Holy Thursday
April 17, 2025

625 Lord Jesus Christ, Life-Giving Bread

1 Lord Jesus Christ, life-giving bread,
May I in grace possess You.
Let me with holy food be fed,
In hunger I address You.
Prepare me well for You, O Lord,
And, humbly by my prayer implored,
Give me Your grace and mercy.

2 To pastures green, Lord, safely guide,
To restful waters lead me;
Your table well for me provide,
Your wounded hand now feed me.
Though weary, sinful, sick, and weak,
Refuge in You alone I seek,
To share Your cup of healing.

3 O bread of heav'n, my soul's delight,
For full and free remission
I come with prayer before Your sight
In sorrow and contrition.
Your righteousness, Lord, cover me
That I receive You worthily,
Assured of Your full pardon.

4 I do not merit favor, Lord,
My weight of sin would break me;
In all my guilty heart's discord,
O Lord, do not forsake me.
In my distress this comforts me
That You receive me graciously,
O Christ, my Lord of mercy!

Text: Johann Rist, 1607–67; tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806–74, alt.
Text: Public domain

Christian Questions with Their Answers

After confession and instruction in the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the pastor may ask, or Christians may ask themselves these questions:

1. Do you believe that you are a sinner?
Yes, I believe it. I am a sinner.

2. How do you know this?
From the Ten Commandments, which I have not kept.

3. Are you sorry for your sins?
Yes, I am sorry that I have sinned against God.

4. What have you deserved from God because of your sins?
His wrath and displeasure, temporal death, and eternal damnation. See Romans 6:21, 23.

5. Do you hope to be saved?
Yes, that is my hope.

6. In whom then do you trust?
In my dear Lord Jesus Christ.

7. Who is Christ?
The Son of God, true God and man.

8. How many Gods are there?
Only one, but there are three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

9. What has Christ done for you that you trust in Him?
He died for me and shed His blood for me on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.

10. Did the Father also die for you?
He did not. The Father is God only, as is the Holy Spirit; but the Son is both true God and true man. He died for me and shed His blood for me.

11. How do you know this?
From the Holy Gospel, from the words instituting the Sacrament, and by His body and blood given me as a pledge in the Sacrament.

12. What are the Words of Institution?
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."

13. Do you believe, then, that the true body and blood of Christ are in the Sacrament?
Yes, I believe it.

14. What convinces you to believe this?
The word of Christ: Take, eat, this is My body; drink of it, all of you, this is My blood.

15. What should we do when we eat His body and drink His blood, and in this way receive His pledge?
We should remember and proclaim His death and the shedding of His blood, as He taught us: This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.

16. Why should we remember and proclaim His death?
First, so we may learn to believe that no creature could make satisfaction for our sins. Only Christ, true God and man, could do that. Second, so we may learn to be horrified by our sins, and to regard them as very serious. Third, so we may find joy and comfort in Christ alone, and through faith in Him be saved.
17. What motivated Christ to die and make full payment for your sins?
His great love for His Father and for me and other sinners, as it is written in John 14; Romans 5; Galatians 2; and Ephesians 5.
18. Finally, why do you wish to go to the Sacrament?
That I may learn to believe that Christ, out of great love, died for my sin, and also learn from Him to love God and my neighbor.
19. What should admonish and encourage a Christian to receive the Sacrament frequently?
First, both the command and the promise of Christ the Lord. Second, his own pressing need, because of which the command, encouragement, and promise are given.
20. But what should you do if you are not aware of this need and have no hunger and thirst for the Sacrament?
To such a person no better advice can be given than this: first, he should touch his body to see if he still has flesh and blood. Then he should believe what the Scriptures say of it in Galatians 5 and Romans 7. Second, he should look around to see whether he is still in the world, and remember that there will be no lack of sin and trouble, as the Scriptures say in John 15–16 and in 1 John 2 and 5. Third, he will certainly have the devil also around him, who with his lying and murdering day and night will let him have no peace, within or without, as the Scriptures picture him in John 8 and 16; 1 Peter 5; Ephesians 6; and 2 Timothy 2.

