

## Means, not mediators

“(43) From a Lutheran perspective the crucial issue here is the nature of Christ’s mediation itself.... The point is that **Christ establishes himself as the one and only ‘Mediator’** through his own person and work....

“(44) Consequently, we can here put the question sharply: “What sort of mediation is it of which Christ is the sole agent? In the Lutheran view, Christ’s mediation is such that his life, death, and resurrection authorize and institute a speaking and doing (word and sacrament) through which he *himself* is imparted to create faith. The act of salvation is **not**, as the word suggest, that of a **‘go-between’** who imparts some ‘thing’ or prior timelessly existing divine favor or ‘grace.’ He gives himself....

“(45) It goes almost without saying, therefore, that the sole mediatorship of Christ does not exclude but rather impels to further ‘mediation’ in the sense of transmitting through word and sacrament. But Lutherans rarely speak of ‘mediation’ in this connection and prefer rather to speak of **the ministry of word and sacrament**, the actual doing of the deed in the living present. They confess that this ministry was instituted by God for the sake of the gospel, to instill faith in Christ, the sole source of salvation. Salvation is thus ‘mediated’ or communicated through the gospel, preach and heard as well as sacramentally enacted. Thus **the word and the sacraments are sometimes spoken of as ‘means’** (*Mittel, instrumenta*) through which the Holy Spirit gives faith to those who receive the gospel (CA 5).”

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The paragraphs above are from “Perspectives on Critical Issues,” *The One Mediator, the Saints, and Mary. Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue VIII*. Eds. H. George Anderson, J. Francis Stafford, Joseph A. Burgess (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1992) 35-41. Bolding added above for emphasis.

Read the whole of “Perspectives on Critical Issues” [here](#).