

Lutheran Confessions

Augsburg Confession, III

1] Also they teach that the Word, that is, the Son of God, did assume the human nature in 2] the womb of the blessed

Virgin Mary, so that there are two natures, the divine and the human, inseparably enjoined in one Person, one Christ, true God and true man, **who was born of the Virgin Mary, truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and 3] buried, that He might reconcile the Father unto us, and be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for all actual sins of men.**

4] He also descended into hell, and truly rose again the third day; afterward He ascended into heaven that He might sit on the right hand of the Father, and forever reign and have dominion over all creatures, and sanctify 5] them that believe in Him, by sending the Holy Ghost into their hearts, to rule, comfort, and quicken them, and to defend them against the devil and the power of sin.

6] The same Christ shall openly come again to judge the quick and the dead, etc., according to the Apostles' Creed.

Formula of Concord, Ep, VIII, 9-18

9] 5. As the two natures are united personally, i. e., in one person, we believe, teach, and confess that this union is not such a copulation and connection that neither nature has anything in common with the other personally, i.e. because of the personal union, as when two boards are glued together, where neither gives anything to the other or takes anything from the other. **But here is the highest communion, which God truly has with the [assumed] man, from which personal union, and the highest and ineffable communion resulting therefrom, there flows everything human that is said and believed concerning God, and everything divine that is said and believed concerning the man Christ;** as the ancient teachers of the Church explained this union and communion of the natures by the illustration of iron glowing with fire, and also by the union of body and soul in man.

10] 6. Hence we believe, teach, and confess that God is man and man is God, which could not be if the divine and human natures had in deed and truth absolutely no communion with one another....

14] 9. Therefore **the Son of God truly suffered for us**, however, according to the property of the human nature which He assumed into the unity of His divine person and made His own, so that He might be able to suffer and be our High Priest for our reconciliation with God, as it is written 1 Cor. 2, 8: They have crucified the Lord of glory. And Acts 20, 28: We are purchased with God's blood.

15] 10. Hence we believe, teach, and confess that the Son of Man is realiter, that is, in deed and truth, **exalted according to His human nature** to the right hand of the almighty majesty and power of God, because He [that man] was assumed into God when He was conceived of the Holy Ghost in His mother's womb, and His human nature was personally united with the Son of the Highest.

... Christ is and remains to all eternity God and man in one undivided person, which, next to the Holy Trinity, is, as the Apostle testifies, 1 Tim. 3, 16, the highest mystery, upon which our only consolation, life, and salvation depends

(Bente, F., *Concordia Triglotta, Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Northwestern Publishing House, 1997*).

The Personal Union of Christ

“We believe, teach, and confess also that now, since the incarnation, each nature in Christ does not so subsist of itself that each is or constitutes a separate person, but that **they are so united that they constitute one single person**, in which the divine and the assumed human nature are and subsist at the same time, so that now, since the incarnation, **there belongs to the entire person of Christ personally, not only His divine, but also His assumed human nature...**” (FC SD VIII 11).

“From this basis of the personal union, as it has been stated and explained above, that is, from the manner in which the divine and the human nature in the person of Christ are united with one another, namely, that they have not only the names in common, but have also in deed and truth communion with one another, without any commingling or equalizing of the same in their essences, **flows also the doctrine de communicatione idiomatum, that is, concerning the true communion of the properties of the natures**, of which more is to be said hereafter. (FC SD VIII 31).

The Communication of Attributes (*de communicatione idiomatum*)

1. Appropriation (*Genus Idiomaticum*) – “Namely, first, since in Christ two distinct natures exist and remain unchanged and unconfused in their natural essence and properties, and yet of both natures there is only one person, hence, **that which is, indeed, an attribute of only one nature is ascribed not to that nature alone, as separate, but to the entire person**, which is at the same time God and man (whether it is called God or man)” (FC SD VIII 36).

2. Communication of Majesty (*Genus Maiestaticum*) – “Now, as regards the divine nature in Christ, since in God there is no change, Jas. 1, 17, **His divine nature, in its essence and properties, suffered no subtraction nor addition by the incarnation;** was not, in or by itself, either diminished or increased thereby....

