

“The Lord’s Supper as Signs of Life” OC, Q/A 79–81
GCC Sunday School, 10/23/22

Introduction–Calvin and the Libertines

Main Idea: *The Lord’s supper is about consistently receiving the benefits of Christ’s once-for-all sacrifice through them sacramental signs of the bread and the cup.*

- I. **How** we receive the benefits of the Cross work of Christ through the Sacraments (Q/A 79)
 - A. What kind of question is this?
 - B. The Sacramental Wars of the Reformation
 1. Radbertus and Ratramnus (8th/9th centuries AD)
 - a. The error of Radbertus
 - C. Four views of supper out of magisterial reformation (Lutheran, Zwingli, Post-Zwinglian, Calvinist)
 1. Lutheran Position–[Unreformed relic of Rome]
 2. Zwinglian Position–[Funeral Memorial]
 3. Post-Zwinglian View [Very Close to Real Spiritual Presence]
 4. Calvinistic View [Real Spiritual Presence]
 5. Seven Clarifying Elements in the Real Spiritual Presence View
 - a. We affirm the symbolic and memorial aspect of the Supper (Luke 22:19) and deny that a re-sacrifice is taking place in the Supper
 - b. We affirm that it conveys grace
 - c. We affirm that the Spirit applies it through *faith*
 - d. We affirm that our souls are fed with the body and blood of Christ
 - e. We affirm a *sacramental* interpretation of the language of the body and the blood
 - f. We affirm that there is *mystery* in how all of this happens
 - g. It is a *communal* meal, not a private meal
- II. **What** we do in the reception of these benefits (Q/A 80)
 - A. Tragedy of the Lord’s Supper Wars
 - B. What is it to eat Christ’s crucified body in the Supper?
 1. To believe.
 2. It is to understand our spiritual connection to him through faith [I.e., union with Christ] “Though he be in heaven and we on earth...”
 3. It is to commune with the saints
- III. The **Authority** upon which these sacraments are based (Q/A 81)

This may seem like a throw away question but it is not. The reason why this question is included in the catechism is because they are pushing back against Rome’s practice of “tradition.”

 - A. Rome’s Extra Sacraments
 - B. Baptism as *initiation*, Lord’s Supper as *ongoing participation*

- C. Four liturgical actions relative to the taking of the elements
1. the taking and breaking
 2. the blessing
 3. the giving
 4. the drinking

Q. 79 How are you in the Lord's Supper admonished and warranted that you are a partaker of that only sacrifice of Christ offered on the cross and of all His benefits?

A. Because Christ has commanded me and all the faithful to eat of this bread broken and to drink of this cup distributed in remembrance of Him. With this He has joined the promise that His body was as certainly broken and offered for me upon the cross and His blood shed for me as I behold with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken to me and the cup communicated to me. Further, my soul is no less assuredly fed to everlasting life with His body, which was crucified for me, and His blood, which was shed for me, than I receive and taste by the mouth of my body the bread and wine, the signs of the body and blood of Christ, received at the hand of the minister.

Q. 80 What is it to eat of the body of Christ?

A. It is not only to embrace, by an assured confidence of mind, the whole passion and death of Christ and thereby to obtain forgiveness of sins and everlasting life, but also by the Holy Spirit, who dwells both in Christ and us, so more and more to be united to His sacred body, that though He be in heaven and we on earth, yet nevertheless we are flesh of His flesh and bone of His bones. As all the members of the body are quickened by one soul, so are we also quickened and guided by one and the same Spirit.

Q. 81 Where has Christ promised that He will as certainly give His body and blood to be eaten and drank as they eat this bread broken and drink this cup?

A. In the institution of the Supper, the words of which are these: Our Lord Jesus Christ in the night that He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, take, eat, this is My body which is broken for you. This do in remembrance of Me. Likewise also He took the cup, when He had eaten, and said, this cup is the New Covenant in My blood. This do as often as you shall drink it in remembrance of Me. For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink this cup you show the Lord's death until He comes.

This promise is repeated by St. Paul, where he says, the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we that are many are one bread and one body, because we are all partakers of one bread.