The Genus Maiestaticum and the Real Presence –
Complementary Comforts

Benjamin Tomczak
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John Calvin, in his major dogmatic work, the *Institutes*, has a bone to pick with the Lutheran Church. The Lutherans, he says,

are carried away with such contentiousness as to say that because of the natures joined in Christ, wherever Christ’s divinity is, there also is his flesh, which cannot be separated from it. As if that union had compounded from two natures some sort of intermediate being which was neither God nor man! So, indeed, did Eutyches teach, and Servetus after him. But from Scripture we plainly infer that the one person of Christ so consists of the two natures that each nevertheless retains unimpaired its own distinctive character…. What sort of madness, then, is it to mingle heaven with earth rather than give up trying to drag Christ’s body from the heavenly sanctuary?

Calvin’s problem has to do with the Lutheran teaching of the Real Presence in the Lord’s Supper, as well as the Lutheran teaching of the *genus maiestaticum*, that is, that “Christ’s human nature shares in the divine power and glory of the Son of God” (cf. Colossians 2:9) and the “almighty power [of the Deity] was communicated to His human nature.” In Calvin’s mind, and the mind of many in the Reformed Church, the Lutheran teaching of the *genus maiestaticum* emerged only as a leg holding up the table of the doctrine of the Real Presence. And what is more, these doctrines caused incredible offense amongst the Reformed, for it violated their two sacred philosophical axioms: the finite is not capable of the infinite, and a body can be present only in one place.

The problem with the Reformed position is that it is based on a false notion. In the Reformed mind the majestic genus was manufactured because the Lutherans had to defend their doctrine of the Real Presence. However, a fair and balanced reading of Lutheran dogmatics will make clear that for the Lutherans the proof of the Real Presence in the Lord’s Supper is to be found in the words of institution. Martin Chemnitz wrote in his monograph regarding the Lord’s Supper: “...it is beyond controversy that the correct belief concerning the Lord’s Supper has its own particular foundation and its own basis in the words of institution.”


3 cf. *Institutes*: “Unless the body of Christ can be everywhere at once, without limitation of place, it will not be credible that he lies hidden under the bread in the Supper. To meet this necessity, they have introduced the monstrous notion of ubiquity” (XXI:1401).

4 Martin Chemnitz. *The Lord’s Supper* (1590). Trans. by J.A.O. Preus, St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House [CPH], 1979, 31. Cf. also page 203: “But because we have the express word of Christ...it cannot be denied, that Christ with his body can do what He wills and can be wherever He will.” Other Lutheran citations: Chemnitz, *The Two Natures in Christ* (1578), trans. by J.A.O. Preus, St. Louis, MO: CPH, 1971, 22; Adolph Hoenecke, *Evangelical Lutheran Dogmatics IV*, trans. Joel Fredrich, Bill Tackmeir, Paul Prange, Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House [NPH], 1999, 121: “The presence of the heavenly material and the certainty of this presence depend, as has already been explained, on the words of institution taken in a literal sense” (cf. also Arnold Koeplin’s article, “The Sacramental
the Formula of Concord. “The confession of the sacramental union is based on Christ’s teaching of the Supper, on the Words of Institution.”5 The Lutheran Church simply follows the rule of Biblical interpretation, “The Bible says what it means,” when it reads the words of institution and believes that when Jesus says, “This is my body, this is my blood,” they are truly present in the bread and wine.

However, it cannot be denied that in discussing the doctrine of the Real Presence, the doctrine of the Person of Christ, and specifically the genus maestaticum (especially focusing in on the communicated omnipresence) have been brought into the debate. But, again, this is not used to prove the doctrine of the Real Presence, as the Reformed claim, but rather, it is there to complement the doctrine of the Real Presence, and to defend it against the rationalism of the Reformed.6 Both doctrines, the Real Presence of Christ in His Supper and the communicated majesty from the divine to the human nature are truths taught by Scripture. These two Scriptural truths beautifully complement each other, building up the Christian in his faith and comforting him by assuring him of the power of God’s Word and God’s Sacraments. The Church of Christ must contend for these doctrines vigorously against any and all errors of the devil.

