

Didache Divine Service

Session 17—The Sacrament of the Altar

8:30, 2:30, and 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 8, 2023

1. Divine Service, Setting 4 Liturgy, *LSB* p. 203ff.
2. Catechetical Sermon on the Lord's Supper: What is the Sacrament of the Altar? Jesus Celebrates the Passover, Matthew 26:17-35

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.

Jesus Is Anointed at Bethany: Matthew 26:17-35

Now on the first *day of the Feast* of the Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?"

¹⁸ And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at your house with My disciples." ' "

¹⁹ So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover.

²⁰ When evening had come, He sat down with the twelve. ²¹ Now as they were eating, He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."

²² And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, "Lord, is it I?"

²³ He answered and said, "He who dipped *his* hand with Me in the dish will betray Me. ²⁴ The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born."

²⁵ Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, "Rabbi, is it I?" He said to him, "You have said it."

²⁶ And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." ²⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you." ²⁸ For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. ²⁹ But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

³⁰ And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

³¹ Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'

³² But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee." ³³ Peter answered and said to Him, "Even if all are ^[a]made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble." ³⁴ Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times."

³⁵ Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And so said all the disciples.

Today's Passion Reading begins with preparations for Passover. Jesus' words indicate that everything would unfold according to God's Word. The Passover is about redemption from slavery through blood. The real slavery is the bondage to sin from which none of us could free ourselves. We see this bondage in Judas. He rejected his Lord. He would not accept the gift of God's love in Jesus. "It would have been better if this man had not been born," not because of the sin of betrayal, but because he died in hardness of heart, impenitence, and unbelief. The announcement that one of them would betray Jesus brought sorrow upon all the disciples. One of their own who ate with Jesus would betray Him. "Lord, is it I?" they asked. In truth, the bondage to sin infected them all, just as it infects us. "All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.'" If we had been there, we would have done the same thing. We cannot by our own strength believe. The disciples would run from Jesus' suffering in fear for their own lives. They would stumble over the cross, over the death of their Savior. This was the scandal. How could He die? How could He be crucified? Because He was the Passover Lamb. The betrayal of Judas, the boasting of the disciples about their own spiritual strength, and their running away in doubt and fear shows us just how much we need Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world...your sin, and mine. "What punishment so strange is suffered yonder! The Shepherd dies for sheep that loved to wander; The Master pays the debt His servants owe Him, Who would not know Him." Today, and every Lord's Day, He calls you by the Gospel in the words of the Supper: "This is My body, given for you! This is My blood, shed for you!" These are the words of purest Gospel for they call us to believe, "Jesus Christ is My Lord, who has redeemed me with His holy precious blood, and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own."