

## **Didache Divine Service**

### **Session 22, 23, 24**

Wednesday Lenten Midweek, March 13, 20, 27, 2024, at 8:00 a.m., 2:30 and 6:30 p.m.

## **The Catechism—The Sacrament of the Altar**

### ***What is the Sacrament of the Altar?***

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink.

### ***Where is this written?***

The holy Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and St. Paul write: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: **"Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."**

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, **"Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."**

1. The Lord's Supper was instituted from the Old Testament Passover. It is, therefore, a continuation and fulfillment of the Old Testament Passover in the New Testament in Jesus' blood.
2. The Passover brought about the redemption of Israel from slavery in Egypt through the blood of the Passover Lamb. The first Passover involved the shedding of the Lamb's blood that was smeared upon the doorposts and lintels of the homes of the faithful, so that the Angel of Death passed over. The Passover Lamb was then roasted and eaten, indicating that the congregation was receiving redemption that the Lord had accomplished for them.
3. The two fundamental actions of the Passover are, therefore:
  - A. The slaughter of the Lamb (Jesus' crucifixion)
  - B. The eating of the Lamb (The Lord's Supper)These two actions find their fulfillment in the death of Christ upon the cross and the reception of the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation in the Lord's Supper.
4. In Biblical time, the Lord's Supper was instituted on the same day that Jesus' died upon the cross, for Thursday night was the beginning of the day of Good Friday.
5. In the Old Testament, Passover was celebrated only once a year. But in the New Testament, the Lord's Supper is celebrated every Lord's Day, every Festival, and at other times the Christians have need of it.
6. The Word of Christ declares what the Sacrament is: His true body and blood. It is not a symbol or a representation but rather, a sacramental union of the body and blood of Christ with the bread and wine of the Supper. The same body and blood born of the Virgin Mary, that was offered up in atonement for sin upon the cross, is distributed in the Lord's Supper by the power of God's Word.

### ***What is the benefit of this eating and drinking?***

These words, **"Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins,"**

show us that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

### ***How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?***

Certainly not just eating and drinking do these things, but the words written here: **"Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins."** These words, along with the bodily eating and drinking, are the main thing in the Sacrament. Whoever believes these words has exactly what they say: "forgiveness of sins."

1. **The Word of Christ gives the Sacrament its benefits.**
2. **The forgiveness of sins is the source of life and salvation.**
  - ✓ "For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation."
3. **Faith believes Christ's Word.**
4. **We eat and drink because of the Word:**
  - ✓ Take, eat..."
  - ✓ "Drink of it, all of you..."
5. **"This is My body, which is given for you..."**
  - ✓ "This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins..." is performative speech that gives what it says. The Lord's Word is always to be received by faith.
6. **"The cup is"** signifies the "holy communion" or "holy fellowship" with Christ and one another in Christ. Out of the "Cup of Blessing" in the Passover Christ instituted "The Cup of Salvation" in the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 10:16-17)
  - ✓ He takes all our sin, burdens, sicknesses, and suffering; we receive his forgiveness, life, salvation, comfort, and healing.
  - ✓ In Holy Communion, we (together) confess our sins and forgive one another; bear one another's burdens, sicknesses, and sorrows; and rejoice with one another in Christ who makes us one in Him, and we share all things with one another in the body of Christ.
7. The liturgical actions and care of the Lord's Supper are intended to hold up the "Real Presence" of Christ's true body and blood, treating it with the utmost reverence and respect. (Review)

***Who receives this sacrament worthily?***

Fasting and bodily preparation are certainly fine outward training.

But that person is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words:

**Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.**

But anyone who does not believe these words or doubts them

is unworthy and unprepared, for the words "**for you**" require all hearts to believe.

1. (Repentant) faith in Christ and the gift of His body and blood for the forgiveness of sins constitute "worthy reception."
2. **"Fasting and bodily preparation"** involve anything that helps prepare the mind, heart, and body to receive the Sacrament with faith in Christ and what He promises the repentant, baptized Christian:
  - ✓ Prayer before and after receiving the Sacrament
  - ✓ devotions before the Divine Service on the Catechism or Christian Questions with Their Answers
  - ✓ taking a shower, putting on clean clothes, arriving at church before the service begins, etc.
3. **"For you"** requires that all hearts believe before partaking of the Sacrament:
  - ✓ I am a baptized Christian.
  - ✓ I believe that Christ is my Savior.
  - ✓ I am sorry for my sin and hunger and thirst for Christ's forgiveness promised me in His true body and blood.
  - ✓ I forgive my neighbor and do not hold his sins against him.
  - ✓ Anyone who does not believe is "unworthy and unprepared."