

Maudy Thursday

Jesus Christ's true and almighty words, which He spoke at the first institution, were effective not only at the first Supper. They endure, are valid, operate, and are still effective. So in all places where the Supper is celebrated according to Christ's institution and His words are used, Christ's body and blood are truly present, distributed, and received, because of the power and effectiveness of the words that Christ spoke at the first Supper. Where His institution is observed and His words are spoken over the bread and cup «wine», and the consecrated bread and cup «wine» are distributed, Christ Himself, through the spoken words, is still effective by virtue of the first institution, which He wants to be repeated there through His word. As Chrysostom says in his Sermon about the Passion:

Christ Himself prepared this table and blesses it. For no man makes the bread and wine set before us into Christ's body and blood, only Christ Himself, who was crucified for us. The words are spoken by the mouth of the priest. But by God's power and grace, by the word, where Christ says: "This is My body," the elements presented are consecrated in the Supper. The declaration "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth" was spoken only once. But it is ever effective in nature, so that it is fruitful and multiplies. So also this declaration was spoken once. But even to this day and up to His second coming it is effective and works so that in the Supper of the Church His true body and blood are present....

The Scriptures speak not merely in general of the Son of Man, but also indicate clearly His received human nature, "the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). This is true not only according to the merit «of Christ's blood» that was once attained on the cross. But in this place John means that in the work or act of justification, not only the divine nature in Christ but also His blood actually cleanses us from all sins [1 John 1:7]. So in John 6:48–58 Christ's flesh is a life-giving food. The Council of Ephesus also concluded from this statement that Christ's flesh has power to give life. Many other glorious testimonies of the ancient orthodox Church about this article are cited elsewhere.

Solid Declaration VII.75–76, VIII.59; Concordia : *The Lutheran Confessions : A Reader's Edition of the Book of Concord* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2006).

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