

The Augsburg Confession *Talking About Faith with Family and Friends*



Article XXII: Of Both Kinds in the Sacrament.

Discussion: How do you understand the Sacrament of Holy Communion? How frequently should a person of faith receive Holy Communion? How should a person of faith prepare for Holy Communion?

"To the laity are given Both Kinds in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, because this usage has the commandment of the Lord in *Matt. 26:27*: Drink ye all of it, where Christ has manifestly commanded concerning the cup that all should drink. And lest any man should craftily say that this refers only to priests, Paul in *1 Cor. 11:27* recites an example from which it appears that the whole congregation did use both kinds. And this usage has long remained in the Church, nor is it known when, or by whose authority, it was changed; although Cardinal Cusanus mentions the time when it was approved. Cyprian in some places testifies that the blood was given to the people.

The same is testified by Jerome, who says: The priests administer the Eucharist, and distribute the blood of Christ to the people. Indeed, Pope Gelasius commands that the Sacrament be not divided (dist. II., *De Consecratione, cap. Comperimus*). Only custom, not so ancient, has it otherwise. But it is evident that any custom introduced against the commandments of God is not to be allowed, as the Canons witness (dist. III., cap. *Veritate*, and the following chapters). But this custom has been received, not only against the Scripture, but also against the old Canons and the example of the Church.

Therefore, if any preferred to use both kinds of the Sacrament, they ought not to have been compelled with offense to their consciences to do otherwise. And because the division of the Sacrament does not agree with the ordinance of Christ, we are accustomed to omit the procession, which hitherto has been in use."

Explanation: Since Vatican II (1962-1965), the Roman Catholic Church has encouraged people to take the body and blood of Jesus Christ. (<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/the-mass/norms-for-holy-communion-under-both-kinds/>) The Lutheran Church considers the distribution and receiving of Christ's body and blood as one of exceptional reverence because Jesus Christ is present in this sacrament, partaking of Holy Communion is a command of Jesus Christ, and the body and blood give life to the believer. Luther taught that Holy Communion is a means of grace in that it forgives sins and nurtures faith. The Holy Spirit enlightens us and grows our faith daily as we remember our Baptism, confess our sins, and hear God's Word.

At the time of the meeting in Augsburg, the Roman Catholic theologians defended the distribution of the bread only based on the words of Luke in Acts 2:42 and Acts 20:7 regarding coming together for the "breaking of bread." In

addition, the defense included many examples documenting the validity of receiving the body of Christ without the blood and the difference between priestly and lay communion.