The problem for the Reformed in this whole situation can be traced back to their faulty Christology. While they vigorously defend the two natures in Christ,7 and even use Chalcedonian language, they violently rend the two natures because of their adherence to the two philosophical axioms mentioned above. For, on the one hand, Calvin can write, “But because the selfsame one was both God and man, for the sake of the union of both natures he gave to the one what belonged to the other.” But then he says, “Let nothing inappropriate to human nature be ascribed to his body, as happens when it is said either to be infinite or to be put in a number of places at once...It is an intolerable blasphemy to declare literally of an ephemeral and corruptible element that it is Christ.”8 Even though Jesus is the God-man, because of the human nature’s limitations (since the natures retain the characteristics essential to each) the human nature of Jesus can not share in the attributes of the divine nature (for the finite is not capable of the infinite). It is utterly impossible for His human nature to be omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, etc. This would lead to a confusion of the two natures of Christ, and thus Eutychianism.9

The logical conclusion of this is that since the human nature does not share in the attributes of the divine nature, then it is impossible for the body and blood of Christ to really and truly be present in the Lord’s Supper according to His human nature (since a body can only be present in one place, and Jesus’ human body retains human attributes). The body of Christ, according to His human nature, is to

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5 Formula of Concord [FC] VII [Epitome], Tappert, 483:15. And Luther wrote in the Large Catechism [LC], “For as we have it from the lips of Christ, so it is; he cannot lie or deceive” (LC, Tappert, 448:14).
6 Prof. Joel Fredrich writes: “…the divine omnipresence communicated to Christ’s human nature through the incarnation is cited, not as the mode of presence of his body in the Supper, but as an argument to demolish the absurd limitations of sacramentarian thinking about Christ’s body” (“The Lord Jesus Institutes Holy Communion,” essay delivered at the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Symposium on Holy Communion, September 22-23, 2003, 11). Hoenecke writes, “Actually, our theologians have not based their teaching of the Lord’s Supper on Christology or developed it from Christology in any way. They have rather adduced the presence of Christ in the Lord’s Supper as evidence in christological controversies to show that their Christology is scriptural” (Ev. Luth. Dog. IV:122-123).
7 Cf. Heinrich Heppe. Reformed Dogmatics: Set Out and Illustrated From The Sources, translated by G.T. Thomson. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. 1950. Heppe quotes the Reformed dogmatician Zanchius: “…the properties of the human and of the divine natures are present unmixed in the one person of Christ” (432:18). And the dogmatician Alting writes, “…the human nature is nowhere unsupported by the λόγος the λόγος nowhere fails to support the human nature, nor is it outside the λόγος or the λόγος apart from it” (434:18). Cf. also Institutes, XX:482.
8 Institutes, XX:484; XX:1382, 1384. Ulrich Zwingli asserts: “If without distinction we were to apply to his human nature everything that refers to the divine, and conversely, if without distinction we were to apply to the divine nature everything that refers to the human, we should overthrow all Scripture and indeed the whole of faith” (“On the Lord’s Supper,” in Zwingli and Bullinger, The Library of Christian Classics, volume XXIV, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1953, 213).
9 Heppe, 443:23.
be found locally in heaven. The Reformed confess this in the Consensus Tigurinus, “For though philosophically speaking there is no place above the skies, yet as the body of Christ, bearing the nature and mode of a human body, is finite and is contained in Heaven as its place, it is necessarily as distant from us in point of space as Heaven is from Earth.” And this is also taught in the Heidelberg Catechism, “Christ is true man and true God. As a man he is no longer on earth.” The Reformed find their Scriptural basis for this in Acts 3:21, as well as the statements of the creed regarding Christ’s ascension and His session at the right hand of the Father.

