

## The Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread; and when He had given thanks, He brake it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

After the same manner also He took the cup when He had supped, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of it; this cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins. This do, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me."

### Formula of Concord Solid Declaration, VII

**75]** For the true and almighty words of Jesus Christ which He spake at the first institution were efficacious not only at the first Supper, but they endure, are valid, operate, and are still efficacious [their force, power, and efficacy endure and avail even to the present], so that in all places where the Supper is celebrated according to the institution of Christ, and His words are used, the body and blood of Christ are truly present, distributed, and received, because of the power and efficacy of the words which Christ spake at the first Supper. For 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 efficacious by *virtue of the first institution*, through His word, which He wishes to be there repeated. **76]** As Chrysostom says (in *Serm. de Pass.*) in his *Sermon concerning the Passion*: ***Christ Himself prepared this table and blesses it; for no man makes the bread and wine set before us the body and blood of Christ, but 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 He speaks: "This is My body," the elements presented are consecrated in the Supper. And just as the declaration, Gen. 1, 28: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth," was spoken only once, but is ever efficacious in nature, so that it is fruitful and multiplies, so also this declaration ["This is My body; this is My blood"] was spoken once, but even to this day and to His advent it is efficacious, and works so that in the Supper of the Church His true body and blood are present.***

**77]** Luther also [writes concerning this very subject in the same manner], Tom. VI, Jena, Fol. 99: *This His command and institution have this power and effect that we administer and receive not mere bread and wine, but His body and blood, as His words declare: "This is My body," etc.; "This is My blood," etc., so that it is not our work or speaking, but the command and ordination of Christ that makes the bread the body, and the wine the blood, from the beginning of the first Supper even to the end of the world, and that through our service and office they are daily distributed.*

**78]** Also, Tom. III, Jena, Fol. 446: *Thus here also, even though I should pronounce over all bread the words: This is Christ's body, nothing, of course, would result therefrom; but when in the Supper we say, according to His institution and command: "This is My body," it is His body, not on account of our speaking or word uttered [because these words, when uttered, have this efficacy], but because of His command—that He has commanded us thus to speak and to do, and has united His command and act with our speaking.*

**79]** Now, in the administration of the Holy Supper the words of institution are to be publicly spoken or sung before the congregation distinctly and clearly, and should **in no way be omitted** [and this for very many and the most important reasons.

**80]** First,] in order that obedience may be rendered to the command of Christ: *This do* [that therefore should not be omitted which Christ Himself did in the Holy Supper],

**81]** and [secondly] that the faith of the hearers concerning the nature and fruit of this Sacrament (concerning the presence of the body and blood of Christ, concerning the forgiveness of sins, and all benefits which have been purchased by the death and shedding of the blood of Christ, and are bestowed upon us in Christ's testament) may be excited, strengthened, and confirmed by Christ's Word,

**82]** and [besides] that **the elements of bread and wine may be consecrated or blessed for this holy use**, in order that the body and blood of Christ may therewith be administered to us to be eaten and to be drunk, as Paul declares [1 Cor. 10, 16]: *The cup of blessing which we bless*, which indeed occurs in no other way than **through the repetition and recitation of the words of institution**.

**83]** However, **this blessing, or the recitation of the words of institution** of Christ alone does not make a sacrament **if the entire action of the Supper, as it was instituted by Christ, is not observed** (as when the consecrated bread is not distributed, received, and partaken of, but is enclosed, sacrificed, or carried about), but the command of Christ, *This do* (**which embraces the entire action or administration in this Sacrament, 84] that in an assembly of Christians bread and wine are taken, consecrated, distributed, received, eaten, drunk, and the Lord's death is shown forth at the same time**) **must be observed unseparated and inviolate**, as also St. Paul places before our eyes the entire action of the breaking of bread or of distribution and reception, 1 Cor. 10, 16.

**85]** [Let us now come also to the second point, of which mention was made a little before.] To preserve this true Christian doctrine concerning the Holy Supper, and to avoid and abolish manifold idolatrous abuses and perversions of this testament, the following useful rule and standard has been derived from the words of institution: *Nihil habet rationem sacramenti extra usum a Christo institutum* ("Nothing has the nature of a sacrament apart from the use instituted by Christ") or *extra actionem divinitus institutam* ("apart from the action divinely instituted"). That is: If the institution of Christ be not observed as He appointed it, there is no sacrament. This is by no means to be rejected, but can and should be urged and maintained with profit in the Church of God. **86]** And the use or action here does not mean chiefly faith, neither the oral participation only, but the entire external, visible action of the Lord's Supper instituted by Christ, [to this indeed is required] **the consecration, or words of institution**, the *distribution* and *reception*, or oral partaking [manducation] of the consecrated bread and wine, [likewise the partaking] of the body and blood of Christ. **87]** And apart from this use, when in the papistic mass the bread is not distributed, but offered up or enclosed, borne about, and exhibited for adoration, it is to be regarded as no sacrament; just as the water of baptism, when used to consecrate bells or to cure leprosy, or otherwise exhibited for worship, is no sacrament or baptism. For against such papistic abuses this rule has been set up at the beginning [of the reviving Gospel], and has been explained by Dr. Luther himself, Tom. IV, Jena.