

The Controversy Surrounding the Moment of the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper and the Proper Scriptural Attitude

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Perhaps the first question to answer is “Where do we begin?” Do we start with the controversy, examining the various statements, and then try and find out what the proper Scriptural attitude is? Or do we start with Scripture and then proceed to the controversy and the various sides of the issue? Why even look at the question at all? If, as some say, this is merely a “presumptuous question”, why not leave it alone? That would be well and fine with me, if that was also the case for all those involved. But as soon as some men elevate their personal opinions to the level of Scriptural truth and teach them publicly, the situation calls for proper answer on the basis of Scripture.

Some Lutheran theologians, particularly Tom Hardt of Sweden, not only hold the personal, private opinion that the initial Presence, or Sacramental union, begins with the repetition of the words of institution, but teach this publicly as the only true Biblical doctrine. To quote Seth Erlandsson speaking about one of Hardt's sympathizers in Sweden:

In agreement with Hardt he now demanded that one must be more precise in defining the real presence and fix the precise moment when it begins and ends. All churches and individuals who do not expressly teach that the presence of Christ's body and blood in the Supper begins in “the moment of consecration” and that the celebration of the Lord's Supper must continue for as long as any consecrated bread and wine existed, must be excluded from the fellowship of true believers. The pastor who does not see to it that all the consecrated bread and wine is consumed is guilty of grave sin. No consecrated bread and wine may be left but it must, for doctrinal reasons, all be consumed at the altar before the celebration ends.¹

We must not, however, think that error rests only with those on the one extreme, unfortunately, it seems as if the proper attitude toward this question concerning the moment of Real Presence was not always taught with the clarity it is today in our own seminary. A look at the Lutheran theologians of the past shows that many weren't concerned to keep their personal opinions to themselves (we'll consider this in detail later). It seems that many of our own Wisconsin Synod pastors have accepted the opinion as Scriptural truth that the real presence occurs only in the eating and drinking of the bread and wine, and pass this on as the true Biblical view to their members and confirmation classes. Thus we have the instance of one pastor who asks his confirmands such questions as, “What is on the altar after the Words of Institution are spoken?”—“Bread and wine only.” “What does the pastor hold in his hands when he offers you the bread and wine?”—“Bread and wine only.” “What do you receive with your mouth when you eat the bread and drink the wine?”—“Christ's true body and true blood together with the bread and wine.” (These are not exact quotes, but the essence is the same.) Likewise, Harold E. Wicke, serving as the voice of our Synod's position in his *Catechism of Differences*, condemns the late Dr. A. C. Piepkorn of Concordia Seminary because he had “repeatedly advocated the *false teaching* (emphasis mine) that the body and blood of Christ are actually present on the altar after the consecration of the elements and prior to their reception by the communicant.”² In both these instances we have the same situation of private opinions being made public doctrine. It should be said that in most cases those holding this view have not pushed to the extremes Hardt has.

¹ Seth Erlandsson, “The Danger of Presumptuous Questions about the Lord's Supper.” *Biblicum*, 4-5, 1977. (translated by Professor S. Becker—Seminary Essay File #297, p. 5)

² Harold E. Wicke, *Catechism of Differences*, Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1964, p. 69.

The two views presented so far are the extreme positions at both ends of the “when” spectrum. In between there are those who hold to the view that the Real Presence begins either with the consecration or sometime after it, but definitely before the eating and drinking. Such a view is put forward as the proper biblical one, to the best of my knowledge, by Seth Erlandsson. But as far as I know, he does not anathematize those who look to the moment of eating and drinking.

Lastly, there is the view which holds that the only thing Scripture says on the matter is that the Real Presence does occur sometime within the Sacramental Use; which is, as the Formula of Concord defines it: “...the entire external and visible action of the Supper as ordained by Christ: the consecration or words of institution, the distribution and reception, or the oral eating of the blessed bread and wine, the body and blood of Christ.” (S.D., VII, 86). The Real Presence may be present from the moment of the consecration (the repetition of the Words of Institution), and it may not occur until the eating and drinking—Scripture doesn’t say. But we *can* be sure that Christ’s true body and blood are present in the Supper and received orally by all those who eat and drink, believer and unbeliever alike. To say more is to say more than Scripture does, and any personal opinions should be kept that way. In fact, the best rule would be to bind our reason to Scripture and have *no* opinion at all. Simply teach what Scripture says—including the fact that it does *not* define the moment of Real Presence—and leave it at that.

And so according to this view, to seek to determine the answer to the question: “At what moment does the Real Presence, or Sacramental Union, of Christ’s true body with the bread and Christ’s true blood with the wine come into existence?” is foolish and presumptuous.

By this time I suppose I’ve also given an inkling as to which view I hold. In case it isn’t clear, it is the last one mentioned. I believe this to be what Scripture shows us the proper attitude and teaching should be.

Therefore, in answer to my first question, “Where do we begin?” I feel the place to start is Scripture: “What do the references in the Bible to the Lord’s Supper have to say about the moment of the Sacramental Union?” From Scripture we can proceed to the Lutheran Confessions. And from these we can look at cases of the individual theologians who have offered, and sometimes insisted upon, their own personal opinion as the true Biblical teaching.

The natural place to start is the four accounts of Christ’s institution: Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. Other passages we can consider are 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 and 11:27-29.

First, it must be said that there is no argument about what Christ says about the bread and wine the disciples ate and drank: “τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου...τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου.” to use Matthew’s words. The apostles received Christ’s true body and true blood with the bread and the wine, just as the communicants in our churches do today.. There is no argument about this among the Lutherans we are talking about. But *when* does this Sacramental Union take place? Upon examination, we see that Scripture leaves this question unanswered. The Holy Spirit chose His words very carefully. He had the various writers describe Christ’s institution and its events in different ways, yet none contradicting the others. Perhaps He did this for the express purpose of showing the futility of trying to answer such a question as “when”.

One side points to Christ’s words, “This *is*”, and thereby concludes that from the moment He spoke them His body and blood had to be sacramentally united with the bread and the wine. But is this necessarily so? Is *time* the important element involved? The others come back and say, “Of *what* was Christ speaking? The simple bread and wine before Him; or the bread and wine of which he had previously said, “Take, eat (Λάβετε φάγετε)”, and “All of you drink of it (Πίετε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες)?” They say that the “*is*” refers definitely to the bread and wine in the context of the Sacrament as to its substance, not to time. In this way, the Apostles were sure that what they were receiving orally was Christ’s body and blood with the bread and wine—for this is what Christ said it would be. They, then, specify the time of eating and drinking as the moment of Real Presence

But the exact time this union occurs is not specified. To say that when Christ says, “This *is*” *must* mean at that specific moment in time, without regard for the context of what He has said before and what is about to happen, is to rule out the equally logical possibility on the basis of translation that this was spoken concerning the bread to be eaten and the wine to be drunk. I’m not saying that when Jesus said, “This *is*,” the Sacramental

Union couldn't have taken place at that time. I'm only saying that it doesn't have to have taken place then, on the basis of Christ's words taken in context. The main thrust is on what the Apostles could be sure they were eating and drinking, and not on the time element. The writers of the formula of Concord demonstrate this also. In the Formula it is said, in their argument showing that "The new covenant in my blood" equals "my blood of the new covenant", that the words, "This is the new covenant in my blood" (Luke 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25), have no other meaning than what the words of St. Matthew and St. Mark give us, "This (*namely, what you are drinking with your mouth from the cup*) is my blood of the new covenant, whereby I establish, seal, and confirm with you people this my testament and new covenant, namely, the forgiveness of sins." (S.D. VII, 53) We see that the Formula also takes Jesus' words as referring to the bread which was to be eaten and the wine which was to be drunk, but without looking at it from the specific viewpoint of time. The tenses of the verbs in the various accounts won't help determine the "when" either Matthew says that giving (δοῦς) the bread to His disciples, Jesus said (εἶπεν) "Take, eat, etc." Mark says Jesus gave it (ἔδωκεν) to them and said (εἶπεν). Luke says that speaking (λέγων) Jesus gave to them (ἔδωκεν). Paul doesn't mention the act of giving at all. At what moment did Jesus begin speaking? We don't know. Is there something here that helps answer the question, "when?" No.