But this position clearly contradicts that of Scripture. In Colossians 2:9, Paul says, “For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.” This cannot refer to the divine nature, since that would create the absurdity of the Deity being full of the Deity. From this passage alone there is enough proof that the human nature of Christ shares in the divine attributes, the communicated omniscience, omnipresence, etc. But this is not the only passage that testifies thus. Chemnitz writes:

But Scripture testifies concerning the assumed nature in Christ that it not only possesses and retains its own essential attributes in the union, but because of and through the hypostatic union with the deity, it is exalted above every name (Eph. 1:21); seated at the right hand of the majesty and power of God (Heb. 1:13 and Luke 22:69); given all power in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18); has all things placed in subjection under His feet (Eph. 1:22); has received power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, blessing (Rev. 4:11 and 5:12); has been anointed above His fellows (Ps. 45:7) and with the Spirit and with power (Acts 10:38); His flesh has been made life-giving (John 5:26 and 6:27); and through this Man is the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15:45).

Since, then, we have clear Scriptural proof of the two natures in Christ (e.g., John 1:14, “The Word became flesh”), and since Scripture also testifies that these two natures are so intimately connected that all the acts of Christ are divine-human acts (Matt. 11:27, 28:18, Lk. 10:22; Col. 2:9), the Christian can be confident that the human nature shares in and possesses (though not essentially) the attributes of the divine nature. Therefore, when Christ says, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me” (Matt. 28:18), the Christian is confident that both the God-man’s divine and human natures are omnipotent. When Jesus says, “I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:20), the Christian is confident that both the God-man’s divine and human natures are omnipresent. When Jesus Christ says, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies” (Jn. 11:25), the Christian is confident that both the God-man’s divine and human natures are life giving. And when Jesus says, “This is my body, this is my blood,” the Christian can be completely certain that He who is the Truth (Jn. 14:6) is not lying, but is really and truly present, according to both His divine and human nature, in the blessed bread and wine of the Lord’s Supper. Professor Joel Gerlach put it well:

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10 www.creeds.net, Chapter 25.
13 Cf. Hoenecke, III:87, “But it [the Deity] must dwell in Christ not according to his Deity but according to his humanity, for otherwise it would amount to the absurdity that the Deity dwells in the Deity.”
14 Chemnitz, The Two Natures, 243-244. Against the argument that these passages are referring only to Christ’s divine nature, it must be pointed out that Christ’s divine nature cannot be made subject to change, since one of the attributes of God is immutability (Mal. 3:6a). And so when passages speak of Jesus being given things, in time, as Pieper points out (cf. footnote 15), these gifts and divine attributes are given to the human (i.e., the assumed) nature.
15 Pieper writes: “The communication of divine properties to the human nature is clearly taught in Scripture. It is taught, in the first place, wherever in Scripture divine majesty in general or a specific divine attribute, such as divine omnipotence or divine rule, are predicated of Christ as having been given to Him in time” (II:157).
Jesus does not make promises, Luther insisted, to be with us literally always and everywhere, and then not keep His promises. The almighty God who has assumed our human nature in the person of Christ has no problem whatsoever transcending the dimension and the limitations of time, space, and movement. So when the One who is sitting everywhere at the right hand of God’s power says that He is giving us His real body and blood in the holy supper, that is precisely what He is doing.\textsuperscript{16}

But now what happens is that the Reformed will say, “Fine, there is a sacramental presence of the body and blood of Jesus in the Lord’s Supper. It is based on the words of institution. However, this presence is a spiritual presence, and is only a presence of the divine nature of Christ, based on the divine omnipresence.”\textsuperscript{17} This flows from the Reformed Christology which denies the \textit{genus maiestaticum} and clings to false philosophical presuppositions, effectively separating the two natures and potentially robbing the Christian of his comfort.\textsuperscript{18} The irony, then, is that the Reformed, who claim that the Lutherans create doctrines to fulfill presuppositions, have essentially created their doctrine of the presence of Christ in the Lord’s Supper (sometimes referred to as “the real absence”) based on their presuppositions in Christology. They have not let Scripture interpret Scripture.\textsuperscript{19} For, as Pieper writes regarding the Reformed:

> …Reformed theologians demand that an unbridgeable chasm should be established between the divine attributes of the Son of God and His human nature, because, as they say, Christ’s human nature cannot be invested with divine omnipotence, divine omniscience, and other attributes of the deity without its being destroyed.\textsuperscript{20}

But the Lutheran view of the Sacramental presence lets Scripture interpret Scripture. It takes Christ at His word in the upper room and understands that what Christ says Christ means. Hoenecke notes two questions we must ask regarding the Real Presence: Does Christ want to be present? Yes, clearly He does, for He says so. Is Christ able to be present? Again, the answer is yes, because, again, Christ has told us, “This is my body, this is my blood.” And then we also have the doctrine of the

\textsuperscript{17} The Reformed confess that the Lord’s Supper is “the holy supper, in which, by the commandment of Christ, spiritual participation in the body and blood of Christ is confirmed to adult Christians” (John Beardslee. \textit{Reformed Dogmatics: J. Willebius, G. Voetius, F. Turretin}. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965, 132). Regarding the spiritual presence of Christ in the Supper, Hepp quotes Polansdorf: “Christ’s body is in heaven corporeally but is present to us who exist on earth not corporeally but spiritually; i.e. by the mediation of his Spirit in him and dwelling in us he is united as the Head to us his members” (637:15). In the \textit{Lausanne Articles} (1536), the Reformed make reference to the divine omnipresence as the mode of the sacramental presence: Jesus Christ “…by the virtue of his Holy Spirit fills, sustains, governs, and vivifies all things” (Cochrane, 115). Cf. also Millard Erickson, “…it is important to remember that Jesus promised to be with his disciples everywhere and through all time (Matt. 28:20; John 14:23; 15:4-7). So he is everywhere present…” (\textit{Christian Theology}. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1985, III:1122).
\textsuperscript{18} Hepp quotes Heidegger, “…the Lutheran doctrine of the omnipresence of the humanity of Christ is to be rejected” (447:27). Zwingli: “But if Christ is now seated at the right hand of God, and will sit there until he comes at the last day, how can he be literally eaten in the Sacrament” (214)?
\textsuperscript{19} Pieper, II:274.
\textsuperscript{20} Pieper, II:152. David Scaer writes: “The Reformed stressed the individuality of the two natures in Christ to such an extent that they almost asserted that there were in Christ two personalities. The philosophical undergirding of Reformed Christology was their principle that the finite is not capable of the infinite (\textit{finitum non est capax infiniti}). This principle surfaced prominently in the Reformed denial of the actual bodily presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Altar; \textit{but the controversy over the Lord’s Supper was only the reflection and result of a deeper Christological disagreement}” (Christology. Northville, SD: The Luther Academy, 1989, 15; emphasis added).
communicated attributes which tells us that Jesus Christ, the God-man, by virtue of the personal union, is able to be present where and when He pleases.\textsuperscript{21} Chemnitz writes:

\begin{quote}
The reason that it is not only possible for the Son of God but even easy for Him to accomplish and perform this while still maintaining unimpaired the true nature of the substance of His body, is derived from the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ, since in the simple, proper, and native sense of the words of His testament He promises the presence of His body in the Supper.\textsuperscript{22}
\end{quote}

On the basis of the clear confession of Scripture then, the Christian has every reason to be confident that the body and blood of Christ are truly present in the Lord’s Supper. And this is the sacramental presence taught by the Lutheran Church, a presence based on the explicit promise of Christ made in the upper room. This is a presence that is not exactly the same as the communicated omnipresence of the deity that allows Jesus to be wherever two or three are gathered in His name (Matt. 18:20). For the Lutheran teaching of the sacramental presence does not imply the so-called ubiquity which the Reformed argue it does. Chemnitz denies this, saying:

\begin{quote}
Nor do we in any way believe that the body of Christ either in the union or in glory has lost its essence and abolished its essential attributes and has been converted or changed…so that because of its essential, immeasurable immensity it is present in all places and fills all things in the manner and for the reason that the deity is everywhere present.\textsuperscript{23}
\end{quote}