NOTE

These questions and answers are no child's play, but are drawn up with great earnestness of purpose by the venerable and devout Dr. Luther for both young and old. Let each one pay attention and consider it a serious matter; for St. Paul writes to the Galatians in chapter six: "Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked."

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C **Amen.**
P I will go to the altar of God,
C **to God my exceeding joy.**
P Our help is in the name of the Lord,
C **who made heaven and earth.**
P During this Lenten season we have heard our Lord's call to intensify our struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that prevents us from trusting in God and loving each other. Since it is our intention to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ on this night when He instituted this blessed meal for our salvation, it is proper that we complete our Lenten discipline by diligently examining ourselves, as St. Paul urges us to do. This holy Sacrament has been instituted for the special comfort of those who are troubled because of their sin and who humbly confess their sins, fear God's wrath, and hunger and thirst for righteousness.
But when we examine our hearts and consciences, we find nothing in us but sin and death, from which we are incapable of delivering ourselves. Therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ has had mercy on us. For our benefit He became man so that He might fulfill for us the whole will and law of God and, to deliver us, took upon Himself our sin and the punishment we deserve.
So that we may more confidently believe this and be strengthened in the faith and in holy living, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, broke it, and gave it to His disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you." It is as if He said, "I became man, and all that I do and suffer is for your good. As a pledge of this, I give you My body to eat."

In the same way also He took the cup, gave thanks, and 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." Again, it is as if He said, "I have had mercy on you by taking into Myself all your iniquities. I give Myself into death, shedding My blood to obtain grace and forgiveness of sins, and to comfort and establish the new testament, which gives forgiveness and everlasting salvation. As a pledge of this, I give you My blood to drink."
Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup, confidently believing this Word and promise of Christ, dwells in Christ and Christ in him and has eternal life.
We should also do this in remembrance of Him, showing His death—that He was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. Giving Him our most heartfelt thanks, we take up our cross and follow Him and, according to His commandment, love one another as He has loved us. As our Lord on this night exemplified this love by washing His disciples' feet, so we by our words and actions serve one another in love. For we are all one bread and one body, even as we are all partakers of this one bread and drink from the one cup. For just as the one cup is filled with the wine of many grapes and one bread made from countless grains, so also we, being many, are one body in Christ. Because of Him, we love one another, not only in word, but in deed and in truth.
May the almighty and merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by His Holy Spirit, accomplish this in us.
C **Amen.**

P Having heard the Word of God, let us confess our sins, imploring God our Father for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.
Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C **I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

P God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

C **Amen.**

P Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness but God's?

C **Yes.**

P Let it be done for you as you believe.
In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✢ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it. Go in ✢ peace.

C **Amen.**

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.
O Lord, in this wondrous Sacrament You have left us a remembrance of Your passion. Grant that we may so receive the sacred mystery of Your body and blood that the fruits of Your redemption may continually be manifest in us; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Old Testament Reading

Exodus 12:1–14

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Gradual

Hebrews 9:12a, c, 15a; Psalm 111:9a

[Christ] entered once for all into the holy places, by means of his own blood,
thus securing an eternal redemption.
Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant,
so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance.
He sent redemption to his people;
he has commanded his covenant forever.

Epistle Reading

1 Corinthians 11:23–32

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

Verse

John 13:1b

Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

Holy Gospel Reading

John 13:1–17, 31b–35

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the thirteenth chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

617 O Lord, We Praise Thee

1 O Lord, we praise Thee, bless Thee, and adore Thee,
In thanksgiving bow before Thee.
Thou with Thy body and Thy blood didst nourish
Our weak souls that they may flourish:
O Lord, have mercy!
May Thy body, Lord, born of Mary,
That our sins and sorrows did carry,
And Thy blood for us plead
In all trial, fear, and need:
O Lord, have mercy!

2 Thy holy body into death was given,
Life to win for us in heaven.
No greater love than this to Thee could bind us;
May this feast thereof remind us!
O Lord, have mercy!
Lord, Thy kindness did so constrain Thee
That Thy blood should bless and sustain me.
All our debt Thou hast paid;
Peace with God once more is made:
O Lord, have mercy!