Perhaps the words concerning the drinking shed more light on what I'm trying to show. Matthew reports that Jesus gave (ἔδωκεν) the cup to them saying (λέγων). Luke and Paul say the same, though Paul leaves out the giving. But Mark says that taking the cup (λαβὼν ποτήριον) and blessing it (εὐχαριστήσας) Jesus gave (ἔδωκεν) it to them and they were all drinking from it (καὶ ἔπιον ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες) and he said to them (εἶπεν). One could argue from this, taking the events strictly with reference to the verbs in respect to time, that it could have been possible for the disciples to have been drinking from the cup while Jesus spoke the words, making His statements concerning the wine and His blood retroactive. All I'm really trying to point out is that the Bible itself, in reference to the first Lord's Supper, doesn't make a point of answering the question *when*. Scripture is only concerned about making it perfectly clear what the disciples received with the bread and wine they ate and drank. The question of "when" is left unanswered for us, and where Scripture leaves a question unanswered, we'd do best to follow suit.

Do the other passages help matters any, as far as determining the "when" of the Real Presence in our communion celebrations? In 1 Corinthians 11:27-28, it is only the one who eats and drinks unworthily who is guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. No mention is made of the elements in conjunction with Christ's body apart from the eating and drinking. Does it say that Christ's body and blood aren't present before the eating and drinking? No; but it doesn't say they are, either. All that Scripture says is important is that the communicant recognize that the body and blood of the Lord are truly present in what he is eating and drinking in the Sacrament. "For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself." (vers 29--NIV)

But doesn't 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 speak of the Lord's body and blood being present before the eating and drinking, and so at least rule out the possibility of the Real Presence not occurring until the actual consumption? What *does* Paul say here? "Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?" (NIV) τὸ ποτήριον τῆς εὐλογίας ὃ εὐλογοῦμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία ἐστὶν τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ; τὸν ἄρτον ὃν κλῶμεν, οὐχὶ κοινωνία τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐστίν;) First of all, those who argue in this way equate the blessing, or thanksgiving, with the repetition of the Words of Institution. But is this what Paul means here? We don't know. We do know that Jesus gave thanks, or spoke a blessing, *before* He said, "This is." Paul might have been referring to a special blessing of some kind, but what that was we don't know because no where are we told that the blessing Paul was speaking about here is specifically the Words of Institution. What is clear, is that the cup (the wine) Paul has in mind is that cup within the *use* of the Lord's Supper (*Use* being used in the sense defined earlier according to the Formula of Concord.). Is one specific moment being referred to here by Paul? No. He's merely referring to the Real Presence in the Supper in general, with no reference to time "when". This is seen even more clearly with reference to the bread. When did Jesus break the bread? *Before* He said, "This is," and so according to those who answer the question, "At the consecration", prior to the time they set.

Obviously Paul is referring to the Sacrament *per se*, as a unified and complete action, and not simply to the elements at some point in time before and apart from their consumption.

It might be added here that this is also clearly how the writers of the Formula understood Paul, for they said:

But the command of Christ, “Do this”, which comprehends the whole action or administration of this sacrament (namely, that in a Christian assembly we take bread and wine, consecrate it, distribute it, receive it, eat and drink it, and therewith proclaim the Lord’s death), must be kept integrally and inviolately, *just as St. Paul sets the whole action of the breaking of bread, or of the distribution and reception, before our eyes in 1 Cor. 10:16.* (S.D. VII, 84)

And so we see that Paul can not be cited as establishing a time “when” for the moment of Real Presence, along with the rest of Scripture.

It can be said at this time that the same goes for the question, “When does the Real Presence end?” No matter when the Sacramental Union occurs, Jesus, in saying, “Take, eat, . . . drink . . .”, makes it clear that it is in this bread and wine which is orally received that the Real Presence is connected. Therefore, we don’t have to concern ourselves with this question. As for the bread and wine left over, they constitute elements outside of the Use of the Sacrament. They weren’t taken and eaten or drunk, and so Christ’s body and blood certainly aren’t present in them. We have the assurance and promise of the presence of Christ’s body and blood only in the bread and wine used according to His institution within the Use of the Sacrament.

Now we can see what the Lutheran Confessions have to say about this matter. The one side insists that the Confessions teach a Real Presence from the consecration on. Some insist that at least there is absolute *reference* to a Real Presence before the actual eating and drinking. They are led to this conclusion by such statements as, “the true body and blood of Christ are really present in the Holy Supper under the forms of bread and wine and that they are distributed and received,”(A.C. X, 1) and, “the body and blood of Christ are truly present, distributed, and received by the virtue and potency of the same words Christ spoke in the first Supper.” (S.D. VII, 75) They look upon the words “present, distributed, and received” as describing a temporal succession. While it can be conceded that this is probably the way the majority of the writers of the Formula looked upon the events in the Lord’s Supper as far as their own personal opinion was concerned, they did not rule out those who would have looked upon them as referring temporally to the same event. When these statements are made in the Book of Concord, the actuality of the Real Presence within the Supper is being stressed, not the “when” or “how long”. The writers are always concerned with expressing the essential presence of Christ’s body and blood in the Sacrament. Christ’s body and blood are “present, distributed, and received” in the Use of the Sacrament. At what specific time or over what length of time are not defined. That this was the intent of the writers seems clear from the silence they give to the question of “when”. It certainly was one they were familiar with—as we’ll see when we consider Johann Saliger. They could have easily put a stop to any further argument over this question within their confessional fellowship by a simple statement on the matter. They could have found such statements very easily at that time, in various confessions that had been written, and, possibly, even in their own writings. But by the grace of God they did not. In their great confession of Biblical truth they remained silent where Scripture remained silent. That they had their own personal opinions on the matter is clear (as we shall see.) But in the Formula they chose to relegate the question to the area of “presumptuous, scoffing, and blasphemous questions” (S.D. VII. 127) by not answering it. Perhaps the only thing we could have hoped for is that they would have called it such with specific reference, and not merely by inference.

