are thus already transformed out of fleshly, sinful and mortal to spiritual, holy and living men. But their spiritual way of being is still hidden in faith and hope; only in the Last Day will it be apparent.⁵⁹

VII The right use of Christ's suffering and merit

1 Delivering of Christ's merit through the Eucharist

From the point of view of Christian living the central theme in the Large Confession is the right use of Christ's suffering and merit. We could also consider the right use or the presuppositions of the right use of Christ's passion the main issue of the whole Confession. The correct use of Christ's suffering presupposes namely that the suffering is delivered and given to human beings and received by them. The giving and delivering of his suffering takes place through the Word and sacraments. Especially the Lord's Supper is about the *usus passionis*, the use of Christ's suffering.⁶⁰

59 WA 23, 205, 9-25: »Sondern also: wird Christus fleisch geessen, so wird nichts denn geist draus, denn es ist ein geistlich fleisch und lesst sich nicht verwandeln, sondern verwandelt und gibt den geist dem, der es isset. Weil denn der arme maden sack, unser leib, auch die hoffnung hat der aufferstehung von todten und des ewigen lebens, so mus er auch geistlich werden und alles was fleischlich an yhm ist, verdewen und verzeren. Das thut aber diese geistliche speise: wenn er die isset leiblich, so verdewet sie sein fleisch und verwandelt yhn, das er auch geistlich, das ist ewiglich lebendig und selig werde, wie Paulus .i. Corin. xv. [1 K 15, 44] sagt: ›Es wird der leib geistlich aufferstehen‹. Denn ynn diesem essen gehets also zu, das ich ein grob exempel gebe, als wenn der wolff ein schaff fresse, und das schaff were so ein starcke speise, das es den wolff verwandelt und macht ein schaff draus. Also wir, so wir Christus fleisch essen leiblich und geistlich, ist die speise so starck, das sie uns ynn sich wandelt und aus fleischlichen sundlichen sterblichen menschen geistliche heilige lebendige menschen macht, wie wir denn auch bereid sind, aber doch verborgen ym glauben und hoffnung, Und ist noch nicht offenbar, Am Jüngsten tage werden wirs sehen.«

60 WA 26, 296, 30 - 297, 9 ≙ StA 4, 63, 30 - 64, 3: »Desselbigen gleichen hab ich ia vleissig geschrieben widder die hymlichen Propheten / wie die geschicht vnd brauch des leidens Christi nicht ein ding sey / factum et applicatio facti / seu factum et vsus facti / Denn

In his sermon on the Eucharist (1526) Luther stresses that we should know and preach two things about the Lord's Supper: First, that there is the work or thing which one believes, and second, that there is the faith itself or the correct use of the content of faith. The first, namely the Sacrament itself, is called *obiectum fidei* and it is outside the human heart and visible to the human eye. The sacrament as object of faith contains the visible elements and the belief that Christ's body and blood are truly in bread and wine. Faith, then, is inwardly in the human heart and its issue is the heart's relation with the outward sacrament.⁶¹ Faith is the correct use of the Sacrament and of Christ's suffering which is delivered by it.

In the Large Confession Luther gives the arguments for the continuous using of Christ's suffering and death in the life of Christians. Even here Luther's way of speaking is not exclusive: it is clear from the context that Christ's suffering and death should not be separated from his resurrection.

For Luther's argumentation it is essential to differentiate between Christ's merit and the delivering of his merit. Christ has once suffered on the cross and so he has deserved the forgiveness of sins. The suffering, death and resurrection which have deserved the forgiveness are together the merit of Christ. This merit Christ delivers to human beings continuously through certain means wherever he is present. Luther thus presupposes that Christ himself is present in these means by which he delivers his merit. The delivering of Christ's merit takes place by preaching repentance and through baptism, the Spirit, reading of the Scripture, faith, and the eating of bread and wine, but it can be done even by other means if Christ wants it so.⁶² Luther's purpose here is not to explain in detail how

Christus leiden ist wol nûr ein mal am creutz geschehen / Aber wem were das nûtz / wo es nicht ausgeteilet / angelegt vnd ynn brauch bracht wurde? Wie sols aber ynn brauch komen vnd aus geteilet werden / on durchs wort und sacrament? « WA 26, 297, 12-14 Æ WA StA 4, 64, 6f: »Sehen nicht / das ym abendmal vsus passionis et non factum passionis gehandelt wird /«

⁶¹ WA 19, 482, 15-25.

