The Personal Union

6] We believe, teach, and confess that the Son of God, although from eternity He has been a particular, distinct, entire divine person, and thus, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, true, essential, perfect God, nevertheless, in the fulness of time assumed also human nature into the unity of His person, not in such a way that there now are two persons or two Christs, but that Christ Jesus is now in one person at the same time true, eternal God, born of the Father from eternity, and a true man, born of the most blessed Virgin Mary, as it is written Rom. 9, 5: Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever.

7] We believe, teach, and confess that now, in this **one undivided person of Christ**, there are two distinct natures, the divine, which is from eternity, and the human, which in time was assumed into the unity of the person of the Son of God; which two natures in the person of Christ are never either separated from, or mingled with, one another, or changed the one into the other, but each abides in its nature and essence in the person of Christ to all eternity.

66] Thus there is and remains in Christ only one divine omnipotence, power, majesty, and glory, which is peculiar to the divine nature alone; but it shines, manifests, and exercises itself fully, yet voluntarily, in, with, and through the assumed, exalted human nature in Christ. Just as in glowing iron there are not two kinds of power to shine and burn [as though the fire had a peculiar, and the iron also a peculiar and separate power of shining and burning], but the power to shine and to burn is a property of the fire; but since the fire is united with the iron, it manifests and exercises this its power to shine and to burn in, with, and through the glowing iron, so that thence and from this union also the glowing iron has the power to shine and to burn without conversion of the essence and of the natural properties of fire and iron (Concordia Triglotta, FC SD VIII)

Communication of Attributes

"And if someone objects that the divine nature does not suffer or die, but Christ died, the answer is well-known, true, and necessary. Since there are two natures in Christ, the things which are proper to one nature do not hinder the presence of the other nature. Further, these are properties of the human nature, that its members become mutilated, suffer, and die. Therefore Peter clearly said, "Christ suffering in the flesh," 1 Peter 4:1. Therefore the difference between the natures must be maintained, but at the same time let it be known that because of the personal union there propositions are true: God suffered, was crucified and died; you must not think that the human nature alone is Redeemer and not the whole son of God. For even though the divine nature is not tortured, does not die, yet you must understand that this Son Himself, coeternal with the Father, is the Redeemer. Therefore rules are taught in this doctrine concerning the communication of attributes, that is, concerning the predication of the properties which are said of each nature in common but in the concrete namely, that the properties must be understood as being attributed to the person" (Loci Theologici, p.88).

The Idiomaticum Genus

(a) Illustration

A person consists of a body and soul, each with its own unique attributes and properties. The attributes and properties of either may be ascribed to the entire person.

- (b) Christ has two distinct natures, human and divine, each of which has its own essential attributes, functions, and activities. The attributes, functions, and activities of either may be ascribed to the entire Person.
- (c) Scriptural support for Idiomaticum Genus -

Luke 3:23, "Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about <u>thirty years of age....</u>"
John 8:58, "Jesus said to them, 'Most assured-ly, I say to you, before Abraham was, <u>I AM.</u>"
1 Peter 4:1, "Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh...."

Furthermore, there are times in which a unique attribute of one nature is ascribed to the whole person by designating the other nature.

Romans 1:3, "...concerning <u>His Son</u> Jesus Christ our Lord, who <u>was born</u> of the seed of David according to the flesh..."

1 Corinthians 2:8, "...which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not <u>have crucified</u> the <u>Lord of glory</u>."

In 431 AD, the council of Ephesus condemned Nestorius, who denied the communication of attributes, stating, "I cannot worship a God who was born, put to death, and buried." Nestorius would only ascribe the suffering/death to the human nature, and not to the whole Person. Thus, he denied the Personal Union of Christ.

---We declare that not a mere man, but the Son of God was born of Mary and died on the cross.

The Maiestaticum Genus

(a) Illustration

The soul imparts life to the body, without the soul being diminished or divided. The body does not impart anything to the soul.

- (b) When the Son of God assumed the human nature, He imparted and communicated to it divine majesty, glory, and attributes. However, the human nature does not impart its attributes to the Divine nature so as to limit or diminish it in any way.
- (c) Scriptural

John 21:17, "And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Matthew 11:27, "All things have been delivered to Me by My Father...."

Ephesians 4:10, "He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

Matthew 28:20, "...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen."

John Calvin: "The finite is incapable of the infinite." (*finitum non possit capere infinitum*) The Reformed teach that Christ's human nature cannot be invested with divine attributes without the human nature being destroyed or changed into the Deity. But if this maxim were true, then the finite human nature would also be incapable of receiving the divine Person of the Son of God at all!

Colossians 2:9, "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;"

No reciprocity! The human attributes (limited power and mortality) are not communicated to the divine nature. The divine nature is not lessened or diminished by its union with the human.

Malachi 3:6, "For I am the Lord, I do not change;"

John 1:18, "No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."

--We declare that Christ's human nature is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.

The Apotelesmaticum Genus

(a) Illustration

Whenever a person performs a voluntary act, not only his body, nor only his soul acts, but both act conjointly, each contributing its part.

- (b) Whatever the Savior did and still does to save sinful mankind may not be ascribed to either of His natures exclusively, but must be ascribed to both natures conjointly.
- (c) Scriptural
 - 1 John 3:8b, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."
 - Galatians 4:4-5, 'But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, ⁵to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."

"If it could not be said that God has died for us, but only a man, we would be lost. But if God's death and "God died" lie in the scale of the balance then He sinks down, and we rise up as a light empty scale." (Luther)

--We maintain that all actions of the Christ (as Prophet, Priest and King) were and are fulfilling the purpose of man's salvation.

John 19:30, "He said, 'It is finished!' And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

1 John 1:7, "...and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

Acts 3:6,12b, "Then Peter said, 'Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.' ... 'Men of Israel, why do you marvel at this? Or why look so intently at us, as though by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk?"

Luke 10:16, "He who hears you hears Me, he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent Me."

Romans 8:34, "Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us."