

2. Sacrament – Lord’s Supper:

a. **Words of Institution:** When Jesus instituted (established) His Supper, He said, “Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you.” He also said: “This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.” Even today we receive *Jesus’ body and blood* for the forgiveness of our sins (Matt. 26:28)! Furthermore, all who have God’s forgiveness also have *life in Christ* and will *live with Christ in eternity!*

b. **Words of Dismissal:** After you receive Jesus’ body and blood, you are dismissed with these words: “The body and blood of our Lord strengthen and preserve you steadfast in the true faith to life everlasting. Go in peace.” Then you agree with those words by saying: “Amen!” In other words, *you agree with these blessed realities:*

- i. I have received Jesus’ body and blood – *under the bread and wine* (1 Cor. 10:16)!
- ii. I believe Jesus’ body and blood will strengthen me in the true faith – *by reminding me of my sins, Jesus’ sacrifice, and my forgiveness through Him!*

- iii. I believe Jesus’ body and blood will preserve me (thus, keep me) in the true faith until, *finally*, I am with Jesus forevermore!

Conclusion

- God ✦ made us alive in Christ *through Word and Sacrament!*
- God ✦ keeps us alive in Christ *through Word and Sacrament!*

Therefore, let us *gladly receive the Word and the Sacrament* week-after-week for the *strengthening* and *preserving* of our lives in Christ! And all God’s people said: *Amen!*

PS: Another very important way in which the LORD feeds us spiritually is through our daily use of the Bible. See the brochure entitled: “Daily Devotion” for encouragement, a beneficial method, and much more!

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio, 44134
440-845-2230 • www.blc7500.com

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Life In Christ!

- ➔ *Who Makes Us Alive?*
- ➔ *How Do We Remain Alive?*



Introduction

Life! It’s a wonderful blessing, but how does it begin and how does it continue?



Physical Life:

- It begins at conception.
- It is nourished by the mother – *while in her womb.*
- It is nourished by the parents – *after birth.*
- It is nourished by the individual – *once he has gained the ability to eat on his own.*

We could conclude that *our parents began our lives* and *we continue our lives*, but that is *only the surface reality*. Behind the scenes, *GOD* was at work to *cause* our conception and *God* continues to work to *provide us with the nourishment we need to remain physically alive!*

Introduction Continued

Spiritual Life:

- It begins with God's gracious work through Word and Sacrament.
- It is nourished, *thus continues*, with God's gracious work through Word and Sacrament.



Again, we *could* conclude that ✦ we go to Christ, ✦ we make ourselves alive in Christ, and ✦ we keep ourselves alive in Christ, but *that is only the surface reality*. Invisibly GOD, *through Word and Sacrament*, was at work to make us alive in Christ and GOD, *through Word and Sacrament*, continues to work to nourish and strengthen our spiritual lives, *thus keeping us alive in Christ!*

How Does a Person Become Alive in Christ?

Though many teach that *we make ourselves alive in Christ by deciding for Christ*, the Bible says that becoming alive in Christ is *not* by “human decision”; instead, we are “born of God.” (NIV John 1:13) *Why must that be so?* The Bible says that *apart from God* ✦ we are dead in our sins (Ephesians 2:1) and ✦ we can do nothing (John 15:5); therefore, “God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ.” (NIV Ephesians 2:4-5) He took action; He did it *through Word and Sacrament!*

1. Word:

- a. **NIV James 1:18** – “[God] chose to give us [spiritual] birth through [the Bible, which is] the word of truth...” *God did it through His Word!*
- b. **ESV 1 Peter 1:23** – “... you have been born again, not of perishable seed [not of flesh and blood that will perish], but of imperishable [seed, having been made alive in Christ], through the living and abiding word of God.” *Through the Word, God is at work to make people alive in Christ!*

2. Sacrament – Holy Baptism: The Bible says that Jesus loved the Church so much that He laid down His very life to “make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word...” (NIV Ephesians 5:25) To be with God in eternity, we *must* be holy in His sight; therefore, in Baptism, **God:**

- a. *United us to Christ!*
- b. *Made us alive in Christ!*
- c. *Made us holy in His sight!*

Invisibly, and yet powerfully, God gives the gift of spiritual life through Word and Sacrament!

How Does a Person Continue to Be Alive in Christ?

Though it's *logical* to believe that *we do it*, the Bible says that *God does it!* It says that “he who began a good work in you [by giving you life in Christ] will carry it on to completion [by keeping you alive in Christ] until the day of Christ Jesus [when He returns].” (NIV Philippians 1:6) So how does God keep us in Christ? *Again, through Word and Sacrament!*

1. **Word:** The Bible says that “by this gospel [by the good news of God's work in Christ] you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word...” (NIV 1 Corinthians 15:2) *What does that mean?*

- a. **God** has saved us!
- b. **God** has made us alive in Christ!
- c. **God** will continue to nourish us through His Word!

Therefore, we hold firmly to that precious, life-giving, life-nourishing Word – hearing it, reading it, marking it, learning it, and inwardly digesting it! We use the Word, but God works through it to keep us alive in Christ!