\textit{How this is so we may not understand, but that it is so, we confess}, and say with Paul, “Beyond all question the mystery of godliness is great” (1 Tim. 3:16). It is in these doctrines that the Christian humbly kneels before God and says, “I do believe, help me overcome my unbelief” (Mark 9:24).\textsuperscript{24}

What, then, is the practical result of the position of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches in this matter? For the Reformed, holding to their positions regarding these doctrines is, in the words of Pieper, “theological suicide and rejection of the clear Scriptural teaching.”\textsuperscript{25} Why? The denial of the \textit{genus maiestaticum} is essentially giving in to the Nestorian heresy of separating the two natures in Christ. What that means is that only a man died on the cross, if their doctrine is taken to its logical conclusion. Calvin writes in this vein, “…although the whole of Christ is everywhere, still the whole of that which is in him is not everywhere.”\textsuperscript{26} The Lutheran historian Charles P. Krauth insightfully noted, “Except in the

\textsuperscript{21} Hoenecke, IV:122-123. Cf. also Chemnitz, \textit{The Two Natures}, “But the true and real reason for our faith and the confession that Christ wills to be present with His body and blood in the celebration of the Lord’s Supper is His own words of institution in which, by a testamentary decree, He reveals His will” (22).

\textsuperscript{22} Chemnitz, \textit{The Two Natures}, 442. Cf. James Janke’s article, “We Still Do Not Have the Same Spirit’ – A Critique of Contemporary Reformed Christology and Its Impact on the Doctrine of the Lord’s Supper,” in \textit{We Believe In Jesus Christ}, Milwaukee, WI: NPH, 1998, where he writes, “The possibility of his body and blood being present is established by the personal union, more specifically, by the communication of divine majesty to the human nature of Christ” (294).

\textsuperscript{23} Chemnitz, \textit{The Two Natures}, 434.

\textsuperscript{24} Chemnitz writes: “If this reply appears rather rude, simple, and puerile, I will not deny it, but I know it is the truest, surest, and safest of all. For we must not believe or say anything about God but what is expressly revealed in the Scripture. And I am right in humbly limiting myself to the bounds of divine revelation in regard to the discussion of the communication of the majesty” (\textit{The Two Natures}, 306).

\textsuperscript{25} Pieper, II:154.

\textsuperscript{26} \textit{Institutes}, XXI:1403. In another place he said, “According to the presence of his majesty we have Christ always, but according to the presence of the flesh, it is rightly said, ‘You will not always have me’ (Matt. 26:11)” (XXI:1394).
locality in which the human nature of Christ is confined, on the Reformed theory, the human is separated from the divine and the divine from the human. So far then from the union, on this theory, being inseparable, there is but a solitary point at which the two natures are not separated.”27 And if this separation has occurred, what then? Pieper writes:

If the human nature of Christ, because of its finiteness, is incapable of the divine attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and the like, then also it is incapable of the divine Person of the Son of God, who is no less infinite than is His omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, and the like.28

Not only do the Reformed destroy the union of the two natures with their doctrine, but they also rob the Lord’s Supper of its true comfort. When “This is my body, this is my blood,” becomes only a figure of speech,29 when the Christian is taught that he must seek Christ only in heaven,30 and that it is only by being swooped up into heaven by the Holy Spirit that he can commune with Christ31 with what is he left? He is left with a God who is not omnipotent, for He cannot do what He says. He is left with a Sacrament that is no Sacrament. And then all of God’s promises are put into question. What is the purpose of the Sacrament? Is Jesus body and blood offered on the cross life giving? Is 1 John 1:7 a lie? This is misery. Chemnitz writes:

Will we not become the most miserable of men if we permit this new idea to reduce the gathering, governance, and preservation of the church as well as the administration of the office and reign of Christ our Savior to a mere creaturely, adventitious, finite, and limited power which has been given to Christ in time according to both natures? What kind of church will there be, what kind of salvation, what kind of faith, if we permit the eternal, divine, infinite omnipotence in the work of Christ, our Savior, King, High Priest, our very Head, to be torn away from us?32

28 Pieper, II:154. He also says, “To refer these statements to Christ’s divine nature would be tantamount to denying His eternal, essential deity and to reducing Christ to a person who was made or came to be God in time, in other words, to an Arian creature or a Unitarian world ruler” (II:157).
29 Institutes, XX:482-483, XXI:1363, 1385.
31 Erickson writes, “The Holy Spirit brings them into closer connection with the person of Christ, the living head of the church and the source of spiritual vitality” (Christian Theology, III:1119; emphasis added). The Scottish Confession of Faith (1560) states: “…this union and conjunction which we have with the body and blood of Christ Jesus in the right use of the sacraments is wrought by the Holy Ghost, who by true faith carries us above all things that are visible, carnal, and earthly, and makes us feed upon the body and blood of Christ Jesus….Not withstanding the distance between His glorified body in heaven and mortal men on earth” (Chapter XXI, Cochrane, 179-180). The Second Helvetic Confession (1566) states: “The body of Christ is in heaven at the right hand of the Father; and therefore our hearts are to be lifted up on high, and not to be fixed on the bread…” (Chapter XXI: Of the Holy Supper Of the Lord, Cochrane, 287).
32 Chemnitz, The Two Natures, 284. We confess in the Formula of Concord: “Hence we consider it a pernicious error to deprive Christ according to his humanity of this majesty. To do so robs Christians of their highest comfort, afforded them in the cited promises of the presence and indwelling of their head, king, and high priest, who has promised that not only his unveiled deity, which to us poor sinners is like a consuming fire on dry stubble, will be with them, but that he, he, the man who has spoken with them, who has tasted every tribulation in his assumed human nature, and who can therefore sympathize with us as with men and his brethren, he wills to be with us in all our troubles also according to that nature by which he is our brother and we are flesh of his flesh” (Article VIII [Solid Declaration], Tappert 608:87).
What is worse, if the Reformed followed their doctrines to a logical conclusion, it would in fact deny the Incarnation. The Reformed “must either admit the communicated divine omnipresence, or they must deny the communicated divine Person, since the former is no greater than the latter.”

Happily, here there is a felicitous inconsistency, as the Reformed hold to the teaching of the Incarnation and the atoning work of Christ over against Servetus and the Unitarians.

For Lutherans, the teaching of the communicated attributes and the Real Presence are supreme comforts. The truth that Jesus was not just a man, nor was He only God, means that we have a Savior from sin. Because He was true man, He could shed His blood for you and me. Because He was true God, His sacrifice was efficacious for the sins of the whole world. Because He was the God-man all this was possible.

And then there was the feast that He instituted for us and for our salvation. Jesus, the God-man, left us with life-giving bread and wine, His true body and blood for the forgiveness of all our sins. Were He only a man, the words of institution would have been of no effect, perhaps the figures of speech the Reformed desire, or perhaps simply the ravings of an unbalanced religious zealot. But because they are the words of the God-man they are powerful and true, and so is the Sacrament.

These two teachings of the Lutheran Church are the teachings of Scripture, and they complement each other beautifully. They bring us comfort because they assure us that our brother, Jesus Christ, the God-man, remains with us to this day in both His divine and His human natures. These doctrines assure us that all our sins have been forgiven by a God in heaven who became a man on earth. These doctrines assure us that the heavenly meal Jesus instituted is a wonderful participation in the true and real body and blood. We have it from the lips of the God-man Himself, in Whom all the fullness of the Deity dwells in bodily form (Col. 2:9). Because this is so, we must fight against any teaching that downgrades the clear teachings of Scripture regarding the Sacraments or the Person of Christ. Let us not sit back idly thinking, “We are Lutherans, we’ve got it straight.” Let us take to heart the lesson of the Bereans, who “received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true” (Acts 17:11).

