

‘WORSHIP GOD WANTS’
(Portraits of Christ in the Tabernacle)
Studies in Exodus & Leviticus

‘Transubstantiation’

“Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise Him up at the last day ... the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spiritual and they are life.” (The Lord Jesus Christ/ John 6:54-65)

Communion, or the Lord’s Supper, is one of only two very important *ordinances* (not *sacraments*) of biblical Christianity. Baptism by immersion is done at the start of one’s new relationship with God through Christ at salvation (*Matthew 28:18-20*). To be immersed in water pictures belief in the Lord Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection. Communion is done periodically to picture a disciple’s ongoing cleansing and fellowship with Christ as a way of life (*1 Corinthians 11: 23-32*). Both are *symbolic* of what Christianity is all about – being born again spiritually, by faith in the sacrificial cross-work of Christ (*the death and burial of our old life before Christ, then raised in newness of life in Christ at salvation*) is portrayed in baptism; communion graphically symbolizes our intimate living relationship with the Lord Jesus through His resurrection life merging with and nourishing our Christian life. Christians refer to the two biblical traditions as **ordinances** (*serious commands of Scripture*), not **sacraments** (*rituals that impart saving grace – taught by the Roman Catholic Church, some Lutheran, and Orthodox churches*).

Spirit-led followers of Christ are blessed by the symbolism of both and the sense of His presence when we obediently submit ourselves to them. But it comes as no surprise that the enemy delights in distorting both of these special times with the Lord into warped caricatures of what they were meant to be. Religious people without the Spirit, or a true relationship with God in Christ, have sadly missed the point of both because they do not **‘rightly divide the Word of truth’** (*2 Timothy 2:15/ study all pertinent Scriptures to arrive at a proper interpretation of a verse or passage*).

Therefore, Roman Catholicism and others like them consistently error in making what is meant to be clearly interpreted as literal, symbolic (*idols, etc.*), and what is meant to be symbolic as literal (*baptism/ water on babies to wash away sin and communion/ eating wafers and drinking wine to literally receive Jesus’ flesh and blood*).

Roman Catholicism, like the unbelieving religious crowd in **John 6**, lacked the spiritual capacity to understand what Jesus was trying to teach them. They were demanding more bread from heaven as He had done for them the day before (*feeding the 5,000/ John 6:1-13*). Jesus told them they really needed *eternal nourishment* not more *physical food* and that **‘believing in Him’** (*6:47-48*) is like spiritually receiving **‘eternal bread of life’** (*6:47-51*). His listeners not only didn’t get it regarding His symbolism, they mock Him sarcastically for the illustration (*6:52*). In response to their unbelief and jest, Jesus adds the comment about **drinking His blood** which in context, like the bread, is to **believe** in His coming blood shed on the cross to atone for sin.

Clearly *eating and drinking* are words synonymous with believing in His flesh (Who He was, the Son of God) and believing in the blood He, as the Savior of the world, would soon shed as the ultimate sacrifice for sin. Please note all the references to **belief** being the key issue about Who Jesus was/is and the work He came to do (*John 6:40, 47, 63-64, 68-69*). Eating and drinking is a fitting picture of believing in Him – to think, meditate and believe Christ, the cross, and the gospel is a faith-feast of belief. But to turn this teaching about belief into a religious medieval magic show, claiming to turn ordinary wafers into broken up bits of Jesus’ literal flesh and turning ordinary wine into the literal blood of Jesus as it goes down your throat, is not only barbaric, but against God’s Word. In the Law of God, to eat human flesh and drink human blood was a capital offense (*Leviticus 7:26-27, 17:10-12, etc.*).

Leave it to the devil to deface God's two ordinances by making either too little or too much of what was meant to be beautiful symbolism of the love relationship between Christ Jesus and His bride, the Church. **Transubstantiation** (*changing things into something else-- bread / Jesus' body and wine/ Jesus' blood*) is another unbiblical heresy of Roman Catholicism. What Jesus did on the cross was '**once and for all and forever**' (**Hebrews 10:10-18**). Trying to perpetuate or replicate it in a mystical ancient rite, as RCC claims, is to choose myth over truth, ritual over redemption, and the mass over the Master (**Titus 3:5**). **Transformation** is the miraculous change of the whole life of men and women who don't need to eat or drink some mystical substance for they have received the very life of Christ by faith and are being changed into His likeness by grace (**John 1:12-13**). In baptism or taking communion, we are **REMEMBERING** what Christ has done for us, in us, and through us. As we feast upon the wonder of believing by faith, *the substance of who we are in Christ* transforms us miraculously (**Romans 12:1-2**)! What needs changing isn't material things put our mouth; it's the truth about the Lord we take into our minds and hearts that changes us day by day continually, by what we believe, not what we eat (**2 Corinthians 3:18**). PtL

'The Tabernacle: House of Blood'

"Both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry were sprinkled with blood. According to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission." **Hebrews 9:21-22**

The Holiness of God

(God's hatred of sin)

"...God is angry with the wicked every day"

Psalm 7:11, 9:17

The Hideousness of Sin

(Sin's hatred of God)

"...the sinful mind is enmity against God"

Romans 8:7, James 4:4

The Power of The Blood

(Blood atonement for reconciliation)

Any and every sinful word, thought, or deed is utterly repulsive to God (*see Jesus' revulsion of the cup of it in Gethsemane/ Luke 22:41-44*). God is supremely holy and cannot just look away from sin; He must punish it with the full fury of His wrath (*see His punishment of His sin-bearer Son, the Lord Jesus to see His awesome disgust of sin/ Matthew 27:45-46*). All sinful humanity ought to have great '*fear of the LORD*' and feel an inner desperation to not only be forgiven of sin, but to hate it like God does and stop it.

The filthiness of sin, its selfishness, misery, brokenness, and death it causes requires a powerful remedy and cure. God has ordained only one thing to **atone** for sin – a substitutionary, blood sacrifice according to Scripture: "***For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls for it is the blood that makes atonement for the soul***" (**Leviticus 17:11**).

In the New Testament another theological word is used: "***...And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world***" (**1 John 2:1-2**). Only the 'power of the blood' can satisfy God's wrath, punish sin and save the sinner.

- Discuss the phrase '*the life is the blood*'. How does blood give life? What type of blood is needed to give life to the dead? What type can provide everlasting life?
- Discuss how atonement ('*at-one-ment*') takes place for Church Age Christians when we fail? (*see Hebrews 10:19-25. How can we apply this personally?*)
- How can understanding '*the shed blood of Christ*' help you appreciate God's forgiveness more? How does it help you forgive others?
- Discuss how considering '*the blood of Christ*' helps us hate sin and stop it.