As for those who point to the consecration as the moment when the Sacramental Union occurs, the Formula makes it clear that the mere recitation of the words have no such power by themselves, as does any other work of man. The Solid Declaration states:

In this question we have reached the following fraternal and unanimous agreement among ourselves. No man's word or work, be it the merit or the speaking of the minister, be it the eating and drinking or the faith of the communicants, can effect the true presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Supper. This is to be ascribed only to the almighty power of God *and the Word, institution, and ordinance of our Lord Jesus Christ*. For the truthful and almighty words of Jesus Christ which he spoke in the first institution were not only efficacious in the first Supper but they still retain their validity and efficacious power in all places where the Supper is observed *according to Christ's institution and where his words are used*, and the body and blood of Christ are truly present, distributed, and received by virtue and potency of the same words which Christ spoke in the First Supper. For whenever we *observe his institution and speak his words* over the bread and cup *and distribute* the blessed bread and cup, Christ himself is still active through the spoken words by the virtue of the first institution, which he wants to be repeated. (S.D. VII, 74-75)

It is clear that it is not the Words of Institution alone which make the Sacrament, but the entire observation of it according to Christ's institution. It is not the repeated Words of Institution which are powerful in the Sacrament, but the first words of Christ whose promise holds true whenever we observe Christ's institution and repeat His words.

Those who quote Augustine, "When the word is joined to the element, it becomes a sacrament" (*accedat verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum*), and point to the Words of Institution as that "Word", don't understand the axiom as Luther himself explains it. Luther himself says that the "Word" refers to the whole Use of the Sacrament. He said, "...one must know that Augustine does not speak of the uttering of Christ's words alone, but moreover includes the command of taking and eating the bread by that. And hereafter to that he joins, 'This is my body', which is as much to say, 'Outside of this use my body and blood will not be bound to these outward elements.'"³

It should be clear, then, that as far as Scripture and the Confessions are concerned, we will find no answer to the question, "At what moment in the Lord's Supper does the Real Presence take place?" Scripture leaves this unanswered for us, therefore the Confessions do likewise, and the best we can do is to follow their example. Indeed, as Christians committed to God's Word, can we do anything else? Where God has not spoken in absolutes, we dare not. If one should arrive at an opinion of one's own, then let him keep it to himself and realize that he has come to an opinion which he won't find conclusively supported or taught in Scripture.

Unfortunately, this has not been the case with all Lutheran theologians of the past or the present. Many have seen fit to publicly put forth their opinions. And some, more unfortunately, have gone so far as to present their opinions as God's own truth. With this being the case, we can look at the controversy surrounding this question as it has showed itself in history. Particularly, we will look at some of the men who have expressed their answers to this "foolish and presumptuous" question, and see what their influence has resulted in.

For one, it is clear that Luther himself believed that the Sacramental Union took place before the eating and drinking, from the time of the consecration, although he would not quibble as to the *exact* moment. In a letter to Carlstadt in 1528 Luther says:

Perhaps you are recalling for us that old question about the instant of consecration, where the papists teach that it is at the last syllable and not before that the Body of Christ is present. We put little value on these thoughts and we do not designate for God moments or times; we are simply content to believe with certainty that whatever God says happens or exists does happen And so here we say that bread is the Body of Christ, because Christ said: "This is My Body," and we

³ Martin Luther, *Samtliche Schriften*, Vol. 21, Johann Georg Walch, 1749, No. 156, pp. 1588-1589. ("Damit man aber diese Irthumer vermeide, muss man wissen, dass Augustinus nicht allein vom der Aussprache der Worte Christi rede, sondern vielmehr den Befehl vom Nehmen und Essen des Brodes mit darunter begreife. Und hernach thut er hinzu: *hic est corpus meum*, welches soviel is, als, ausser diesem Gebrauche wird mein Leib und mein Blut nicht mit diesen ausseren Zeichen verbunden.")

stay away from the other idle arguments, when they dispute about moments and syllables. For we are commanded to believe that the Words of God are true, but not to investigate at what instant or how the Words are true and how they are fulfilled.⁴

While it may sound as if Luther leaves a lot of leeway for the “when”, anyone familiar with his writings will concede that he saw the Real Presence existing from the consecration on. It seems clear that the majority of first generation orthodox Lutherans held similar views. While they, too, did not want to set a definite time “syllable-wise”, it seems clear they, with Luther, believed the Sacramental Union was present from the consecration on. Over against the Roman Catholics who were of the opinion that the Lutherans restricted the Real Presence to the moment of reception, Chemnitz remarks:

It is not our opinion that the blessed bread which is distributed, offered, and which the apostles received from the hand of Christ, is not the Body of Christ, (it is not our opinion) that it is first made the Body of Christ at the moment when it begins to be eaten. For the whole action of the institution is connected together, and these words: “This is my Body” pertain to this total action. Therefore, it is concerning this bread which is blessed, which is broken or distributed, which is offered, which is received and eaten concerning this bread, I say—that Christ says: “This is My Body.” (Chemnitz, *Examen*, p. 309)⁵

Musculus apparently also held Luther’s view, and in defense of Musculus Andreae is quoted as writing: “Through the sacramental union the bread immediately becomes the body of Christ when the words of the Lord’s Supper are presented, which it was not before, and which Musculus says, namely, that the body of Christ immediately becomes present (*Solida Refutation*, p. 404).⁶

The question reached the point of full-blown controversy through Johann Saliger, a pastor in Luebeck, and then in Rostock. Like Hardt in Sweden today, Saliger insisted on the presence of the Sacramental Union from the moment of consecration on. In his article concerning this issue printed in 1848, Dr. Julius Wiggers of Rostock said that the pastors complained about Saliger because said “that the true body and the true blood of the Lord Jesus are present in the Lord’s Supper already before the use, administration, and sumption, in such a way that he openly declared all those who did not teach likewise Sacramentarians.”⁷

His fellow pastors tried to deal with him in an evangelical and brotherly manner, but they themselves said of Saliger, “We have never found such a hard-head.”⁸ It isn’t that the majority wouldn’t have agreed with him as to the opinion he held. Wiggers quotes a lengthy confession by Saliger in which he clearly states his belief in the Real Presence from the consecration on, but in it doesn’t anathematize those who might not be willing to be as precise as himself. Of this confession, Wiggers says, “This presence could have also been subscribed to by the opposition, and does not show why they attacked him, since it stands throughout in

⁴ Edward Frederick Peters, *The Origin and Meaning of the Axiom: “Nothing has the Character of a Sacrament Outside of the Use”*, in *Sixteenth Century and Seventeenth Century Lutheran Theology*, (thesis presented to the Concordia Seminary, St. Louis faculty, May 1968), (“Luther to Carlstadt, Beilage Jan 29, 1528, *WABr*, IV 367-368), (“Luther to Carlstadt, Beilage, Jan 29 1528, *WABr*, IV, 367-368); Translated by Peters, pp. 198-199.

⁵ *Ibid*, p. 449. “Nec tamen sententia est, panem benedictum qui distribuitur, qui exhibetur, et quem Apostoli de manu Christi susceperunt, non esse corpus Christi, sed tunc primum fieri corpus Christi, quando incipit manducari. Tota enim actio institutionis connexa est, et ad totam illam actionem pertinent haec verba: Hoc est corpus meum. De illo igitur pane qui benedicatur et manducatur, de illo inquam pane Christus dicit: Hoc est corpus meum.”

⁶ Erlandsson, *op. cit.* p. 4

⁷ Julius Wiggers, “Der Saliger’sche Abendmahlstreit”, *Zeitschrift für Historische Theologie*, Leipzig, 1848 (photo-copied in Seminary Essay File #238), pp. 620-621. “...dass der wahre Leib und das wahre Blut des herrn Christi im Abendmahl schon vor dem Gebrauch, Verreichnung, und Niessung vorhanden sei, sowie dass er Alle die solches nicht lehren öffentlich für Sacramentirer ausschrie.”

