

Whether four thousand gathered in a desolate place, or a few hundred (or even two or three) gathered around Jesus to hear Him speak, His Word provides plenty of bread to go around.

A READING FROM THE BOOK OF CONCORD
SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY
FORMULA OF CONCORD: SOLID DECLARATION
PART VIII.43-45: THE HOLY SUPPER [Words of Institution]

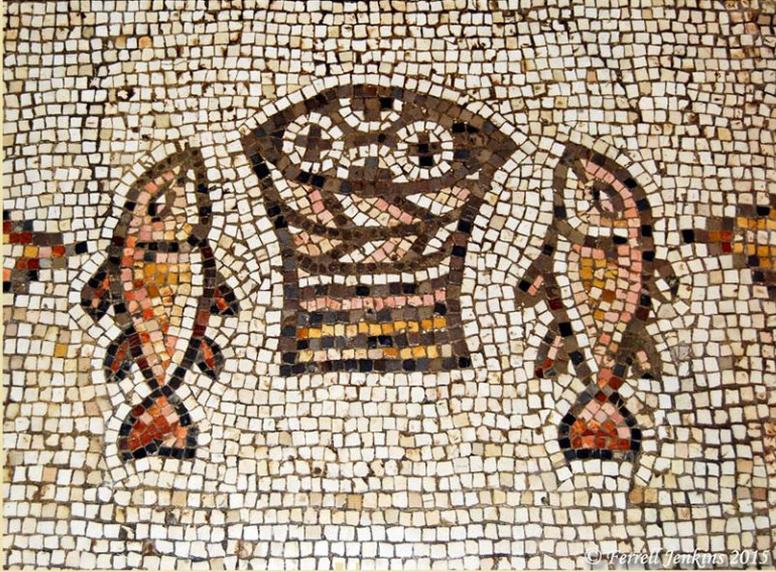
⁴³ Concerning our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as our only Teacher, this solemn command has been given from heaven to all people, “listen to Him” [Matthew 17:5]. He is not a mere man or angel, neither is He just true, wise, and mighty, but He is the eternal Truth and Wisdom itself and Almighty God. He knows very well what and how He is to speak. He can also powerfully effect and do everything that He says and promises. He says, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away” (Luke 21:33); “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me” (Matthew 28:18).

⁴⁴ Consider this true, almighty Lord, our Creator and Redeemer, Jesus Christ, after the Last Supper. He is just beginning His bitter suffering and death for our sins. In those sad last moments, with great consideration and solemnity, He institutes this most venerable Sacrament. It was to be used until the end of the world with great reverence and obedience <humility>. It was to be an abiding memorial of His bitter suffering and death and all His benefits. It was a sealing <and confirmation> of the New Testament, a consolation of all distressed hearts, and a firm bond of unity for Christians with Christ, their Head, and with one another. In ordaining and instituting the Holy Supper He spoke these words about the bread, which He blessed and gave: “Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you,” and about the cup, or wine: “This is My blood of the new testament, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins.”

⁴⁵ We are certainly duty-bound not to interpret and explain these words in a different way. For these are the words of the eternal, true, and almighty Son of God, our Lord, Creator, and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. We cannot interpret them as allegorical, figurative, turns of phrases, in a way that seems agreeable to our reason. With simple faith and due obedience we receive the words as they read, in their proper and plain sense. We do not allow ourselves to be diverted <from Christ’s express words> by any objections or human contradictions spun from human reason, however appealing they may appear to reason.

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**Floor mosaic in Church of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes,
Tabgha an area on the shore of Sea of Galilee Israel**



**Mosaic of the Multiplication of the Loaves and Fishes,
The Church of the Holy Saviour--Chora, Istanbul**