⁶² WA 26, 23-27 Æ StA 4, 62, 17-20: »Der blinde tolle geist / weis nicht / das meritum Christi vnd distributio meriti zwey ding sind / Vnd mengets ynn einander wie ein vnflätige saw. Christus hat ein mal der sunden vergebung am creutz verdienet / vnd vns erworben / Aber die selbigen teylet er aus / wo er ist / alle stunde vnd an allen örten.« In »Wider den himmlischen Propheten, von den Bildern und Sakrament« Luther makes the distinction

Christ's merits are delivered, but to stress that one has to differentiate between Christ's merit on the cross and its delivery through different means everywhere where Christ is present. He thus criticizes Zwingli who does not differentiate between these two aspects. Elsewhere he gives a more systematic and consistent description of the delivery of Christ's merit.

Luther emphasizes that Christ is not only on the cross and forgives the sins there. Christ is eternally on the cross because of our sins, but at the same time he is also in other articles of faith and forgives sins there as well.⁶³ Luther would say that Christ's presence and delivering of the forgiveness of sins is contained in every article of the Christian faith, not only in the article of crucifixion. This statement is an example of Luther's conception of the relation between the life, work and person of Christ and the theological language. Even though Luther differentiates between Christ's merit on the Cross and the delivering of his merit to the believers, he does not separate Christ from his merit. Christ is present wherever he delivers his merit and in this delivering he also gives himself. Articles of faith in which Christ is present are not only theological propositions but also real, concrete events of the history of creation and redemption. As such they are words in God's continuous speaking. Like the Gospel, all articles of faith contain and give Christ and his work or merit.⁶⁴

In the »Sermon on Sacrament of the body and blood of Christ against the fanatics« Luther combines Christ's self-giving in the proclaimed Gospel and in the Eucharist explicitly. The created material voice brings Christ to the heart of a believer. When she believes truly so that her heart

between the deserving of the forgiveness of sins on the Cross and its delivering and donating through Word and Sacraments. There he opposes Karlstad's understanding of the Eucharist as mental remembering and experiential tasting of Christ's suffering; WA 18, 202, 1 - 203, 38. See Jari JOLKKONEN: *Uskon ja rakkauden sakramentti: opin ja käytännön suhde Martti Lutherin ehtoollisteologiassa* (The sacrament of faith and love: doctrine and practice in Martin Luther's theology of the Eucharist). Helsinki 2004, 305-307.

⁶³ WA 26, 293, 32 - 294, 4 ≙ StA 4, 62, 12-16: »Also wollen wir aus Christo nichts machen / denn einen solchen / der ewiglich am creutz leide fur vnser sunden / auff das wir nicht widder den glauben handeln / so wir ynn andern artickeln glauben / das Christus da sey / vnd sunden vergebe / welchs dieser geist allein am creutz haben wil.«

⁶⁴ About Luther's conception of the nature of doctrine and the creeds and their relation with the Gospel see Eeva MARTIKAINEN: *Doctrina: Studien zu Luthers Lehrbegriff*. Helsinki 1992, 60-71.

lays hold of the Word and holds fast within it that voice, she has the true Christ in her heart. All other believers have received the same Christ in their hearts as well. Christ is in their hearts in the same way as he is at the right hand of the Father. Christ's sitting at the right hand of God does not refer to any specific location but to the fact that he is present with the Father everywhere and rules over all creatures, sin, death, life, the world, devils and angels. When a person believes this, Christ is in her heart and her heart is truly with Christ in heaven.⁶⁵ According to Luther it is not possible to know how this comes about, but the heart is able to feel Christ's presence through the experience of faith. Certainly the experience of Christ's presence in faith should not be understood as any kind of presupposition for remission of sins and salvation. The theme that Luther is dealing with here is how Christ delivers himself and his merit, that is, salvation, through the Word.⁶⁶

If Christ is able to come in the human heart and spirit and to live in the soul, it should not be difficult for him to reach the material things. The heart is certainly much more subtle than the material thing. Consequently, as Christ makes himself present in the heart through the Word and faith, so he unites himself through the Word with bread and wine so that they may be received in a material way. He has first included himself in the Word and through the Word he includes himself in the bread.⁶⁷ Christ is present in the elements of the Eucharist in order to grant his merit to the whole human being who consists of body and soul.

