

Table Talk #1325 March 23, 1532 The Catholic Mass

"At the Diet of Augsburg the papists tried to frighten and threaten us. They wished us to agree that the mass is a sacrifice of praise merely to provide themselves with a subterfuge in the term of 'sacrifice.' I'm ready to concede to them that the mass is a sacrifice of praise provided they on their part concede that it's not only the priest at the altar but every communicant who 'sacrifices.'"

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Luther". The script is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first name "Martin" written in a larger, more prominent hand than the last name "Luther".

Commentary: This statement gives us a perspective on the complex negotiations between Catholics and Lutherans regarding the purpose of worship. Luther understood worship as the community of saints worshiping together in God's presence. The mass or worship was about confession, hearing the Word, receiving the sacrament, offering one's self as a faithful servant, and songs of praise!

Dr. Robert Kolb references one of Luther's sermons on Luke 1:51-52 when Mary recounts in her song of praise: *"He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. he has put down the mighty from their seats and exalted those of low rank."* Dr. Kolb's commentary continues that "Luther admonished the believers of his time to discipline their lives with moderation as did Joseph in his administration of power in the Egyptian government. (*Luther and the Stories of God*. pp.64-65).

Question: Does worshipping God also include faithfulness to family, patience with relationships, dealing with people fairly in business, and serving willingly and humbly?