

**THE DOCTRINE OF THE LORD'S  
SUPPER, AS SET FORTH IN THE  
BOOK OF CONCORD,  
CRITICALLY EXAMINED, AND ITS  
FALLACY DEMONSTRATED**

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The Doctrine of the Lord's Supper, as set forth in the Book of Concord, critically examined, and its fallacy demonstrated by J. B. Gross

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**J. B. GROSS**

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OF  
THE LORD'S SUPPER.



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BY  
REV. J. B. GROSS.

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“ Kann die Wahrheit vererbt werden, wie irdischer Besitz? Oder angezogen werden, wie ein Gewand? ”

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## DEDICATION.

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THAT which is essential to the salvation of mankind must admit of being readily understood, and—if not easily, at least successfully—carried out, by all that have the gift of ordinary intelligence or common sense, and faithfully make use of the appointed means of grace, as set forth in the word of God: a qualification of which we must never lose sight. The idea that God has founded a system of redemption for the benefit of mankind which only priests or hierarchs—that is, men claiming to be especially authorized or Divinely appointed—can accurately understand and render intelligible to the rest of the human race, is preposterous, and at once an insult to God and an outrage against common sense.

What mainly causes the Scriptures to be so often misunderstood, or understood only with great labor and difficulty, is the extensively controlling influence which human creeds, or the exclusive doctrines of sectism, exercise over the human mind, which, thus warped and debased, is no longer competent to interpret the word of God agreeably to its true import or in conformity to common sense principles. Christians at this moment, and in this nineteenth century of the Christian era, though they are not generally aware of the humiliating fact, are too frequently the followers of men instead of the Lord Jesus Christ; of "the commandments of men," taught as saving truths, instead of the Divine teachings

of the Gospel of the Son of God. Owing to this criminal practice, this high-handed invasion of the rights of conscience, the Gospel of the Saviour is virtually superseded by man's devices, and the poor, deluded laity is often made to believe a myth instead of the Divine truth. This is sometimes done designedly for the good, as may be supposed, of plebeian souls; but in the Protestant Church a practice so base must be presumed to be rare in proportion to the ascendancy of liberal principles and the general diffusion of education.

Much that the Bible teaches is not absolutely essential to salvation, but is to be regarded as adventitious, and designed only as a vehicle of instruction at the time to which it refers: as the *wrapper* in which the Gospel has been clothed and handed down to future ages. It is emphatically this unessential part of the Scriptures which especially claims the labors and requires the skill of the learned commentator, but which has no direct or vital bearing on the redemptive virtue of the Divine word. Christ's hearers were in an eminent degree the unlearned, the common people, or, in the touching phrase, "The lost sheep of the house of Israel"; but, unless he spoke in parables or in unusual figurative language,—which he at once explained and thus rendered intelligible,—his illiterate hearers understood him quite well; and they even had the sagacity to compare his method of teaching with that of the Jewish rabbins, drawing the significant inference that "he taught them as one having *authority*, and not as the scribes": Matthew, vii. 29.

But to render salvation certain there must surely be human creeds? Oh, no: they are not at all necessary. Christ laid down no creed except that he is the Saviour: the Apostles professed no other creed but this; and the Christian Church was content to abide by this creed till it began to grow corrupt. Sects only need creeds. Christians, not given to novelties, have creed enough in the Bible: this is the only

creed that is manifestly God-sanctioned. It is ample enough, and stringent enough; yet it allows every one "to be convinced in his own mind."

The Bible refers to man as co-agent with Christ in redemption, and declares works and grace mutually and inseparably co-operative in the Christian life. The Bible and Bible-imbued common sense, therefore, are to be regarded as exclusively normative in matters of faith and holy living. Such being the plain and incontrovertible facts, as regards this most interesting and important subject, the opinions inculcated in this paper are respectfully inscribed to the attention and prayers of the Friends and Advocates of biblical truth, and Gospel-enlightened and guided common sense,\* by

THE AUTHOR.

\* In a Sermon on the Reformation, the learned and devout Spener, the introducer of Pietism into the dead routine of formalism of the Lutheran Church, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, writes thus: "Preachers are not to monopolize all proofs of doctrine to themselves, but to concede personal research to their hearers, who are not to be hindered, but advised and urged, diligently to read and study the Scriptures, that they may establish and strengthen their faith in the word of God." "Therefore," continues this eminent divine, "the Scripture is to be understood, not with blind submission to the commentators, but as each Christian, after diligent meditation and prayer, is convinced by the Holy Ghost. Christian ministers too are delivered from the papistic yoke, so that, in our office of teaching; so far as doctrine is concerned, we are bound by nothing but the Holy Scriptures and the infallible word of God, and may, with confident freedom, teach whatever we believe to be derived from it, and need, therefore, not ask whether a Pope or Council has authorized it."

The following cognate sentiments are from the pen of Prof. Sprecher, in a contribution to the *Lutheran Observer* of April 10, 1868, founded on the Life and Writings of Luther, by Walch, vol. v., p. 326, and vol. vi., p. 182: "Comfort is to be found nowhere but in the Scriptures and God's word. We are to believe no Councils or Saints,