⁸ *Ibid*, p. 620. “Wir haben noch niemals einen so steiften-Kopf gefunden.”

harmony with Lutheran Church teachings.”⁹ This shows which opinion Wiggers holds, but I also think it is an honest appraisal of the commonly held view of Saliger’s time.

The controversy was settled for those in this area by the so-called “Mecklenburger Edict” of 1569, which Wiggers attributes without a doubt (*ohne Zweifel*) to Chytraeus.¹⁰ In it the question, “How and when and in what sort of ways the bread in the Lord’s Supper is the Lord’s Body” (*Wie und wann und waserlie Weise das Brod im Abendmahl der Leib Christi sei*), was included as part of the wholly unnecessary disputations. But the Edict clearly places the presence of the Sacramental Union before the eating and drinking.

... now in this whole unbroken action of the Holy Supper, which also is called the Sacrament of the Holy Supper, Christ is truly and essentially present and with bread and wine offers and gives his true body and blood, just as the true presence of Christ’s body and blood in the Supper also before the sumption will not be denied, but, with the customary and, in these churches, usual phrases, will be confessed...¹¹

Among the “following foreign, in our churches unusual, dubious, obscure, and vexatious statements (*folgende fremde, im unserer Kirchen ungewohnliche, zweifelhafte, dunkle und argerliche Reden*) which should not be used (*sollen...nicht gebrauchet werden*), this statement is found:

item: that after the spoken blessing the bread and wine even before the distribution (which first of all might follow some days or months after that) a complete Sacrament exists, and over against these matters (*Reden*) (which, however, as we find from the *Actis*, are not promoted by any one in our churches), that Christ’s body and blood can not be present earlier in the Lord’s Supper, unless the blessed bread and wine are touched with the lips or enclosed in the mouth.¹²

It can be seen here that the Mecklenburger Edict would also seem to condemn those who would say that Christ’s body and blood can’t be present until the moment of oral reception, and thereby insist that their opinion is the correct Biblical doctrine.

Wiggers cited the case of one Wolfgang Peristerus of Wismar who was accused by some of the other pastors of Wismar of teaching (among other things) “that the bread and wine in the Lord’s Supper after the blessing and before one eats and drinks them are not Christ’s body and blood.”¹³ While denying that he personally believed this and making it clear that he believed in the Real Presence before the sumption within the Use, Peristerus said of his accusers in his refutation:

That is precisely the fault, which such wiseacres hold on us, and over which they take us to task, slander, and persecute; namely, that we also won’t refine and determine with them that in Christ’s Supper, right after the spoken words and also still outside of the use, and before the *Usus* or Use or the participation and sumption or the eating and drinking are present with it, the bread and wine become Christ’s body and blood.¹⁴

⁹ Ibid, p. 630-631. “Diese Darstellung hatte auch von den Gegnern unterschrieben werden können und zieht nicht, warum Diese ihn angegriffen, da sie mit der lutherische Kirchenlehre durchaus in Einklanger steht.”

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 638.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 639

¹² Ibid, p. 640. “*item, dass nach gesprochenem Segen das Brod und Wein auch vor der Austheilung (welche etliche Tage oder Monate darnach allererst folgen mochte) ein vollkommenes Sacrament sei, und dagegen diese Reden (welche doch, wie wir aus den Actis befinden, von keinem in unserer Kirchen gefuhrt sind) dass der Leib und Blut Christi nicht ehe im Abendmahl vorhanden sie, es werde denn das geseignete Brod und Wein mit dem Lippen beruhret oder im Munde beschlossen;*”

¹³ Ibid, p. 650. “*das Brod und Wein im Abendmahl des Herrn nachdem Segen und ehe man es isset und trinket Christi Leib und Blut seien.*”

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 651. “*Das ist eben der Mangel, den solche Kluglinge an uns haben, und darum sie uns zur Rede setzen, lastern und verfolgen, namlich, dass wir auch mit ihnen nicht grubeln und determiniren wollen, dass im Abendmahl Christi bald nach*

Saliger refused to accept the Mecklenburger Edict. Hardt says that he believes Saliger refused to accept it because it was “likely that Saliger saw that his opponents in a Melanchthonian way used equivocation even in the settlement.”¹⁵ I think Erlandsson is closer when he says that “since the edict described such questions as to ‘how and when and in what manner the bread in the Supper is the body of Christ’ as being ‘unnecessary, presumptuous, confusing disputes and quarrels about words’ it became impossible for Saliger to accept it.”¹⁶ At any rate, Saliger was forced to leave. The controversy continued in other areas, but Saliger’s “doctrine” was never adopted by the orthodox Lutheran theologians as a matter of confession. The majority seem to have held to his opinion that Christ’s body and blood were truly present before the eating and drinking, but as to the exact moment this Real Presence began they refused to define as dogma.

Many of the Lutheran theologians spoke in the terminology of the Formula of Concord and so it is not possible to determine just what their personal opinion might have been. Gerhard was one of them. Edward Peters quotes Gerhard in favor of Saliger’s view: “By the word of His Institution, which is spoken through the mouth of the minister, He brings it about that bread is His body and the cup His Blood.”¹⁷ But one has to ask the question, “Is *time* involved here?” Because Schmid, who appears to hold the view that the Sacramental Union takes place at the moment of eating and drinking (since he quotes those who hold this view), quotes Gerhard in favor of his own view:

This consecration of the Eucharist is (1) not a magical incantation, essentially transmuting, by the power of certain words, the bread into the body and the wine into the blood of Christ; nor (2) is it only the historical repetition of the institution...but it is (3) an efficacious *ἀγιασμός* (sanctification) by which, according to the command, ordination, and institution of Christ, sanctification is, as it were, carried over from the first Supper to the Supper at the present day, and the external elements destined to this sacred use, so that with these the body and blood of Christ are distributed.¹⁸

Peters also quotes Quenstedt as holding Saliger’s view of the moment of Real Presence, for Quenstedt includes as part of the consecration, “(3) the sacramental uniting of the bread and wine with the Body and Blood of Christ, through the Words of Christ’s testament, so that the blessed bread is the communication of the Body of Christ; and the blessed chalice is the communication of the Blood of Christ.”¹⁹ But Peters appears to be mistaken. He should have read a little farther, for Schmid has the same quote and quotes Quenstedt further:

This sacramental union itself does not take place except in the distribution; for the elements, bread and wine, do not become portative media (*προσφερόμενα*) of the body and blood of Christ, until during the distribution they are eaten and drank.²⁰

So Quenstedt has to be included among those who see the moment of Sacramental Union occurring first with the eating and drinking.

gesprochenen Worte, und auch noch ausserhalb dem Gebrauch, und ehe der Usus oder Gebrauch oder die Participation und Niessung oder das Essen und Trinken dazu kommt, Brod und Wein Christi Leib und Blut werden.”

¹⁵ Erlandsson, op. cit. p. 4

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 7.

¹⁷ Peters, op. cit. p. 544. “*Institutionis suae verbo, quod per os ministri pronuntiatur, efficit, ut panis sit ipsius corpus et poculum ipsius sanguis.*” John Gerhard, *Loci*, (Preuss edition), V, 154.