⁶⁵ WA 19, 489, 24 - 490, 3.

⁶⁶ WA 19, 489, 9-21: » Item ich predige das Euangelion von Christo und mit der leiblichen stim bringe ich dir Christum yns hertz, das du yhn ynn dich bildest. Wenn du nu recht glewbist, das dein hertz das wort fasset und die stim drinne haftet, so sage mir, was hastu ym hertzen? Da mustu sagen, du habest den warhafftigen Christum, nicht das er also darin sitze, als einer auff einem stul sitzt, sondern wie er ist zur rechten des vaters. Wie das zugehet, kanstu nicht wissen, dein hertz fület yhn aber wol, das er gewislich da ist, durch die erfahrung des glaubens. Kan ich nun abermal mit einem wort solchs ausrichten, das der einige Christus durch die stim ynn so viel hertzen kompt und ein iglicher, der die prediget horet und annimpt, fasset yhn gantz ym hertzen; Denn er lesset sich nicht stucklich zu teilen und wird doch gentzlich ausgebreitet ynn alle glewbigen, Also das ein hertz nicht weniger, und tausent hertzen nicht mehr kriegen denn den einigen Christum, [...].«

⁶⁷ WA 19, 492, 30 - 493, 26.

2 The Triune God's Self-giving through the Creatures and the Right Use of the Divine Gifts

This self-giving of Christ is exactly the core idea of the well-known and often cited summary which Luther presents at the end of his Large Confession. There he describes how the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, totally gives himself to human beings. With himself God gives everything that he is and that he has.⁶⁸ In the Large Catechism Luther summarizes the whole Creed by stating that it tells what the Triune God does for human beings and grants to them. For the understanding of Christian living it is important that he completes the thought presented in the Confession by saying that God gives himself to us completely, with all his gifts and his power, to help us keep the Ten Commandments.⁶⁹ The aim of God's self-giving is also Christian living according to God's Commandments.

In the Large Confession Luther's aim is Christian living as well. The viewpoint, however, is not the fulfillment of the Commandments but the right use of the Divine gifts. Characteristic for the Divine self-giving is that all the three persons, Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, are giving themselves

68 WA 26, 505, 38 - 506, 12 $\cong$ StA 4, 251, 22 - 252, 5: »Das sind die drey person / vnd ein Gott / der sich vns allen selbs gantz vnd gar gegeben hat / mit allen das er ist vnd hat. Der Vater gibt sich vns / mit hymel vnd erden sampt allen creaturen / das sie dienen vnd nütze sein müssen. Aber solche gabe ist durch Adams fal verfinstert / vnd vnnütze worden / Darumb hat darnach der son sich selbs auch vns gegeben / alle sein werck / leiden / weiseheit vnd gerechtigkeit geschenkt vnd vns dem Vater versunet / damit wir widder lebendig vnd gerecht / auch den Vater mit seinen gaben erkennen vnd haben möchten. Weil aber solche gnade niemand nütze were / wo sie so heymlich verborgen bliebe / vnd zu vns nicht komen künde / So kompt der heilige geist vnd gibt sich auch vns gantz vnd gar / der leret vns solche wolthat Christi vns erzeugt / erkennen / hilfft sie empfangen vnd behalten / nützlich brauchen vnd austeilen / mehren vnd foddern / Vnd thut dasselbige beide innerlich vnd eusserlich / Ynnerlich durch den glauben vnd ander geistlich gaben. Eusserlich aber / durchs Euangelion / durch die tauffe vnd sacrament des altars / durch welche er als durch drey mittel odder weise / er zu vns kompt vnd das leiden Christi ynn vns vbet vnd zu nutz bringet der seligkeit.«

69 BSELK 661, 38 - 662, 1: »Per huius doctrinae cognitionem amorem ac voluptatem Dei preceptorum faciendorum consequimur videntes hic, quemadmodum Deus prorsus se nobis tradiderit cum omnibus, quae possidet, ut praesenti ope et auxilio in perficiendis preceptis nos subleuet, pater cum omnibus suis creaturis, Christus vero omnibus suis operibus, porro autem spiritus sanctus omnibus suis dotibus.«

in and through created things. The Father gives himself with the heaven and the earth, and with all creatures, so that they serve human beings and are useful for them. However, because of the Fall of Adam this divine gift has become obscure and has lost its usefulness. It is important to note that both the correct regarding of the Father's giving nature and work and the right using of them have become impossible for the fallen human being. For this reason the Son has become man and given himself and his work, suffering, wisdom, and righteousness. In addition, he has reconciled us with the Father so that we, made alive and righteous again, could also know and have the Father with his gifts. However, such grace would be useless if it stayed secret and hidden, that is, if we could see in Christ only suffering, death and loss. So the Holy Spirit comes and gives himself fully, teaches us to know the good works of Christ, helps to receive, keep and to use them in a helpful manner and to deliver, increase and strengthen them.