For the Holy Scriptures, and the ancient Fathers from the Scriptures [in which they were fully trained], testify forcefully that, for the reason and because of the fact that it has been personally united with the divine nature in Christ, **the human nature in Christ**, when it was glorified and exalted to the right hand of the majesty and power of God, after the form of a servant and humiliation had been laid aside, **did receive, apart from, and over and above its natural, essential, permanent properties, also special, high, great, supernatural, inscrutable, ineffable, heavenly prerogativas (prerogatives) and excellences in majesty, glory, power, and might** above everything that can be named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come [Eph. 1, 21]...” (FC SD VIII 49-51).

3. Communication of Official Acts (*Genus Apotelesmaticum*)—“Secondly, as to the execution of the office of Christ, **the person does not act and work in, with, through, or according to only one nature, but in, according to, with, and through both natures**, or, as the Council of Chalcedon expresses it, one nature operates in communion with the other what is a property of each. 47] Therefore Christ is our Mediator, Redeemer, King, High Priest, Head, Shepherd, etc., not according to one nature only, whether it be the divine or the human, but according to both natures, as this doctrine has been treated more fully in other places” (FC SD VIII 46).

6:30 PM “Learn by Heart”

Through simple repetition those present will inwardly digest...

Hymn #95, stanza 1-2
Christian Questions with their
Answers, 10-16
2 Corinthians 5:21

7:00 PM “Catechesis”

+ Opening Verses
“O Lord, open my lips...” p.224

+ Ascription of Praise
“Praise to you, O Christ.
Lamb of Our Salvation.” p.225

Reading
St. Matthew 27:11-54 (back)

Hymn
"Grant, Lord Jesus, that My Healing"
#95

Catechesis on... (back)

St. Matthew 27:11-54
Liturgy
Catechism

–*prayer based on reading*
+ Responsive Prayer for Catechesis
(insert)

Ten Commandments
Lord's Prayer
Apostles' Creed
Psalm 73
Collect of the Day
Prayers based on the text
The Collect for Peace
Benedicamus
Benediction

Catechesis on St. Matthew 27:11-54

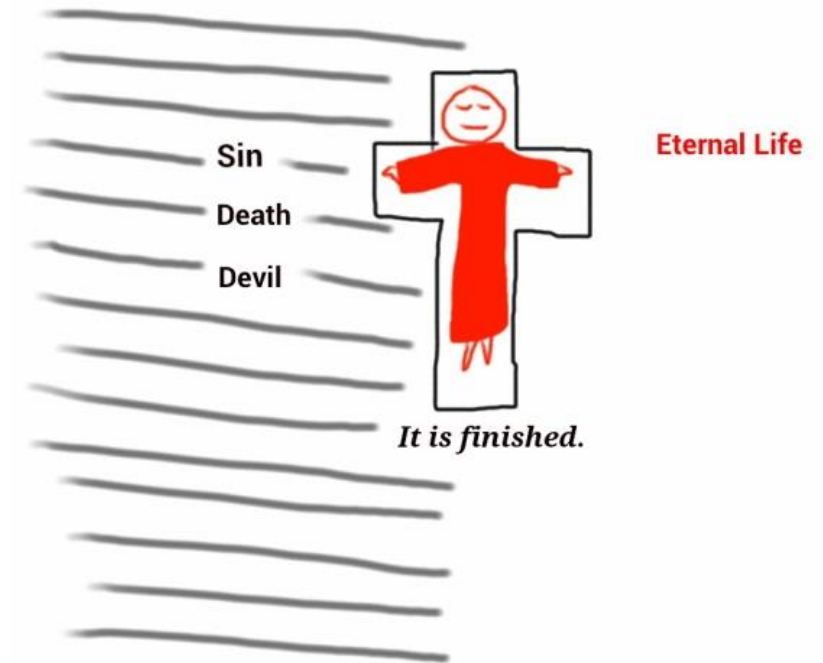
Now Jesus stood before the governor. And the governor asked Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?” So Jesus said to him, “*It is as you say.*”¹² And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He answered nothing.¹³ Then Pilate said to Him, “Do You not hear how many things they testify against You?”¹⁴ But He answered him not one word, so that the governor marveled greatly.¹⁵ Now at the feast the governor was accustomed to releasing to the multitude one prisoner whom they wished.¹⁶ And at that time they had a notorious prisoner called Barabbas.¹⁷ Therefore, when they had gathered together, Pilate said to them, “Whom do you want me to release to you? Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?”¹⁸ For he knew that they had handed Him over because of envy.¹⁹ While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, “Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him.”²⁰ But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus.²¹ The governor answered and said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?” They said, “Barabbas!”²² Pilate said to them, “What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” *They* all said to him, “Let Him be crucified!”²³ Then the governor said, “Why, what evil has He done?” But they cried out all the more, saying, “Let Him be crucified!”²⁴ When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather *that* a tumult was rising, he took water and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see *to it.*”²⁵ And all the people answered and said, “His blood *be* on us and on our children.”²⁶ Then he released Barabbas to them; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *Him* to be crucified.²⁷ Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole garrison around Him.²⁸ And they stripped Him and put a scarlet robe on Him.²⁹ When they had twisted a crown of thorns, they put *it* on His head, and a reed in His right hand. And they bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, saying, “Hail, King of the Jews!”³⁰ Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head.³¹ And when they had mocked Him, they took the robe off Him, put His *own* clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.³² Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross.³³ And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull,³⁴ they gave Him sour

wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted *it*, He would not drink.³⁵ Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: “They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.”³⁶ Sitting down, they kept watch over Him there.³⁷ And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.³⁸ Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left.³⁹ And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads⁴⁰ and saying, “You who destroy the temple and build *it* in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross.”⁴¹ Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said,⁴² “He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him.”⁴³ “He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”⁴⁴ Even the robbers who were crucified with Him reviled Him with the same thing.⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land.⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”⁴⁷ Some of those who stood there, when they heard *that*, said, “This Man is calling for Elijah!”⁴⁸ Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled *it* with sour wine and put *it* on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink.⁴⁹ The rest said, “Let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come to save Him.”⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit.⁵¹ Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,⁵² and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;⁵³ and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.⁵⁴ So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, “Truly this was the Son of God!” (NKJV)

2 Corinthians 5:21

For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Catechesis on St. Matthew 27:11-54



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Put it into Practice

These questions have been put together to help you as you extend and apply tonight's Scripture to your life.

Prayer

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who sent Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ to take upon Him our flesh and to suffer death upon the cross that all mankind should follow the example of His great humility, mercifully grant that we may both be guided by His patience in this life and also be made partakers of His resurrection; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.** (*Prayer for Palm Sunday*)

Questions to Ponder in Prayer

St. Matthew, Chapter 26

1. The Passover(26:2) was celebrated on Nissan 14(which we call Maundy Thursday). How long did the entire feast(26:5)? See Leviticus 23:5-6.
2. Two days before the Passover (that is, Tuesday, Nissan 12) Jesus told his disciples he would die after two days, what did the religious leaders decide? (v.3-5) Who was correct?
3. On the Saturday(Nissan 8 – Jn 12:1) before Palm Sunday, a woman anointed Jesus. What does Jesus say concerning her action?(26:12) Could she have known his coming death? (17:22-23, 20:17-19)
4. What is the price paid for Judas' betrayal? (Exodus 21:32)
5. Why does Jesus not openly tell the apostles where they will celebrate the Passover? (26:16)
6. Note the three attempts to get Judas to admit his betrayal during the Passover (v.21, 23, 24). Why does Judas ask, "Is it I, Rabbi?"
7. From John 13:27-30, we see that Judas left and then Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper. Matthew includes, "for the many for the forgiveness of sins." This reference does not teach a limited atonement(forgiveness of sins only for the elect, not the whole world), but is in contrast to a man dying for himself(his own sin). Jesus' blood of the covenant is not for One, but by Jesus' substitution for "the many," that is, mankind in general. For other passages, see 1Tim 2:5-6 and 1 Pet 1:18-19.
8. What do you learn about the "blood of the covenant" in Exodus 24:3-11.
9. Who does Jesus say will be scandalized(fall away) because of Him? (26:31-35)
10. Jesus takes the inner circle(Peter, James and John) further for his comfort? Though they fall asleep, how does Jesus' remarks in v.41, show that even now he is thinking of his disciples?
11. It is a great horror to hear the words, "one of the twelve," in verse 47. Jesus is betrayed by a kiss. What does Jesus call Judas in v.50? Note how that title is used in Matthew 20:13 and 22:12!
12. Luke tells us that there were two swords in the upper room(Lk 22:38) and John tells us that Peter is the one who cut off the ear with a sword. What was Peter's idea to overcome evil? Why does Jesus quote the law in Genesis 9:6?