¹⁸ Heinrich Schmid, *Doctrinal Theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961, p. 573. (*Loci*, X, 270)

¹⁹ Peters, op. cit. p. 544. “*in panis & vini cum corpore & sanguine Christi, per verba Christi Testamentaria sacramentali unitone, ita ut panis benedictus sit corporis Christi, & calix benedictus sit sanguinis Domini communication*”, Quenstedt, *Theologia Didactico-Polemica*, IV, 179.

²⁰ Schmid, op. cit. p. 573.

Concerning this viewpoint, opposite to those we have really considered so far, perhaps now would be just as good a time as any to bring in some of those men who expressly taught that the Sacramental Union is present in the Lord's Supper only at the moment of eating and drinking. One such man was Aegidius Hunnius. According to Peters:

Giles Hunnius as early as 1590 says clearly that "wine before it is drunk is not the communion of the Blood of Christ, much less is it converted into Christ's Blood substantially."²¹ He also says that the Body of Christ is in the hand of the minister only when it is placed into the mouth of the communicant.^{22/23}

Walther also quotes Hunnius in his *Pastorale* (which is further quoted by Pieper in a footnote): "As the bread is the communion of the body of Christ only in the act of eating and not before, so, too, the bread is not sacramentally united with the body till this communion and reception takes place."²⁴ Hunnius' reasons seem to be drawn from logic rather than from any attempt to find them in Scripture, for he goes on to say:

For if it should happen that after the recital of the Words of Institution by the minister and after the so-called consecration a fire or tumult broke out before anyone had come to the Lord's Table, and thus the holy rite was prevented by this accident, it would be doubtful whether by virtue of the completed recitation the body of Christ is in some mysterious manner united with the bread, even without the use of the bread, which consists in the eating and was unexpectedly prevented. Here certainly every sensible person would rather negate than affirm the sacramental union.²⁵

Here, of course, all we would have to do is point to the absence of the completed Sacramental Use, and therefore leave all other questions unanswered.

Peters also includes Leonard Hutter with Hunnius in this view, as does Schmid. Hutter, after speaking about the views of the Roman Catholics in this matter, goes on to say:

So there are even some among ourselves who dream that, when the words of institution have been recited, there results a permanent sacramental union of the bread with the body and the wine with the blood . . . The purified Church, correcting this error, teaches that no sacramental union takes place until the external use is added, which consists in eating and drinking.²⁶

It can be noted that these men seem to have a different definition for the term "use" than the writers of the Formula of Concord. It seems they limit it to the eating and drinking, or perhaps the distribution and reception, rather than make it all-inclusive of the Sacrament as an inviolate whole. When using a word or term from the Confessions which the confessions themselves specifically define, it should necessarily be used in the same way so that confusion is avoided.

Lastly to this group Peters adds Joachim Hildebrand, who said that, "The Body of Christ is not united with the eucharistic bread through consecration, but only in its own use, that is, in receiving and eating the consecrated bread."²⁷ Peters says, "Other than these three men (Hunnius, Hutter, Hildebrand), the present writer

²¹ "Vinum enim, antequam bibatur, non est koinoonia sanguinis Christi: multo minus conuertitur in Christi sanguinem substantialiter." Giles Hunnius, *Articulus sive Locus*, p. 792.

²² Giles Hunnius, *Articulus sive Locus*, p. 715. (cited by Peters)

²³ Peters, op. cit. pp. 549-550.

²⁴ Francis Pieper *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. III, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950, (English translation) p. 373; and C.F.W. Walther, *Pastoraltheologie*, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1875, (German quotation) p. 175.

²⁵ Ibid, Pieper, p. 373; and Walther, p. 175.

²⁶ Schmid, op. cit. p. 573.

²⁷ Peters, op. cit., pp. 549-550. "quod corpus Christi cum pane Eucharistico non per consecrationem, sed in ipso demum usu, h.e. in accptione & comestione panis consecrati uniat. Hildebrand, *Theologia Dogmatica*, p. 802.

has not found any, seventeenth century theologians who explicitly limit the presence of the Body and Blood of Christ to the moment of reception.”²⁸ Thanks to Schmid, we can add Quenstedt to that list. Quenstedt’s view also comes out clearly in Hoenecke’s *Dogmatik*, which we will consider with the next group of men.

Moving to the Nineteenth Century and the early Twentieth Century, we come to Krauth, Schmid, Walther, Pieper and Hoenecke.

Charles Porterfield Krauth definitely places the Sacramental Union beginning with the Words of Institution. He claims to find this taught clearly in the statement of the Augsburg Confession, “The body and blood of Christ are present in the Supper, and there communicated and received (X, 1).” As he argues:

The distinction is made between the generic presence which is “in the Supper”, and the specific participation made by the reception of the sacrament imparted. From the *beginning* of the Supper, *strictly defined* (that is, from the time when Christ’s consecrating words are uttered in His name by His authority) to *its end*, (that is, until the last communicant has received the elements) or, in other words, from the first time to the last “*in the Supper*” in which, by Christ’s authority, it is declared, this is Christ’s body, this is Christ’s blood,” that of which this affirmation is made, *is* His body, and *is* His blood. When He said, Take, eat, this is My body, He undoubtedly meant, Take, eat, *because* it is my body. The presence of the body in the *order of thought* precedes the command to Take, eat, though in point of time they are absolutely simultaneous...The Mathematical moment need not concern us. We know the sacramental moment...The doctrine of the Lutheran Church begins with the beginning of the Supper and ends with the end of the Supper.²⁹ (emphases his own)

A powerful Argument, but Krauth puts more in the Confessions than they say, as he makes more of the “in the Supper” than has to be put in it. He reads in “time” where time is not specifically mentioned. Christ’s body and blood are present “sometime” in the Supper; when, and for how long, the Confessions remain silent. When the Confessions wish to stress the entire action of the Supper, they do so. If they had meant to say “throughout” they would have. Krauth fails to take into account the Saligerian Controversy which had preceded the writing of the Formula, and so the great care the writers took to express themselves just as they did—to say no more and no less than God’s Word said in what they had to say as a matter of confession.

Heinrich Schmid makes himself perfectly clear as to which position He holds, letting Quenstedt and Hutter speak for him. He undoubtedly believed that Hutter holds the correct teaching of the “purified Church”.

As for C. F. W. Walther, I think it is safe to assume that he would agree with Schmid—that the Sacramental Union does not take place until the eating and drinking—because he lets Hunnius speak for him. It seems you can tell a man by whom he quotes.

Franz Pieper likewise seems to hold this same opinion, referring to Walther’s quote from Hunnius, although he specifically makes no definite statement of his own in just so many words. But he does speak of Johann Saliger and says that, “he tenaciously defended the opinion that the *unio sacramentalis* occurred already *ante usum*; hence before the distribution and reception.”³⁰ He apparently drew this from Frank, who in turn had been speaking on the basis of Wigger’s article. However, Frank in fact says that “Saliger set the Presence as occurring before the *usus*, although not absolutely *ante usum*, namely not without regard to the subsequent distribution and sumption.”³¹ If Pieper did read this carefully, then he knew what Saliger was really saying. Therefore, I believe he himself apparently must have held the same view as Hunnius, Schmid, and Walther. Furthermore, Pieper writes:

²⁸ Ibid, pp. 549-550.

²⁹ Charles Porterfield Krauth, *The Conservative Reformation and its Theology*, Philadelphia: General Council Publication Board, 1872, pp. 822-823.