3 Receiving Christ and His Good Works through the Word and Sacraments

The description of God's self-giving is closely connected with the thought that Christ is delivering the remission of sins in every article of the Christian faith. The self-giving of the Son with all his works is at the center of divine benefaction. Among other gifts Luther mentions the suffering of Christ which, again, contains the remission of sins. And giving the remission of sins contains the gift of Christ's righteousness. Luther sees Christ and all his deeds here clearly as gifts that are delivered or granted to human beings. In the third part of the summary he explains how these gifts can be received. They come to us through the Spirit, who teaches how to know, to receive, and to use them. The Spirit does this both outwardly and inwardly. Outwardly he brings Christ and his good works through the Gospel and the sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper. Inwardly he does this through faith and other spiritual gifts. Luther especially stresses that the Spirit comes to human beings through the three outward and created means, Gospel, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and practices the suffering of Christ in the believers for the good of their salvation. Only as a consequence of Christ's and the Spirit's self-giving and acting for the good of human beings does the self-giving of the Father with all his other

gifts become known and useful again. As Luther writes in »That these words of Christ Still Stand Firm«, without the Word everything would be useful only in the bodily sense, but for the soul they are of no avail. But when the Word of God is added to the physical things, the heart uses the Word and enjoys spiritually what the body is using and enjoying outwardly and bodily.⁷⁰ Of course, the spiritual using of the physical things with the Word which is connected with them is possible only by faith. Consequently, Luther thinks that the correct understanding and using of the gifts of creation presuppose the delivering of Christ's suffering, death and the forgiveness of sins through the Word and sacraments and their reception and use by faith.

The delivering of Christ's merit through the Lord's Supper strengthens the new man. Luther calls this strengthening the fruit of the Sacrament. The idea is that the fruit is the food of the new, spiritual man.⁷¹ Through Baptism Christians have already been born again and they have been set in a new being. But after the Baptism the old Adam has become furious. The new man encounters many dangers with which the flesh, the world and the devil are threatening him. In the struggle against these threats the new man gets tired and loses the power to continue. The Lord's Supper is given for the recovery of the new man. The heart that feels different temptations such as impatience, hate and envy should seek consolation from the Sacrament and eat and drink it in order to get more strength. This food and drink gives power and feeds the faith, chastity, patience, love and everything that belong to the new man. It feeds not only the soul but also the body which feels its influence and becomes cheered up.⁷²

The Sacrament also strengthens the love of the new man. One may serve the neighbor either in the fleshly manner or spiritually. The fleshly service is of no avail. But if the service is done spiritually, so that one's heart does it out of faith in God's Word, it is life and beatitude. The spiri-

⁷⁰ WA 23, 183, 23-28.

⁷¹ Luther's view of the Eucharist as nutrition of the new man is described thoroughly by Fredric CLEVE: *Luthers nattvardslära mot bakgrunden av Gabriel Biels uppfattning av nattvard och sacrament* (Luther's Eucharistic teaching in the light of Gabriel Biel's concept of the Eucharist and the sacraments). Åbo 1968, 351-371.

⁷² WA 30 I, 25, 1-23.

tual service is grounded in the Word of God, since the heart knows what the body is doing from the word »love your neighbor«.⁷³ In the Confession Luther presents Christian love as a common order of God above all the other orders such as the Church, marriage, and worldly government. They who belong to this order of Christian love serve everyone who is in need and help others with all kinds of good works. They feed the hungry, give the thirsty to drink, forgive their enemies, pray for all human beings and suffer all kinds of evil. Luther accentuates that even though all the works of Christian love are holy, they do not form a way to salvation. The only way above all the divine orders is the faith in Jesus Christ.⁷⁴ As we see, by speaking of the value of service Luther does not mean that loving service of the neighbor earns eternal life and beatitude or leads to them as ends. Instead of that he says that the service itself is the holy life and beatitude. So, wherever faith and love are present, there also are the true divine life and salvation.

