

43. So, does Paul think that the answers to his questions should be difficult, or obvious?



44. In simpler language, Paul says that the contents of the cup participate in the blood of Christ. The wine in the cup shares in the blood of Christ. This figure of speech of naming “the cup” when we mean the contents of the cup— the use of one noun for a related noun— is called a ...



45. This is not a metaphor, a comparison of unrelated nouns (such as “That man is a pig.”). This is a metonymy. A political example would be: “The White House announced today that health care reforms are urgent . . .” Of course, it wasn’t the building itself that made the announcement, but . . .



Similarly, you might say to a crowd, “Let’s give Detroit a hand.” You mean the crowd should give the auto industry . . .



46. Where is the metonymy (Greek for “a change of name”) in . . .

a. Psalm 100:1?



b. John 11:24–25?



c. Acts 2:4?



d. Revelation 1:12?



47. How would you respond to someone who says, “We should take everything in the Bible literally!”?



48. How in the world can the wine participate in Jesus’ blood, and the bread share in his body?



49. How would you respond to someone who says this? “I think Paul must mean that those who drink the wine and eat the bread participate in Jesus’ blood and body. So we eat the bread, but remember Jesus’ body. We drink the wine, and it makes us think of Jesus’ blood, too.”



50. Analogies limp. Still, what do you think of Martin Luther’s analogies?

“For instance, if I point to or hand over a bag or purse and say, ‘This is a hundred gulden,’ both the gesture and the word ‘this’ refer to the purse. But since the purse and the money in some degree constitute one object, one lump, my words apply at the same time to the money.

“In this manner, I lay my hand on a cask and say, ‘This is Rhine wine; this is Italian wine; this is red wine.’ Again, I take a glass and say, ‘This is water; this is beer, this is ointment.’ In all these expressions you see that the word ‘this’ refers to the container, and yet because the liquid and the container in some degree are one, it applies also and indeed principally to the liquid. [...]

“Here also applies my illustration¹ of the red-hot iron, borrowed from St. Augustine,² over which the fanatics have racked their brains all in vain. For whatever fire may be, it is correct to say in any language, ‘This object is fire, and it is iron.’

“Now a subtle Wycliffe or a sophist may laugh and say, ‘You show me a purse, saying, “This is a hundred gulden”; but how can a purse be a hundred gulden?’

“Again, he may say, ‘You show me a cask, saying, “This is wine”; but my friend, a cask is wood and not wine, a purse is leather and not gold.’

“At such a remark even the children would laugh, as they do at a fool or a jester, for he tears apart the two united substances and tries to speak of each separately, whereas here we have to do with two substances which have become one substance. For the cask here is no longer merely wood or a common cask but a wine cask, wood containing wine; and the purse here is no longer mere leather or a mere purse but a money purse, leather containing money. If you wish to break down this complex and separate the money from the leather, it is true that each constituent exists in its own right and one must describe the matter differently: ‘This is money, this is leather; this is wine, this is a cask.’ But if you retain the wholeness, you must describe the matter in terms of the whole, and point to the cask or purse, saying, ‘This is money, this is wine,’ by virtue of the unity of substance. We must pay no attention to the nonsense of these subtle sophists, but examine the mode, use, and custom of language.”



¹ “In red-hot iron, for instance, the two substances, fire and iron, are so mingled that every part is both iron and fire. Why is it not even more possible that the body of Christ be contained in every part of the substance of the bread?” (Luther, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, 1520. AE 36:32).

² This common illustration goes back to Origen, *First Principles*, II, 6, 6 (c. 212–215 A.D.). Sources: MPG 11, 213 f.; ANF 4, 283. Why Luther cites Augustine is not apparent.

51. In the same essay from 1528 (“Confession Concerning Christ’s Supper,” which he meant to be his final word on the subject when it became a controversy, though he later wrote even more detailed essays), Luther continued:

“Thus, since this mode of speaking is common both in Scripture and in all languages, ‘identical predication’ is no obstacle to us in the Supper. No identical predication is even there; Wycliffe and the sophists only dream that it is. For even though body and bread are two distinct substances, each one existing by itself, and though neither is mistaken for the other where they are separated from each other, nevertheless where they are united and become a new, entire substance, they lose their difference so far as this new, unique substance is concerned. As they become one, they are called and designated one object.

“It is not necessary, meanwhile, that one of the two disappear or be annihilated, but both the bread and the body remain, and by virtue of the sacramental unity it is correct to say, ‘This is my body,’ designating the bread with the word ‘this.’ For now it is no longer ordinary bread in the oven, but a ‘flesh-bread’ or ‘body-bread,’ i.e. a bread which has become one sacramental substance, one with the body of Christ. Likewise with the wine in the cup, ‘This is my blood,’ designating the wine with the word ‘this.’ For it is no longer ordinary wine in the cellar but ‘blood-wine,’ that is, a wine which has been united with the blood of Christ in one sacramental substance” (AE 37:301–303).

What does Luther mean by “identical predication”? (Hint: By contrast, think of telling somebody: “Yeah, let’s get rid of that can. It’s just dried-up old paint.”)



52. We will come back to the Greek word for “this” in Matthew, Mark, Luke and 1 Corinthians, which may back up Luther’s assertions here. First, though, let’s go to Hebrews 10:29. How does this verse seem to speak of holy communion and holy baptism?



53. Another verse that may speak of holy communion is Hebrews 13:10. What does it say?



54. What does it mean?