³⁰ Pieper, op. cit. p. 372.

³¹ Fr. H.K. Frank, *Die Theologie Der Concordienformel*, V. II, Erlangen, 1863, p. 147. “Saliger setzte die Praezenz als vor dem usus eintreten, wenn auch, wie er sagte, nicht absolute ante usum, d.h. nict ohn Ruchsicht auf die nachherige Austheilung und Niessung.”

On the contention of Bellarmine that Christ spoke the words, “This is my Body,” before the act of partaking and that, accordingly, already before its reception the Sacrament must by the consecration be complete (*confectum*), that is, the *unio sacramentilis* must obtain, Quenstedt gives the opposite answer: “Christ does not say absolutely of the consecrated bread that it is His body, but of the bread broken and given to eat. For first He said, ‘Take, eat,’ thereupon He said, ‘This is My body.’” (Syst. 11, 1268)³²

Adolf Hoenecke also seems to hold the opinion that the Sacramental Union occurs at the moment of eating and drinking. He quotes the statements of Quenstedt which Peters quoted, but then includes also the further statements Schmid included. As Hoenecke says:

This *unitio* (the Sacramental Union) occurs (*geschieht*) through the Words of Institution. Quenstedt however adds directly to this, that the Sacramental Union occurs (*geschieht*) only in the distribution. Bread and wine are not “porters” (*trager*) of the body and blood of Jesus Christ before they shall be eaten and drunk. This demonstrates correctly the word of Christ, “Take, eat; this is my body. The dogmaticians therefore call the *unitio* (union) occurring in the consecration a *praclusiva*, that is to say, whose result first with an action, the eating and drinking, occurs (*eintritt*).³³

Hoenecke does say, “As far as reference to the exact moment (*Zeitpunktos*) from which Christ’s body and blood are present under the earthly elements and united with the bread and wine is concerned, Baier says that it is not necessary that it be fixed.”³⁴ This statement is important to note, for just as Luther clearly placed the moment the Real Presence began within the Consecration, without defining the exact *Zeitpunkt*—which syllable it began under—so also Hoenecke and those who hold to the Real Presence occurring in the eating and drinking don’t define the exact pin-point of time (for example: When the element touches the lips”; “When the element is enclosed in the mouth”; “When the element is swallowed”, etc.). But they do define the moment with just as much certainty and “accuracy” as Luther with respect to time. Thus Hoenecke goes on to speak of Quenstedt and says:

Quenstedt comes consequently to conclude from this (that outside of the use the essence is not there, therefore also neither Christ’s body and blood), that in the moment of eating and drinking, under the bread and wine Christ’s body and blood are there. This also has full support in the words, “Take, eat this is my body. All drink from it, this is my blood,” and that in the moment of eating and drinking the bread and wine are the “porters” of Christ’s body and blood for the communicants, that was brought about (*vermittelt*---“negotiated”) through the consecration occurring with the words of institution. That will our Confession also say, in that it once declares, that the words of institution effect that Christ’s body and blood are present and likewise yet also gainsays, there is no Sacrament without eating and drinking. This says with this evidently, that by virtue of the words of institution in the moment of sumption of the bread and

³² Pieper, op. cit. p. 373

³³ Adolf Hoenecke, *Ev. Lutherische Dogmatik*, Vol IV, Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1909, p. 127. “Diese *unitio* geschieht durch die Einsetzungsworte. Quenstedt setzt aber gleich hinzu, dass die sakramentale Vereinigung nur in der Austeilung geschieht. Brot und Wein sind nicht Träger des Leibes und Blutes Jesu Christ, bevor sie gegessen und getrunken werden. Dies beweist als richtig das Wort Christi: ‘Nehmet, esset; das ist mein Leib.’ Die Dogmatiker nennen deshalb die in der Konsekration geschehende *unitio* eine *praclusiva*, d.h. deren Resultat erst bei einer Handlung, dem Essen und Trinken, eintritt.”

³⁴ Ibid, p. 130. “Bezüglich des Zeitpunktes, vom welchem an Christi Leib und Blut unter den irdischen Elementum gegenwartig seien und mit dem Brot und Wein geeint, sagt Baier, es sei nicht nötig, denselben zu bestimmen.”

wine, under the same Christ's body and blood are present. Were one to hold the matter differently, so one would ever arrive at a form of impanation.³⁵

I think that this clearly shows that Hoenecke takes the view of Schmid, Walther, and Pieper.

Before I go any further, I think I will add that in his article translated and reprinted in the April, 1977, *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, "The Biblical and Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper," Seth Erlandsson was not quite as straightforward with his readers as I believe he should have been. He gives the impression, in my opinion, that these men (Walther, Pieper, Hoenecke) believed at least that the moment of the Real Presence occurred before the eating and drinking, when it seems clear they did not. In fact, he mentions none of the men who openly espoused the view held by these men or mentions the view itself. Elsewhere, Erlandsson himself says that he holds to the opinion that the Sacramental Union occurs with the consecration: "It is also worth noting, that even if Luther believed (just as I do) that the real presence begins when the consecration takes place, yet he never made a doctrinal article out of this..."³⁶ Likewise, he also says, "The Lutheran Fathers clearly rejected Philippism, and they also refused to fix the beginning of the real presence at the exact moment of the eating and drinking—the so-called receptionist view—which also lacks support in Scripture, and therefore must be rejected."³⁷ Erlandsson also, when he quotes Hoenecke's statement concerning Baier and the *Zeitpunkt*, fails to show the distinction Hoenecke made between this *Zeitpunkt*, pin-point in time, and "moment", in reference to the Real Presence. He seems to have Hoenecke say something with a sense Hoenecke didn't mean, while, in fact, Hoenecke very definitely does place the "moment" of the Real Presence, as we have understood "moment" throughout this paper. It seems to me that Erlandsson should have made it clear this "receptionist view" was the opinion held by these men, and while it must be rejected if insisted upon, it is still a possible opinion.

Moving on, John Mueller, in his *Christian Dogmatics* which he claims is an epitome of Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik* quotes Quenstedt's answer to Bellarmine which Pieper also quoted, and adds, "Hence Christ's body and blood are really present with the consecrated earthly elements only when we eat and drink them."³⁸ Not only is this Mueller's view, but it no doubt also gives further expression to the view held by Pieper himself.

Proceeding further, in John Meyer's "Dogmatics Notes" we find the statement, "-4) A decisive fact. -a) Sacramental union has place only in the moment of eating."³⁹ While it can be read in an ambiguous way, it can also be misunderstood. I wouldn't be surprised that Meyer held the opinion of Hoenecke, and from the personal "opinions", which are held with the status of a true teaching by many of our pastors, it would seem that this was not taught as clearly as it should have been, but was taught to opt for the moment of eating and drinking as the moment of the Sacramental Union. This is, however, only my own personal estimation of the situation.⁴⁰

Back to the Missouri Synod, we have a statement of Ottomar Krueger in *The Abiding Word*. In answer to the question, "When does the Sacramental Union take place in the Lord's Supper?", he says:

³⁵ Ibid, p. 131 "Quenstedt kommt somit darauf hinaus, dass im Moment des Essens und Trinkens unter dem Brot und Wein Christ Leib und Blut sind. Das hat auch vollen Grund in den Worten: "Nehmet, esset; das ist mein Leib. Trinket alle daraus; das ist mein Blut." Und dass im Moment des Essens und Trinkens für den Genießenden Brot und Wein die Träger des Leibes und Blutes Christi sind, das wird vermittelt durch die mit den Einsetzungsworten geschehende Konsekration. Das will auch unser Bekenntnis sagen, indem es einmal erklärt, dass die Einsetzungsworte bewirken, dass Christi Leib und Blut gegenwärtig seien und zugleich doch auch wieder sagt, es sei ohne Essen und Trinken kein Sakrament. Es sagt inmt deutlich, dass kraft der Einsetzungsworte im Moment des Genießens des Brotes und Weines unter denselben Christi Leib und Blut seien. Wollte man die Sache anders fassen, so wurde man stets zu einer Art von Impanation gelangen."