4 The Use of Christ's Merit in the Communion of Christians

At the end of the Confession Luther combines receiving the remission of sins with the communion of Christians or the spiritual body of Christ, which he also calls Christendom. According to him the Church is one. Physically it is dispersed everywhere in the world, but spiritually it is collected or united by one Gospel and one faith under the one head, Christ. By the »physical Church« Luther means the audible proclaiming of the Gospel and the visible delivering of the Sacraments. The remission of sins is there where this one Christendom is.⁷⁵ The communion of Christians and the forgiveness of sins are inseparable. They belong together, because where the Christendom is, there is also the kingdom of grace and true absolution.

And, as Luther stresses, where grace and forgiveness are, there is the Triune God himself. In the communion of Christians God Himself is also present delivering grace and forgiveness through the Gospel, the Baptism and the Lord's Supper. In the Confession Luther encourages Christians

⁷³ WA 23, 189, 8-22.

⁷⁴ WA 26, 505, 11-17 ≙ StA 4, 250, 18 - 251, 1.

⁷⁵ WA 26, 506, 30-40 ≙ StA 4, 253, 1-12.

to receive the remission of sins as often as it is needed during this life.⁷⁶ Since the Lord's Supper delivers the merit of Christ that makes all the divine gifts useful again, receiving it is one of the necessary conditions of Christian spiritual living.

In the Large Confession Luther does not explicate the nature of the spiritual body of Christ. He concentrates there on the delivering and receiving of Christ's merit and emphasizes that the Christian community is there for that purpose. He continues and enlarges the discussion on this theme in some other texts of the same period. In the Large Catechism the connection between the Church and the forgiveness of sins is very clear. Although Christians have received grace through Christ and holiness through the work of the Holy Spirit in the unity of the Church, they need forgiveness constantly, because they are not yet without sin. In the Church forgiveness is granted through the sacraments and absolution as well as through the entire Gospel. So, according to Luther, everything in the Church is so ordered that Christians may daily obtain full forgiveness of sins and receive comfort for their conscience through the Word and the sacraments. The forgiveness given by God will then be used by Christians so that they forgive, bear with, and aid each other.⁷⁷ In the Christian communion the right use of God's mercy and of the remission of sins consists of a peaceful conscience before God and of mercifulness and forgiveness towards the neighbors. This mercifulness enables the Christians to mutual assistance and aid.

The idea of the Lord's Supper as the basis of the Christian communion is described even more fully in a Sermon on the Catechism which Luther delivered in the same year that the Confession was written. It is character-

⁷⁶ WA 26, 507, 7-16 ≙ StA 4, 253, 18 - 254, 5: »Ynn dieser Christenheit vnd wo sie ist / da ist vergebung der sunden / das ist / ein kōnigreich der gnaden vnd des rechten ablas / Denn daselbst ist das Euangelion / die tauffe / das sacrament des altars / darynn vergebunge der sunden angeboten / geholet vnd empfangen wird / Vnd ist auch Christus vnd sein geist vnd Gott da selbst. [...]. Solche aber vergebung der sunden ist nicht auf ein mal / als ynn der tauffe gewarten / wie die Nouater leren / sondern so offft vnd viel mal / man der selbigen bedarff bis ynn den tod.«

⁷⁷ The aspect of using God's forgiveness in the relations between the members of the Christian community is explicitly present in the Latin text of the Large Catechism: BSELK, 658, 10-52.

istic for Luther that he describes the nature of the Christian community directly for the congregation in his sermons. In this sermon he explains what he calls the signification of the Sacrament, namely Christian unity, love and community.⁷⁸ This signification is contained in the grains and grapes. Like the many grains are ground to meal and formed into one bread and like the many grapes which all have their own form are pressed into one common form, so the Christians should form one common and true spiritual body. In this body they have one head, Christ, and they are each other's members. They share the same faith and doctrine, and the same sacraments with another as well as the same weakness, foolishness, infirmity and poverty. If one is naked or hungry, the other shares his nakedness and hunger. This means that one member will not rest before the other is clothed or fed. Since the members of the communion have one spirit and one body, everything – both physical and spiritual goods and evils – is shared and no one lets another suffer any want.⁷⁹