Bibliography

33 Pieper, II:167.
34 FC VIII [Epitome]: “Out of this personal union and the resultant exalted and ineffable sharing there flows everything human that is said or believed about God and everything divine that is said or believed about Christ the man” (Tappert, 488:9). Chemnitz, The Two Natures, “But rather the whole fullness of deity dwells personally in the assumed nature in such a way that the divine majesty in all its fullness shines forth in the assumed nature, and the divine strength and power exercise and carry on their works of majesty and omnipotence in, with, and through the assumed nature” (305).
35 Chemnitz writes: “Therefore, since He said, This is My body, this is My blood, though the natural and essential attributes of a human body cannot do this, yet He can, to whom is given all power in heaven and on earth, also according to the human nature” (Ministry, Word, and Sacraments, An Enchiridion. trans. by Luther Poellot, St. Louis, MO: CPH, 1981, 125). Cf. Matt. 28:20, Jn. 3:35 and 13:3, Eph. 1:20-22, and Php. 2:9-11.
36 FC VIII [Solid Declaration]: ‘Because of this communicated power he can be and is truly present with his body and blood in the Holy Supper according to the words of his covenant, to which he has directed us through his Word. No other human being can do this, since no human being is united in this manner with the divine nature and installed in the exercise of the divine, omnipotent majesty and power through and in the personal union of both natures in Christ, the way Jesus, the son of Mary is” (Tappert, 596-597:28-29).


http://www.creeds.net/Tigurinus/tigur-bvd.html The Consensus Tigurinus (1549).


*All Scripture references are from the Concordia Self-Study Bible (New International Version) unless otherwise indicated.*
Outline:

Theme: The Scriptural teaching of the *genus maiestaticum* complements the real, sacramental presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord’s Supper, and we must contend for them vigorously.

I. The *genus maiestaticum* complements the Real Presence
   A. The Reformed View of the *genus maiestaticum*
      1. Jesus Christ is the God-man.
      2. The attributes of the divine nature are not communicated to the human nature, since the finite is not capable of the infinite – Jesus’ human nature is in heaven
      3. It is impossible for the body and blood of Christ to be in the Sacrament, because a body can only be locally present
   B. The Lutheran view of the *genus maiestaticum*
      1. Jesus Christ is the God-man.
      2. The attributes of the divine nature (omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, etc.) are communicated to the human nature – Jesus’ human nature is wherever the divine nature is, taking part in everything it does. In the God-man the finite shares in the infinite.
      3. It is possible for the body and blood of Christ to be in the Sacrament, because it is not a local, but a supernatural presence.

II. The Sacramental Presence complements the *genus maiestaticum*
   A. The Reformed View of the Sacramental Presence
      1. The Sacramental presence is based on Christ’s promise
      2. The Sacramental presence means that Christ’s body and blood are spiritually present
      3. The Sacramental presence is a type of the divine omnipresence
   B. The Lutheran View of the Sacramental Presence
      1. The Sacramental Presence is based on Christ’s promise
      2. The Sacramental presence means that Christ’s body and blood are actually present
      3. The Sacramental presence is a uniquely promised presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament

III. The Practical Result of These Two Doctrines
   A. From the Reformed Perspective
      1. Without the *genus maiestaticum* only a man died on the cross
      2. Without the Real Presence the comfort of the Sacrament has been stolen
      3. Without either, the testimony of Scripture is compromised, reason is crowned king
      4. Logically, there is a denial of the Incarnation itself (though here there is a felicitous inconsistency)
   B. From the Lutheran Perspective
      1. We are comforted by the teaching of the *genus maiestaticum*
      2. We are comforted by the teaching of the Real Presence
      3. We remain true to Scripture and Scripture remains the authority in faith and life