

With the Same Heart

An overview of the Book of Concord

Session 5 - The Defense of the
Augsburg Confession - Part B



Warm up question

When have you experienced someone questioning your beliefs (religious or otherwise)?



Human Traditions

Article 8 addresses what the Defense calls “Human Traditions,” a catch all phrase that is used to include many different traditional practices of the Roman Catholic Church, including fasting, the practice of relics, the practice of indulgences, and other traditional and non-Scriptural practices of the church.

- *Question:*
- *Not all traditions are bad. What is a tradition you can think of that we practice?*



Invocation of the Saints

In this article, the Lutherans specifically address the Roman Catholic practice of the invocation of the saints. This had been defended in the Confutation largely through the citing of certain early Church figures and the book of Maccabees.

The Defense argues again that the Lutherans do show honor to the saints and their stories, and affirms their life in heaven - but that believing in the ability to communicate with the saints is wrongheaded for Christians

- *Question:*
- *Have you had and experience with the invocation of saints around you?*



Of Both Kinds

The Confutation begins by arguing literalistically about the term “bread” in the common New Testament phrase “breaking of bread”. According to this, it is not only allowed to use just the bread in communion, but to give a lay person (non-priest) the cup is a sin.

The Defense argues that having different communion rules for different people in the Body of Christ results in a split in the Body of Christ especially in something as important as communion.

- *Question:*
- *Where do you see times when people are treated differently due to station in life?*



Marriage and Celibacy

The confutation brings up the age of the practice of celibacy of priests, and does so impressively. The celibacy of priests is a old tradition in the church, dating back several centuries - although not exactly in the way that it is bring practiced in the 1500's.

The Defense simply points out that marriage is an institution that is created by God for the sake of His people and is not be slighted. It essentially brings up the same argument from "of both kinds" that there should not be separate rules for laity and priests.

- *Question:*
- *What difficulties does marriage bring a priest? What benefits?*



Of the Mass

The confutation argues that the Lutherans have done damage to Christian unity by abolishing the Latin-language mass and replacing it with vernacular German masses. Additionally, they argue that a private mass should be considered a real “offering” of Christ in the Roman Catholic conception of the Mass.

The Defense goes on to debunk the issue of Christian unity, arguing that unity should begin with understanding. It also goes to great length to try to explain the notion that the “sacrifice” of the mass is not the sacrifice of the people to God, but the other way around.

• *Question:*

- *What are some of the things that are in danger of being misunderstood in our “mass” today?*



Vows

Perhaps one of the most weakly stated items in the confutation. Essentially the confutation simply says “no we don’t” to the charge that monastic vows imprison people for life.

The Defense goes even further with the attack on monasticism, essentially making the claims that monks and nuns are no closer to Christ than anyone else nor are they engaging in their vows for purely honorable reasons.

- *Question:*
- *When are some times when people have done things that seemed good for poor reasons?*



Ecclesial Power

The Confutation ends with a somewhat pragmatic note, stating that ecclesial power (that of bishops, especially the Bishop of Rome, the Pope) should be retained because leadership is necessary in the Church.

The Defense calls out this pragmatism and parries with a pragmatic issue - that the bishops should be better leaders and not so concerned with their own wealth. It goes on to make allusions to ecclesial power being the thing that has caused so many other problems previously mentioned in the Defense.

- *Question:*
- *When are some times when people have done things that seemed good for poor reasons?*



Next Time - The Smalcald Articles

Next time we will get back into the writings of Martin Luther as he writes these articles to a military/political resistance in 1537