13. When they come to arrest Jesus(v.47), there are Roman soldiers and temple police present. Why? (See John 7:32, 43-47) Why does Jesus' complain about their need for hundreds of men, etc.?
14. There are two trials, one by the religious authorities(Mathew 26:57-27:1, Anna, Caiphias, Sanhedrin) and another by the Roman government(Matthew 27:1-66, Pilate the governor). Why? (Jn 18:31)
15. Why does Jesus refuse to answer Caiphias (v. 63)? See 26:55, Jn 18:20-21)
16. Why does he speak up when charged to speak under oath(v. 63-64, Rom 13:1, Deut 6:13)?
17. Some heretics claim that Jesus never claimed to be "the Son of God?" From verse 64 is that true? (Also see Jn 19:7)
18. Jesus gives a full explanation of "the Christ, the Son of God," in verse 64. See Daniel 7:13-14 and Psalm 110.
19. Why did Peter and John follow Jesus? 26:58 (Also see Jn 18:15-16).
20. In order to save his own skin, Peter denies Jesus three times before the rooster crowed. Why did Peter weep(v.75)?

St. Matthew, Chapter 27

21. Why a morning meeting(27:1), after their judgement in 26:66?
22. Whenever Judas saw that Jesus would be crucified, he changed his mind and returned to the religious authorities(27:3f). Was Judas confessing(27:4)?
23. Why did Judas hang himself? (Gen 4:13, 9:6, Mt 25:24-25, Ps 130:3)
24. Though they didn't give absolution to Judas for his sin, what do they fully acknowledge by not putting the money into the treasury(27:6)?
25. Although Jesus would speak to Pilate privately, why wouldn't he speak to the Jews? (Isaiah 53:7-8, Acts 8:32) See Psalm 43:1.
26. Does Pilate know that Jesus is innocent? (See 27:18, 24)
27. Can Judge Pilate declare himself innocent? (27:24, 26)
28. Though innocent, what does Pilate have done with Jesus(27:26)
29. Their sarcastic words have an ironic truth to them. Explain: "Let his blood be on u and on our children!" (27:25), scarlet robe, crown, staff (27:29), "Hail, king of the Jews!" (27:30), "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days.", "He saved others, but he can't save himself!" (27:42), "He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him...(27:43)
30. Why did they force Simon to carry Jesus' cross(27:32)? See 27:26.
31. Why didn't Jesus drink the wine mixed with gall(27:34)
32. Why is Jesus crucified between robbers? (Isa 53:12)
33. Why does it get dark from noon to 3 PM(27:45)?
34. Jesus quotes the beginning of Psalm 22! Read it. Had he been forsaken? A. They gambled for his clothes. Read Psalm 22:18
35. They misunderstood Him to be calling Eli(jah)?
36. What do we learn about Jesus' death from "...he gave up his spirit?"
37. Things happened when Jesus died: A. Curtain of the temple was torn. B. Earthquakes, C. Tombs opened, people rose from dead.
38. These things that happened were signs. What did the Centurion conclude?
39. What does it mean that Jesus is the "Son of God?"

Christian Questions with their Answers-II

“What is it? What are its benefits? and, Who is to receive it? And all these are established by the words by which Christ has instituted it, 2] and **which every one who desires to be a Christian and go to the Sacrament should know. For it is not our intention to admit to it and to administer it to those who know not what they seek, or why they come**” (LC V 1-2).

