

Biblical Topics

Sacrament of the Altar – Lord's Supper – Benefits

What is the benefit of this eating and drinking?

These words, "given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins," shows us that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sin, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sin, there is also life and salvation.

We go to the Lord's Supper:

- A. Chiefly to receive forgiveness of our sins. This in turn strengthens our faith in Christ Jesus. Forgiveness of sins is given to us in the Sacrament (not in the sense as though we did not have any before). Christians have complete forgiveness the very moment they believe in Christ and as long as they continue in this faith. But in the Lord's Supper this full forgiveness is emphatically assured and confirmed to us personally. Therefore, our faith in forgiveness is strengthened.
- B. To obtain strength for a holier life. Being assured of the grace of God, our hearts are filled with gratitude toward God. Then our spiritual life is invigorated. Then we have strength and willingness to serve God in holy works. Some of those holy works might be: (1) doing good to our neighbor, (2) avoiding temptation, (3) being patient in tribulation, and (4) being strengthened in our hope of eternal life.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:15, 17: ¹⁵ And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!
- C. To bear witness that we are of one faith with those with whom we commune. Altar fellowship presupposes unity in doctrine. When we attend the Lord's Supper we are proclaiming that Jesus died for the sins of men and we confess our faith and trust in Him.

Much of the above information is taken from: "Luther's Small Catechism" annotated by Edward W. A. Koehler.