³⁶ Erlandsson, op. cit. p. 9

³⁷ Ibid, p. 6

³⁸ Mueller, *Christian Dogmatics*, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing house, 1934, p. 9.

³⁹ John P. Meyer, *Dogmatics Notes: based on Dr. Adolph Hoenecke's "Dogmatik"*

⁴⁰ On reading my paper, Professor Joel Gerlach noted here: "and undoubtedly a correct one."

When the apostle Paul . . . by inspiration of the Holy Ghost writes in 1 Cor. 11: “As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death til he come”, he expressly refers to the elements as bread and wine, using the figure of speech *continens pro contento*, a synecdoche, and does not indicate that the bread has been united with the body and blood of Christ at the words of institution, but rather at the eating, for now he goes on to say that “whosoever *eats* this bread and *drinks* this cup unworthily is guilty of the body and blood of our Lord.” So, then, the action is there when we receive the elements, and therein lies actual presence, not in some change that the ministrant brings about when he pronounces the words of consecration or institution . . . Although the words of institution are important and we should not omit them at the observance of the Eucharist, nevertheless we should not feel that by the simple speaking of those words the sacramental union takes place. The elements must be taken, eaten, and drunk to make the sacrament complete.⁴¹

I think the weaknesses of this argument, in the light of all I have said before, should be obvious. Apparently there were others who disagreed with him, (and rightly so), for while this was published in 1960, it was written sometime during 1954-55. In 1959 a clear and truly Scriptural statement was issued by the joint faculties of the St. Louis and Springfield seminaries and printed in the *Concordia Theological Monthly*, the result of a resolution of the St. Paul convention of the Missouri Synod, “That the joint theological faculties of Synod provide appropriate studies on the following topics mentioned in Unprinted Memorial 18, ‘The Moment of the Real Presence in the Lord’s Supper’, and ‘Intercessory Prayers for the Benefit of the Souls of the Dead’”⁴² The faculties concluded:

1. Scripture is silent with reference to the “moment” of the Real Presence in the Lord’s Supper, for 1 Cor. 10:16 relates the sacramental union to the total sacramental action.
2. According to the Formula of Concord (VII 83) the Lord’s Supper is a sacrament only when the elements are consecrated and the directives included in Christ’s command *This do* are executed. . . (then the S.D. 83 and 85 are quote)
3. The Formula of Concord does not, however, fix the moment when the sacramental union takes place. It rather lashes out in severe language against speculative questions dealing with the “when” and “how” of the sacramental union. . .
4. In view of the above considerations (silence of Scripture regarding the “moment” of the Real Presence in the Lord’s Supper, and statements Quoted from the Formula of Concord) Lutheran theologians, whether they be in the preaching or teaching ministry, will be careful not to ask or evoke “presumptuous, frivolous, blasphemous questions” regarding the mystery of the “moment” of the Real Presence in the Lord’s Supper, lest Christian consciences be disturbed and Satan be given an opportunity to sow the seed of discord in the church. Lutheran theologians need constantly remember that the chief emphases in the Lutheran doctrine of the Lord’s Supper are those succinctly expressed in the statement of the Small Catechisms “Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” Which words, besides the bodily eating and drinking, are the chief thing in the Sacrament; and he that believes these words has what they say and express, namely, the forgiveness of sins.⁴³

I believe this to be an excellent statement and a presentation of the proper Scriptural teaching concerning this question.

⁴¹ Ottomar Krueger, “The Lord’s Supper”, *The Abiding Word*, Vol. III, St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1960, pp. 454-455.

⁴² Joint Theological Faculties of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and Concordia Seminary, Springfield, “The Moment of the Real Presence in the Lord’s Supper,” *Concordia Theological Monthly*, Vol. 30, No. 7, July, 1959, p. 530.

⁴³ *Ibid*, pp. 530-531.

This statement (in a portion not quoted) also cites Hermann Sasse's book *This Is My Body*, in which Sasse says:

Luther and the early Lutheran Church avoided forming any theory about the "moment" when the Real Presence begins and the "moment" when it ceases. Some later orthodox theologians (whom we've noted) advance the theory that Christ's body and blood are present only at the "moment" when they are received. This is frequently regarded, within and without the Lutheran Church, as the genuinely Lutheran doctrine. Actually this view is only another attempt to determine a time that only "He knows who knows all things."⁴⁴

We have seen already how Hardt stands squarely with Saliger on the Lord's Supper. He says in one place, "According to the doctrine of the real presence, the body of Christ is at one and the same time present in its entirety in every single host on the altar as well as in every part of each host."⁴⁵ While he is not speaking of the moment of the Real Presence *per se*, it is clear what his view is. He also states, "It is only the consecration that *makes* the bread and wine the body and blood of Christ . . . Only the consecration ties the presence to the elements and creates the Real Presence in its specific sense."⁴⁶ (emphasis his own)

Hardt does admit that any "elements" put outside the use (*extra usum*), "lose their Biblical significance." (that is, anything left over and not consumed once the Sacrament is completed is not Christ's body and blood.) But in conjunction with this he also says, "On the basis of Luther's view on such matters, one may say that such occurrences are so deeply disturbing for the sincere faith in the mystery of the Sacrament of the Altar that they ought not become known when and if they occur."⁴⁷

Hardt bases his belief concerning the moment of the Real Presence on a creative power in the words of institution—"The Word spoken over the created element conveys directly the uncreated eternal power of God"⁴⁸ but this is not something Scripture teaches in just these words, or the Confessions.

Hardt has found at least a sympathizer for his position (without the demand for the exclusion from fellowship of all who refuse to say it is the one true teaching of Scripture) in Bjarne W. Teigen. Teigen, however, in his article, "The Real Presence in the Book of Concord", makes some statements and suppositions which are not fully supported. For one, he speaks about Luther and the emphasis Luther put on the Word connected to the elements in the Lord's Supper. He quotes Luther in the Large Catechism: "It is the Word, I maintain, which distinguishes it from more bread and wine and constitutes it a sacrament which is rightly called Christ's body and blood. It is said, *accedat verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum*. . . The Word must make the element the sacrament; otherwise it remains a mere element." (V,10) Teigen says, "As can be seen from the context, Luther is thinking of the active, powerful Word of consecration of that divine majesty at whose feet every knee should bow."⁴⁹ But not so, according to Luther's own explanation of this axiom which we quoted earlier: . . . one must know that Augustine does not speak of the uttering of Christ's words alone, but moreover includes the command of taking and eating the bread by that." (quoted earlier on p. 11, footnote 43) Teigen here is mistaken to limit the "Word" to only the Words of Institution, but he should include, as Luther did, the entire Use of the Sacrament according to Christ's institution. Add all that to the element, and you have the Sacrament. That Teigen misses this point seems to be the basic "error" in his presentation and everything he has to say about the Sacrament and the power of the Words of Institution.