The communion will be realized when the Lord's Supper is received. The purpose of the eating of the Sacrament both physically by mouth and spiritually by faith is to strengthen the faith and after that to fulfill the meaning of the Sacrament, the communion.⁸⁰ When eating the Sacrament people enjoy Christ and unite themselves with him and he unites himself with them. The sinners come to Christ and give him all their sin and other evil, and from him they receive faith, righteousness, eternal life and willingness to live according to God's will. When the Christian is united with Christ he also allows the others to eat and drink him or her, so that the reciprocal eating and drinking fulfils the meaning of the verse »bear each other's burdens«. This reciprocal assistance is the law which Christians should follow because they are renewed by faith. Such goodness is to be exercised towards all whom they know. A Christian says to his neighbor: if you are poor, give your poverty to me; here you have bread and clothes.

78 WA 30 I, 26, 22-24: »Sicut baptismus aliquid significant / sic hoc quoque Sacramentum aliquid significant. Significatio eius est / quod in Christianitate sit unitas / lieb und gemeinschaft.«

79 WA 30 I, 26, 25 - 27, 4.

80 WA 30 I, 27, 16-18.

81 WA 30 I, 27, 6-16. 19-21.

Taking care of the neighbor's needs means for Luther both spiritual and material service; the neighbor may hear the Gospel, get consolation and receive what he or she needs for material living.⁸¹ This example shows how the spiritual and material aspects merge together in the Christian community. A poor person can »change« her poverty to bread and clothes because her neighbor is able to receive the poverty as if it were his own and give what the poor person needs. In the Christian community people do this reciprocally for each other. There is no division between »the givers« and »the receivers« but all belong to both groups. Even though it is not mentioned explicitly in the sermon, it is clearly presupposed that the reciprocal assistance and aid originate in the mercifulness and forgiveness that are received through the Word and the Lord's Supper and then used in daily Christian living in the community.

VIII Conclusion

In his Confession from 1528 Luther states that in faith a Christian regards his or her fellow human and Christ in a new spiritual way. Regarding others in the spiritual manner means that one seeks what is best for them. And one, who knows Christ in the spiritual manner, understands that true life and glory are attained through suffering and death. In this context Luther does not explain concretely how one should seek the neighbor's good. He concentrates on the attaining of the true life. However, in certain sermons concerning the Lord's Supper he explains some aspects of the spiritual regarding of one's neighbor.

The true life is received in Christ's body and blood, that is, in his suffering and death, which are delivered to the believers in the Eucharist. Luther accentuates that in order to get the new, spiritual life one has to receive Christ's real body and blood because through them one participates in Christ's suffering and death, which hide his true glory and life. Luther explains how the Word of God makes this possible by producing the sacramental union between Christ's body and bread as well as between Christ's blood and wine. This happens when the Word out of the repletive ubiquity of Christ's body and blood produces their definitive presence in the concrete material elements of the Eucharist. In the sac-

ramental union all the elements maintain their own essences but at the same time unite into new »things« which Luther calls »body-bread« and »blood-wine«. For Luther spirit is not contrary to body and blood. Christ's body as well as his blood are totally spiritual and thus able to make the believers' bodies completely spiritual also. So the resurrection of the bodies to the new life begins already through the receiving of Christ's body in the Lord's Supper.

By eating and drinking Christ's body and blood the believer receives the whole Christ and all His merits; suffering for others, mercy, forgiveness of sins, righteousness, salvation, and eternal life. She will also be united with Christ and all other believers so that they form a community where all members seek each other's best. The union with Christ is very concrete and real and it concerns both body and spirit. When Christ gives himself for the food of human beings, they receive him and his merits and Christ receives the believers and their sins. Through faith and sacrament Christ gives himself for the good of all human beings and those who believe this are using his suffering, death and other gifts for their salvation. They also become able to use Christ's merits for the good of their neighbors. So the Christians give themselves for the food and drink of their neighbors by serving them both spiritually and materially. In the Christian community, which is based on participation in Christ and his merits through the Word and sacrament, people share spiritual and material misery and evil as well as wealth and goodness. This sharing includes two aspects: Firstly, the Christians are united into one body so that each one's righteousness, strength and other spiritual gifts help the other's sinfulness, weakness and other spiritual distress. And secondly they serve each other and all human beings in their needs, poverty, hunger and thirst with their outward deeds. In practice these two aspects are always together in Christian life.