

Communion II

The Benefit of the Sacrament

Best Use

A guide to use before you take communion

Advance Preparation

- ☐ Luther's Small Catechism
- ☐ Bible

Read- Catechism Part II of the Sacrament of the Altar “What is the benefit of this eating and drinking?”

Discuss- This is a place where our Lutheran theology parts company with the doctrine of many other protestant churches today that follow the teachings of John Calvin, a contemporary of Luther back in the 1500’s. Calvin approached the sacraments from standpoint of human logic rather than faith in the words of Jesus. In summary, Calvin said, “We know that Jesus lived, died, rose from the grave and ascended into heaven. Since Jesus’ ascension is well documented and we know that He is in heaven, He cannot really be present in this sacrament. So, when Jesus said this ‘*Is*’ my body and blood, He really meant this ‘represents or symbolizes’ my body and blood. And since He is not ‘really’ present under the forms of bread and wine, there can be no forgiveness of sins or blessing for life and salvation received from this meal. It is only a meal of remembrance that we celebrate because Jesus told us to do it to ‘*remember me*.’”

However, as Lutheran Christians we trust the promise of Jesus rather than our ability to make rational sense of what He said. In fact, speaking prophetically about the Sacrament before His death, Jesus got very pointed about the benefits conveyed through the Sacrament. He said, “*I can guarantee this truth: If you don’t eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you don’t have the source of life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will bring them back to life on the last day. My flesh is true food, and my blood is true. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood live in me, and I live in them.*” (John 6:53-56)

Wow! How’s that for a high calorie spiritual meal! Forgiveness of sins, eternal life and the indwelling presence of Christ to bless us 24/7 in our lives. May God richly bless you as you regularly receive this blessed Sacrament.