Teigen also says, "While the Augsburg Confession and the Apology do not use the word 'element', the Augsburg Confession certainly indicates the presence of the body and blood in the elements before the final act

⁴⁴ Herman Sasse, *This is my body*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1959, p. 173.

⁴⁵ Tom G. Hardt, *On the Sacrament of the Altar: A Book on the Lutheran Doctrine of the Lord's Supper*, (mimeographed sheets) p. 32

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 48

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 71

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 49

⁴⁹ B.W. Teigen, "The Real Presence in the Book of Concord", *Concordia Theological Quarterly*, Vol. 41, No. 2, April 1977, p. 46

of sumption.”⁵⁰ He then quotes Article X and refers to Krauth’s argument put forth about the words “in the Supper”. Concerning the contents of the Solid Declaration, VII, 73-90, he says that in this section, “it is asserted that the words of consecration effect the Real Presence of the body and blood of Christ.”⁵¹ I would agree, as long as these words joined to the Use of the Sacrament are considered effective, and not the bare words alone, because *this* is what the Solid Declaration says. I would agree to this statement *also* as long as it isn’t meant to provide an answer to the question “when”. But Teigen believes it does. He says:

With regard to the time or “moment” when the Real Presence begins and the moment it ceases (see Sasse, p.173) Luther believed that it began with the words of consecration and ended when the communion service was over. This is what the Solid Declaration is saying (73-90) as it was certainly the understanding of the Augsburg Confession, as Krauth shows...It seems to me that a fairly definite time is here set forth and that the Confessions do not limit the sacramental union to the instant of distribution and reception.⁵²

Teigen says more than the Confessions do. They don’t limit the Real Presence to the instant of sumption. Neither do they say it can’t be limited to that. They leave the question unanswered, and so must we.

As far as Seth Erlandsson is concerned, I believe his position has already been made clear.

Thus I have tried to trace the controversy to the present day. I believe that the true Scriptural teaching is that we leave the question unanswered, and settle on no opinion for ourselves. If one does come to one’s own opinion, then that should be kept private. And that person must remember that he has come to a “conclusion” to a question for which Scripture itself offers no conclusion. In practical terms, this means that a person who is of the opinion that Christ’s body and blood are present only in the eating and drinking won’t treat the outward elements of bread and wine before this action any differently than those who believe Christ’s body and blood are present before. In the Use of the Sacrament the bread and wine are to be consumed, and nothing else is to be done with them, regardless of when the Sacramental Union takes place. Jesus said, “Take, eat; . . . drink”, and nothing else. If anything else is added, this has to be considered outside of, or apart from, the Use, and adding actions to the institution Jesus didn’t prescribe. For example, He didn’t give us His body and blood to “adore”. Hardt insists on the adoration (in a properly “Lutheran” sense, however, as far as I have been able to determine with the material at my disposal) as a matter of confession and so not optional.

I believe he is mistaken, and should follow the advice of Luther which he himself presents:

Luther then divides the communicants into four groups as regards the adoration of the Sacrament. The first group acts as the Apostles did at the first celebration and sticks to faith in the forgiveness of sins in accordance with the words of institution, omitting the adoration: “these are the safest and the best.” (WA 11, 449, 15f.) The second group consists of those who “exercised in this faith arrive at their deed and adore Christ spiritually in the sacrament, i.e. in the depths of their hearts they bow before Him and acknowledge Him as their Lord who works everything, in them and outwardly they bend and bow and fall on their knees with their bodies in order to prove their inward adoration.” (WA 11, 449, 19ff.) The third group consists of those who adore without any outward gestures. The fourth group adores with gesture only, and that is hypocrisy . . . Summarizing, Luther says, “Nevertheless, you see that it is not without danger to adore the Sacrament where the Word and faith are not urged, so that I would almost contend that it would be better not to adore, in the company of the apostles, than to adore in the company with us.” (WA 11, 449, 29f.)⁵³

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 47

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 48

⁵² Ibid, p. 50

⁵³ Hardt, op. cit. p. 65

Rather than follow Luther's lead expressed here, Hardt concludes:

Particularly in view of the fact that this adoration is attacked by those people who deny the miracle of the Presence, the free ceremony spontaneously becomes a necessity, and professing the Real Presence thus procures for itself the desirable profile through the words about the adorable sacrament, described in Latin by Luther's own pen as *eucharistia venerabilis & adorabilis*.⁵⁴

Those who believe that the moment of Real Presence occurs in the eating, and drinking could, I think, also "adore" the Sacrament in Luther's sense, and I'm sure many do. But they certainly don't give it the significance Hardt does.

In conclusion, I will simply sum up my own personal belief concerning this whole question as to the Moment of the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper. What I say is the result of my study and investigation, and I believe all that follows is in harmony with the Scriptures and the Confessions.

I believe that the "Moment", that is, the definite time at which the, Real Presence is effected, can not be determined conclusively and dogmatically from Scripture. I will only say that the Real Presence is effected and occurs sometime within the *Use* of the Sacrament, as the Use is defined by the Formula of Concord, S.D. VII, 85 and 86. I consider all personal opinions concerning the Moment of the Real Presence to be just that—personal opinions—which I believe can be held without error as long as the Real Presence is not denied; as long as those who hold one such an opinion do not charge those who hold another opinion with error; as long as these personal opinions are not made into articles of faith and doctrine which must or ought to be believed, and a differing opinion which still retains the Real Presence within the Use of the Sacrament is thereby deemed heretical or contrary to sound doctrine.

I believe that those who hold differing opinions of the Moment of Real Presence (whether they say it occurs during the consecration in view of the forthcoming and immediate continuance and completion of the whole Use of the Sacrament; or whether it occurs at sumption) can both correctly understand what the Confessions have to say concerning the Lord's Supper in view of their own opinions and still be in agreement with one another on the Christian doctrines the Confessions set forth. Neither party denies the Real Presence or destroys the efficacy of the sacrament. One views Christ's words, "Take, eat; this is my body . . . this is my blood," as referring to the bread and wine which are to *be* consumed, to be used according to the Use of the Sacrament; and the other views Christ's words as referring to the bread and wine which are *being* consumed. I believe both views are possible according to linguistical usage and are defensible, and neither one can be said to be impossible.

That Luther and the majority of the early orthodox Lutheran theologians held the former view I believe is undeniable. That many prominent orthodox Lutheran theologians held and hold the latter is also undeniable. I sincerely believe both can only be considered as private and personal opinions; neither one to be presented as the only correct view, or even the *more* correct view. Scripture leaves the question unanswered, and so should we. I will simply look at the entire Sacrament as one whole and inviolate action, or Use, from consecration to sumption, and be assured by Christ's words and institution that with the bread and wine, in the Sacramental Union, I receive the true body and blood of my Savior, which was given and shed for the remission of my sins. All questions concerning the "when" and the "how long" I shall push out of my mind as much as is humanly possible.

To sum it all up in the words of Professor Becker, "For us it is enough to know that His body which was given for us, and his blood which was shed for us, truly are present, in order to give us certainty that our sins are forgiven."⁵⁵

Amen to that.

⁵⁴ Ibid, p. 67

⁵⁵ Erlandsson, op. cit. p. 13

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