Examination

“At the outset we must again make the preliminary statement that we do not abolish the Mass, but religiously maintain and defend it. For among us masses are celebrated every Lord’s Day and on the other festivals, **in which the Sacrament is offered to those who wish to use it, after they have been examined and absolved.** And the usual public ceremonies are observed, the series of lessons, of prayers, vestments, and other like things” (AC XXIV, 1).

“With us many use the Lord’s Supper [willingly and without constraint] every Lord’s Day, but **after having been first instructed, examined** [whether they know and understand anything of the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments], **and absolved**” (Ap XV 3).

Confession of Sins and Lord’s Supper

“Confession in the churches is not abolished among us; for it is not usual to give the body of the Lord, **except to them that have been previously examined and absolved**” (AC XXV 1).

"If the pastor, who daily is occupied with it, desires to go to the Sacrament without a confession or questioning, he may do so. The same thing is true of other well-informed persons who know well how to examine themselves, in order that this confession, which should and must remain a free act, does not again develop into a new papistic coercion and indispensable rite. And I, Dr. Martin, once in a while go to the Lord's Table without having confessed, in order that I may keep from feeling bound in my conscience to observe this custom as necessary; then again I use the confession and would not be without it; above all, because of the absolution, that is, the Word of God," (Walther's *Pastorale*, p. 168 quotes from the "Instruction for the Visitors" of 1538 (St. L. X:1655).

C.F.W. Walther’s Pastoral Theology

“In Article XXV of the Augsburg Confession, our church declares: "We retain the custom of not administering the Sacrament to those who have not previously been examined and absolved." In the Article about the Mass in the Apology, it says: "The Sacrament is administered to those who request it, but in such a way that they are first examined and absolved."

It would be contrary to conscience to accept a call to a congregation that did not agree to personal announcement for the holy Supper. That is incontrovertible because, according to God's Word, the preachers are supposed to be

not only teachers but are also shepherds, bishops (overseers), and watchmen over souls and so have to be careful that no one receives the holy Supper to his judgment. Especially where the holy Sacraments are concerned, they are not mere distributors but stewards of them (1 Cor. 4:1) and so are responsible for their misuse as far as it depends on them. Finally, according to Christ's explicit, earnest command and faithful warning (Matt. 7:6), they are not to give that which is holy to dogs nor cast their pearls before swine. There will be opportunity to speak about this matter in greater detail when we discuss the correct procedure of the preacher in private confession and absolution.” (Chapter 6, Comment 7).

“A **faithful and wise use of confessional announcement** consists in this that the preacher consider only the salvation of those who want to commune and primarily explore:

1. whether the person considers God's Word to be God's Word;
2. whether he knows what is necessary for salvation;
3. whether he recognizes himself to be a miserable sinner, finds comfort only in Christ's merit, and has no wicked intentions (Ps. 66:18);
4. Whether he believes in the mystery of the holy Supper and seeks in it forgiveness as well as strengthening in faith and godliness;
5. whether he confesses the Lutheran faith, as it is laid down in Luther's Small Catechism, as the correct Christian doctrine. With all diligence the preacher should guard against deterring people with a formal attitude and against turning a friendly discussion into a rigorous examination and torture session. If possible, the preacher should find out what he needs to know without giving the person the impression that he is being examined.

The greater the prejudices that are present in a new congregation against the institution of confessional announcement, which has become strange [foreign, *fremd*] to them, the more the preacher must avoid everything that could make this institution suspicious and repugnant to the members. In order to win over those who oppose it out of misunderstanding, the preacher must not shrink from visiting those who refuse to come to him and starting the necessary exploration in the most careful way.

Luther writes to Pastor Balth. Thuringen in Coburg: "I have written to the pastor that he should not torture the ignorant by long examinations when they want to go to the holy Supper and yet [he should] not admit them entirely unexamined and unquestioned. For it is no use [*nichts nuetze*] to admit them unexamined. We accuse the opponents of serving the belly [Rom. 16:18]. But our people are harsh and incur wrath. So I ask you, for God's sake, to give our greatest efforts so that the Gospel may be preached properly" (Walch, XXI, 1348).

It is an atrocity if a preacher uses confessional announcements to find out secret sins or family matters (Chapter 15, Comment 2).