



The EUCHARIST

Where is that in the Bible?

Jesus declared the Eucharist to be his body and blood. Based on Scripture and Tradition, Catholics realize he meant exactly what he said.

Matthew
26:26-28



Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

Catholic Perspective

At the Last Supper, Jesus takes bread and wine in his hands and says, "This is my body" and "This is my blood." In doing so, he identified these elements to have been changed from ordinary bread and wine to his own body and blood.

Common Objections

JESUS REFERRED TO HIMSELF AS "THE DOOR" AND "THE TRUE VINE."

REASONING

Jesus was speaking metaphorically when he said that the bread and wine are his body and blood. After all, he referred to himself as "the door" (John 10:9) and as "the true vine" (John 15:1).

RESPONSE

Jesus does often speak in metaphors. But Jesus is speaking a little differently during the Last Supper. Saying "I am the door" is different from pointing to an actual, material door and saying, "This door is me." (For what it's worth, Jesus' followers seem to understand this distinction: when Jesus says that he is "the door" or "the true vine," no one starts looking for an actual door or vine.)

During the Last Supper, Jesus makes a direct statement about the nature of a specific, material object: "This [bread] is my body" and "This [wine] is my blood."

JESUS MEANT WHAT HE SAID IN A "SPIRITUAL" SENSE.

REASONING

Jesus said that eating flesh has no profit and that the words he speaks are spirit and life (John 6:63). That means he must be speaking solely in a spiritual sense when he says the bread and wine are his flesh and blood.

RESPONSE

Jesus often uses "flesh" and "spirit" to distinguish human understanding from divinely revealed truth. Jesus refers to this distinction when he says, "You judge according to the flesh, I judge no one. Yet even if I do judge, my judgment is true, for it is not I alone that judge, but I and he who sent me" (John 8:15-16).

In John 6, Jesus promises the Eucharist. The crowd understands him to be speaking literally and is horrified. Rather than explain that he was only speaking metaphorically, Jesus says, in effect, "You can't understand this right now because you are relying on human reason alone [the "flesh"]. That won't help you here. You must rely on what I am telling you, which is divinely revealed truth [the "spirit"]."

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