3 May God bestow on us His grace and favor
That we follow Christ our Savior
And live together here in love and union
Nor despise this blest Communion!
O Lord, have mercy!
Let not Thy good Spirit forsake us;
Grant that heav'nly-minded He make us;
Give Thy Church, Lord, to see
Days of peace and unity:
O Lord, have mercy!

Text: tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.; (st. 1): German, 14th cent.; (sts. 2–3): Martin Luther, 1483–1546
Text: © 1941 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: LSB Hymn License no. 110002020

Sermon "The Hand of the Lord Who Serves & feeds

Prayer of the Church

P …Lord, in your mercy:
C **Hear our prayer.**
P …through Jesus Christ our Lord.
C **Amen.**

Preface *LSB 160*

P The Lord be with you.
C **And also with you.**
P Lift up your hearts.
C **We lift them to the Lord.**
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
C **It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

Proper Preface

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who accomplished the salvation of mankind by the tree of the cross that, where death arose, there life also might rise again and that the serpent who overcame by the tree of the garden might likewise by the tree of the cross be overcome. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus *LSB 161*

C **Holy, holy, holy Lord God of pow'r and might:**
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.
Hosanna. Hosanna.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.
At Your command, Abraham prepared to offer his son Isaac as a sacrifice on the mountain; yet, in mercy You provided a ram as a substitute. We give You thanks that on Calvary You spared not Your only Son but sent Him to offer His life as a ransom for many.
As we eat and drink His body and blood, grant us, like Abraham our father, to trust in Your promise now fulfilled in Christ, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.
Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

Lord's Prayer

C **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,**
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those
who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

The Words of Our Lord

P 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."

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.
C **Amen.**

Agnus Dei *LSB 163*

C **Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world; grant us peace.

Distribution

Post-Communion Collect

A Let us pray.
We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Stripping of the Altar

The communion vessels are reverently removed from the altar, the altar is stripped, and the chancel is cleared in preparation for the solemn services of Good Friday.

[1]My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my groaning?
[2]O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.
[3]Yet you are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
[4]In you our fathers trusted;
they trusted, and you delivered them.
[5]To you they cried and were rescued;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.
[6]But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by mankind and despised by the people.
[7]All who see me mock me;
they make mouths at me; they wag their heads;
[8]"He trusts in the LORD; let him deliver him;
let him rescue him, for he delights in him!"
[9]Yet you are he who took me from the womb;
you made me trust you at my mother's breasts.
[10]On you was I cast from my birth,
and from my mother's womb you have been my God.
[11]Be not far from me, for trouble is near,
and there is none to help.
[12]Many bulls encompass me; strong bulls of Bashan surround me;
[13]they open wide their mouths at me,
like a ravening and roaring lion.
[14]I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint;
my heart is like wax;
it is melted within my breast;
[15]my strength is dried up like a potsherd,
and my tongue sticks to my jaws;
you lay me in the dust of death.
[16]For dogs encompass me;
a company of evildoers encircles me;
they have pierced my hands and feet—
[17]I can count all my bones—
they stare and gloat over me;
[18]they divide my garments among them,
and for my clothing they cast lots.
[19]But you, O LORD, do not be far off!
O you my help, come quickly to my aid!
[20]Deliver my soul from the sword,
my precious life from the power of the dog!
[21]Save me from the mouth of the lion!
You have rescued me from the horns of the wild oxen!
[22]I will tell of your name to my brothers;
in the midst of the congregation I will praise you:
[23]You who fear the LORD, praise him!
All you offspring of Jacob, glorify him,
and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of Israel!
[24]For he has not despised or abhorred
the affliction of the afflicted,
and he has not hidden his face from him,
but has heard, when he cried to him.
[25]From you comes my praise in the great congregation;
my vows I will perform before those who fear him.
[26]The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek him shall praise the LORD!
May your hearts live forever!
[27]All the ends of the earth shall remember
and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations
shall worship before you.
[28]For kingship belongs to the LORD,
and he rules over the nations.
[29]All the prosperous of the earth eat and worship;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust,
even the one who could not keep himself alive.
[30]Posterity shall serve him;
it shall be told of the Lord to the coming generation;
[31]they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people yet unborn, that he has done it.

All leave the church in silence.

Acknowledgments
Holy Thursday from Lutheran Service Book
Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.
Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2025 Concordia Publishing House.