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What Is Faith?

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In a recent issue of a well-known magazine an article described the faith of Bishop Brown, the Episcopal Modernist, as mental content regardless of its basis. It proclaims the acceptance of such views as a complete separation of religion and dogmatism, giving the freethinker the same standing in the Church as the orthodox Christian. Furthermore, it denies the ability of the Church to define the term "faith."

Such views are in harmony with Modernism. However, religion and dogmas cannot be separated any more than heat and light. Correct dogmas are necessary to create correct faith. If one has an erroneous dogma, false faith and a life displeasing to God will follow as a natural consequence. For example, a Catholic has an erroneous dogma about saints; therefore he has an unwarranted faith in the power of the saints and commits wrong acts in worshipping the saints. To have faith in the mercy of God because of the merits of Jesus and to lead a God-pleasing life, it is necessary to believe in the Christian dogma of Christ's divinity.

Mental content is not a guarantee of a God-pleasing faith. Many people are egoistic enough to live in perfect content regardless of God's Word. Their mental, physical, or material advantages create in them a superiority complex resulting in mental content. They may experience this satisfaction in spite of the fact that they live in error and have ideas of decency which are not even in conformity with social ethics.

Moreover, it is a ridiculous statement to accuse the Christian Church of inability to define the term "faith." Christianity has a definite declaration as to the elements which constitute faith. Our Lutheran Catechism defines it in the following manner: "To believe in God is to know and to accept as true what the Scriptures say of God and with firm confidence to trust and rely in God."

To have faith, it is necessary, in the first place, to know God's

Exposition of the Sedes Doctrinae of the Lord's Supper.

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(Concluded.)

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We now come to the second part of the words of institution. Paul begins this part with the words: "After the same manner also He took the cup when He had supped" ("After the same

manner He also took the cup," etc.), Ὡσαύτως καὶ τὸ ποτήριον (ἔλαβε) μετὰ τὸ δειπνῆσαι. The words of Paul and the corresponding words of Luke are identical, while Matthew and Mark simply begin thus: "And He took the cup." From the words of Luke and Paul, "After supper," or, "When He had supped," and in view of the fact that Matthew and Mark begin their record of the institution with the words, "And as they were eating," some conclude that the celebration of the Lord's Supper, held at the time of its institution, was not a continuous action. They hold that Jesus distributed the bread during the celebration of the feast of the Passover, and that He then, after this feast had been terminated, gave the disciples the cup. However, the circumstances, as stated, do not warrant the assumption that a longer interval elapsed between the distribution of the bread and the giving of the cup. The true explanation thereof is rather this, that Matthew and Mark emphasize that the Lord instituted the Eucharist *while sitting at the Passover-table* with His disciples, while Paul and Luke stress that the *actual Passover-meal had been terminated* and that the Lord thereupon immediately commenced with the institution of His Holy Supper. The celebration of the Passover and the institution of the Sacrament were two separate and distinct acts, the latter following immediately, or being grafted, upon the former.

"When He had supped," Paul writes, the Lord "took the cup." What was in the cup is not expressly stated in the words of institution. We are, however, not left in doubt as regards the contents of the cup. Paul uses the definite article, "*the cup*," and thereby specifies that the Lord took the cup that was before Him, and from which the disciples had drunk at the Passover-meal; and we know with a sufficient degree of certainty that this cup contained *wine*, the ordinary wine of commerce, *i. e.*, *fermented wine*; for it was customary at the Jewish feasts to drink intoxicating wine diluted with water. Moreover, the Lord said, either immediately *before* (according to Luke 22, 18) or *after* (according to Matt. 26, 29 and Mark 14, 25) the institution of the Eucharist: "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." The cup, then, contained *the fruit of the vine*, γέννημα τῆς ἀμπέλου, which we cannot interpret otherwise than to mean *fermented, intoxicating wine*, made from the fruit of the vine, *i. e.*, from grapes; for the entire Biblical and historical evidence appears to be in favor of such interpretation. Regarding

this, Dr. Kretzmann, in answer to an assertion that "at the Passover-feast of the Old Testament, and therefore at the institution of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament, fermented wine could not have been used," writes thus (*Theol. Quarterly*, Vol. 20, p. 99 sq.): "Wine and strong drink, far from being regarded as impure by the Jews, was, on the contrary, used in certain sacrifices. We read Num. 28, 7: 'In the Holy Place shalt thou cause the strong drink to be poured unto the Lord for a drink-offering.' Ex. 29, 40 (wine for a drink-offering); Hos. 9, 4 (wine-offerings to the Lord). But that is not all. The liquors that were barred during the Passover week according to the Jewish law are enumerated in the *Mishna*: 'The law [prohibiting leaven to be seen or found in the house on Passover] is transgressed by the following articles: Babylonian *kuthach* [a mixture of moldy bread with milk and salt, used as a sauce for food], Midian beer [made of wheat or barley], Edomite vinegar [made by fermentation of barley and wine], Egyptian *zeethum* [a mixture of barley, salt, and wild saffron], the dough of bran used by dyers, the dough used by cooks [to attract the impurities in a pot where food was boiling], and the paste used by scribes [to paste the sheets of paper together].' And far from finding a passage prohibiting the use of wine at the Passover meal, we are told that all partakers were obliged to drink four cups of wine during the meal, the last of which was drunk in the intervals of the second part of the Hallel. (Rodkinson's *Babylonian Talmud*, Tract *Pesachim*, 5, 20.)" There can, therefore, not be the slightest doubt on *historical* grounds that our Lord, in instituting the Eucharist, used wine, true, fermented, intoxicating wine, though, after the Jewish custom, it may have been diluted, called *krama*. But there is also sound *exegetical* basis for the use of wine even in the words of institution. The *genema tes ampelou* was not a term used by Christ to permit the greatest latitude, but it is the *terminus* of the Jews for the *Passover wine*. The blessing of wine which they used upon all occasions, but especially at the Passover, was: *Benedictus sit, qui creavit fructum vitis*, "Blessed be He who created the fruit of the vine!" Whenever the expression "fruit of the vine" was used, it *always* meant *wine*, fermented, intoxicating wine, and nothing else. In addition to this it may be stated that the Christian Church, from the beginning, seems to have used fermented wine, either mixed or pure, in the administration of the Eucharist. For the reasons given we hold that the second essential element in the Lord's Supper is wine, *fermented, intoxicating wine*. Without

