



Math was not my favourite subject at school, but I already knew that “two multiplied by two” is not five before I started school.

The cartoon on the front of the program shows a big city skyline, littered with flags, posters, billboards and

banners...all with the same message: “two multiplied by two is five!”

Of course, we all know that this is not true.

But the mathematical equation in the cartoon is just a placeholder. If we replace it, things might start to look a little different. Let's stick with adverts:

- We give your future a home
- The only thing that counts is me!
- Stinginess is cool
- Nothing is impossible
- “two multiplied by two is five”

At first view, it's easy to see through it. But the hidden messages of these advert slogans go deeper than we think. And we are more seducible and deceivable than we would like to admit.

“Two multiplied by two is five”, can be replaced by:

- The world is bad
- Wars will always exist
- Attack is the best defense
- If you seriously looks for work, you will find work
- Politicians are to blame for everything
- Women’s place is in the home
- Faith and politics have nothing to do with each other
- The main thing is to be healthy
- There is no God, who asks for our responsibility in this world
- “two multiplied by two is five”

If you are told long enough that “two multiplied by two is five”, you will eventually believe it. Then it becomes a sentence, which we repeat thoughtlessly. Then we accept mere assertions without questioning. If it is only repeated often enough...the first contradiction will decrease. Millions of BILD-ZEITUNG readers can't be wrong. One can live from 132€ Hartz IV per month, as long as one is not you. The earth is a disk and “two multiplied by two is five”.

Will this calculation become generally accepted, because it penetrates from all advert boards into our mind? Or will this claim, that “two multiplied by two is five”, in its endless variations, eventually be exposed as a lie? As a lie, behind which we discover solid interests concerning power and money? What if suddenly, one day someone comes along and says, "two multiplied by two is four!"?

How many people will breathe a sigh of relief: "Finally, the spook is over. Finally someone dares to tell the truth!"?



Or, perhaps, suddenly an ambulance from the psychiatric hospital stands in front of your door, or - depending on the country - the military - because

there is danger in your truth!

Why are we here today?

We are here because we listen to Christ, who said:

"If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (John 8: 31-32)

Against all our “two multiplied by two is five” sentences, Christ says his truth:

- "Blessed are the spiritually poor, blessed are those who mourn, blessed are the meek, the peacemakers - they all are God's children!"

- Jesus Christ says, "I am the way, the truth and the life!"

Against all “two multiplied by two is five” sentences we confess and celebrate by following Him:

- One does not live by bread alone, not by money, not by possessions, not by career, not by success, not by health - but by God's word to us, by God's promise and claim to us, by God's faithfulness to us.
 - Instead of "two multiplied by two is five", we confess: We live from God's love alone, more important than anything else is His will.
 - More important than our EGO is the faithfulness to our fellow human beings, even in hard times.
 - More important than profit is the community in the church of God.
 - More important than the DAX or Bitcoin is righteousness according to God's will.
- "Two multiplied by two" is not five", but four, that means spoken in the words of faith:
- We let God's grace be enough for us
 - We accept our limitations and trust that God's power is made perfect in our weakness.
 - We insist that every human being, regardless of race or origin, is an equally loved creature of God with the same right to live.
 - We insist that in everything we do and create, we always have to ask: Does it serve life, does it serve humanity, does it correspond to the Spirit of God?
 - We refuse the ultimate claim of death on our lives; we do not believe that death has more power than the life-giving love of God.

We celebrate our worship, today and every Sunday, together with all Christians, with believers and seekers, so that we do not stand alone with our flags and posters saying "two multiplied by two is four". We become a reliable community in which people can breathe a sigh of relief:

"Finally, the spook is over. Finally truth will make us free!"

We celebrate worship, and today also Communion, and by doing so we are confessing: The truth is that we are all equally needy before God, equally dependent on his bread of life, his word of life, that we are all equally dependent on forgiveness and reconciliation, equally dependent on God who always will open doors, and show us new paths.

We go away from the table of the Lord, comforted, as a community, again and again, enabled to shape our lives differently. We know that we are told what is good: "...to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God." (Micah 6:8)

We go away from the table of the Lord, again and again enabled to bear our burdens, again and again, enabled to stand up against resignation.

I hope and expect that one day people will come out of all churches and houses and whisper and say and shout: “two multiplied by two is four”. And they will form a long procession over the whole earth and through history, because they know, because we know: God’s love is stronger than death and our love and our hope receive power from the Holy Spirit.

This power of the Holy Spirit is present in every piece of bread, in every sip from the cup that we receive at the Lord's Table. It is the greater power of the presence of the Risen Christ - and it will become present in our words and our acting, it will become bread of life for the person next to us.

And: the truth will make us free.