wine there is no Lord's Supper. Wine, fermented wine, must be used; but whether it be red or white, pure or mixed with water, is immaterial. (Cf. also *Theol. Quarterly*, Vol. 17, p. 163 sq.)

Paul, and likewise Luke, proceed thus: (He took the cup), "saying, This cup is the new testament in My blood," λέγων. τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἡ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι. The records of Matthew and Mark are more detailed; before proceeding to relate what the Lord said, they add the words: "And when He had given thanks, He gave it to them (*εὐχαριστήσας ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς*), saying" ("saying" according to Matthew only). As the Lord had done with the bread, so also with the cup: by a prayer of thanksgiving to His heavenly Father He blessed it, consecrated it, whereupon He gave it to His disciples, "saying," telling them what it was that He was giving them in the cup in and with the wine. According to Matthew the Lord said: "Drink ye all of it," Πίετε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες. Only in Matthew's account do we find this command of the Lord. Mark, instead thereof, relates the fact: "And they all drank of it," Καὶ ἔπιον ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες. In the words of Matthew and Mark we find the strongest argument against the practise of the Roman Catholic Church of withholding the cup from the laity. All the disciples were to, and did, and therefore all communicants at all times are to, receive also the cup. The drinking of the cup, as well as the eating of the bread, is an essential part of the Sacrament.

Matthew and Mark relate the following as the additional words of the Lord: "This is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for many," *i. e.*, for a multitude, for all mankind, Τοῦτο γάρ ἐστὶν τὸ αἷμά μου τὸ τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον, and Matthew alone adds the words: "for the forgiveness of sins," εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν. The grammatical construction of the sentence, "This is My blood," is the same as that of the words, "This is My body." The subject "This" is qualified by the succeeding words "My blood" and indicates what it is that the Lord gives His disciples to drink in and with the wine, *viz.*, His blood. And what we said in the first part in opposition to a figurative interpretation of the Lord's words applies also to these words; likewise, what has been said regarding the sacramental union of the earthly and heavenly element and the reception thereof by every communicant.

In and with the Eucharistic wine we receive Christ's true blood, and this Matthew and Mark call "the blood of the new testament." In these words a distinction is made between the

blood which we receive in and with the wine in the Eucharist and the blood of the Old Testament. While the Old Testament was dedicated with the blood of animals, Ex. 24, 8, Heb. 9, 18, the New Testament was established with the blood of Jesus, the true Mediator between God and man. Jesus shed His blood on the cross for the forgiveness of the sins of all mankind, and by this blood the covenant of grace was established. And inasmuch as the Lord made this covenant not only with the disciples who were with Him that evening, but with all His Christians, we find in these words additional evidence that the Lord instituted the Eucharist for His disciples of all times.

Paul and Luke, as stated, relate the saying of the Lord thus: "This is the new testament in My blood." There is no material discrepancy between these words and the corresponding words of Matthew and Mark. Being the more difficult, they must, according to the established law of exegesis, be interpreted according to the import of the words of Matthew and Mark, which are clear and simple. The words "in My blood" relate to the entire preceding statement: "This cup is the new testament." The apostle states the reason why the cup is rightfully called the new testament, *viz.*, by virtue or reason of that which it contains, *i. e.*, the blood of Christ, by which the New Testament was established. Thus all the blessings of the New Testament, grace, forgiveness, life, and salvation, are offered, conveyed, and sealed to us by means of the Eucharist, where we receive the true blood of the New Testament, the blood of our Redeemer and Mediator Christ.

There remain to be considered the words of Luke, "which is shed for you," τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυρόμενον. Some refer them to the subject of the sentence, *viz.*, "This cup"; the action expressed in the words would then relate to the distribution of Jesus' blood in and with the wine in the Eucharist. However, the better explanation is to refer the words to the shedding of Jesus' blood on the cross, in which case they coincide with the words of Matthew and Mark. The apostle adds the words: "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me." The meaning is the same as that of the same command of the Lord in the first part of the record. —

We have explained the words of the institution of the Eucharist according to their simple and apparent meaning. If we have erred in holding the meaning, as stated, to be the true, intended meaning, we cast all responsibility therefor upon the Lord. We have taken Him at His word, or rather, we accept the clear and

simple meaning of His words. However, we are convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that this is the intended meaning of the Lord's words. And with this firm conviction we meet the opponents of the true doctrine of the Lord's Supper with the words of Luther's hymn:—

The Word they still shall let remain
And not a thank have for it.

And we pray to the Lord:—

Vouchsafe, O blessed Lord,
That earth and hell combined
May ne'er about this Sacrament
A doubt raise in my mind.

And may I never fail
To thank Thee day and night
For Thy true body and true blood,
O God, my Peace and Light!
