

THE APOSTLES COULD NOT HAVE UNDERSTOOD JESUS TO MEAN FOOD AND DRINK TURNS INTO HIM WITHOUT A PHYSICAL CHANGE

In John 6 Jesus after multiplying bread for the Jews tells them to seek the bread that takes away all hunger and that his flesh is the bread he will give. They ask how this can give his flesh to eat but he tells them they need to eat his body and drink his blood to have salvation and never hunger again. Roman Catholicism says this refers to the Eucharist and the bread and wine being changed or transubstantiated into the body and blood of Christ, despite the fact that there was no Last Supper, when Jesus shared bread and wine saying they were his body and blood. John 6 is the only place in the Bible that might teach the transubstantiation idea.

The Christians take John 6 to be Jesus symbolically saying he can be eaten and drunk to illustrate the need for having a relationship with him as the saviour who gave his body and blood on the cross for sinners so that one might be saved.

The Catholics take John 6 literally saying it refers to their miracle of transubstantiation. They argue that when the Jews said among themselves that they wondered how Jesus could give them his flesh to eat and when Jesus didn't correct them that Jesus agreed with their literal interpretation for he kept saying that they had to eat his body and added that they had to drink his blood too.

Jesus had said that he is the living bread come down from Heaven and that the bread he will give to save the world is his flesh. But Jesus is not bread. The Eucharist doctrine teaches that bread becomes Jesus and ceases to exist so it is not a matter of Jesus becoming bread!

The book of Acts states that after Jesus went to Heaven the apostles maintained the Jewish rule of not consuming blood. The apostles themselves would not have understood the concept of transubstantiation. If they believed that the bread and wine were the body and blood of Jesus they didn't have the philosophy or the theology to know if that meant taking communion was not the same as cannibalism. The Roman Church says the early Church only got the basics and it was left to the Church fathers to understand and explain doctrines further. The Catholic Church claims that though the bread is Jesus and the wine his blood to partake of communion is not cannibalism for the appearances of bread and wine remain. It is the appearance of bread not the flesh of Jesus that is eaten physically. It is the appearance of wine that nourishes the body physically - there is no actual physical contact with blood.

If the apostles said the wine was the blood of Jesus that does not indicate that they had any philosophical explanation like the Catholics do for what this means. It wasn't until Lateran 4 in 1215 AD that the Church forbade the opinion of some that the wine only looked like wine as in an illusion and was actually blood. Instead the Church taught that there is no illusion but the wine is not wine anymore but blood. The wine changes into blood without the smell or taste etc of the wine changing. If Jesus meant that bread is really his body and wine is his blood then he was certainly permitting people to believe in cannibalising him until 1215AD!

The notorious doctrine that the bread physically turns into flesh and the wine turns into real blood and that God makes us sense that they are still bread and wine to make them palatable fits John 6 better than transubstantiation. In other words, the flesh is really flesh in every way but God miraculously changes our perception so that it still seems to be bread and tastes like bread. In this view, the bread loses the appearance of bread and this change is hidden from our senses. Catholicism teaches that the physical characteristics do not change but this doctrine says that they do but we are unable to sense or detect the changes. The difference is that with transubstantiation the physical aspects of bread and wine are real and do not change with the other doctrine God changes sense perception so that though there is a slab of raw human meat on the altar it looks like bread to us. It would mean that taking communion is cannibalism literally. The Church rejected the incredible doctrine that the substance and appearances change into the physical body and blood of Jesus at the Fourth Lateran Council and favoured transubstantiation. Even if the Bible does say the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus it never indicates anything like transubstantiation. That is a doctrine that appeared among philosophers centuries later. In the Israelite culture, there was not an inkling of such a philosophy. Some Christian writers did claim that communion is literal eating of the literal Jesus and is cannibalism. There are even alleged miracles where the wafer turned into heart muscle. The Church says that the Bible must never be interpreted in an absurd way. It seems to be depending on that principle to deny the alternative doctrine to transubstantiation. But how do you know that it is worse to believe in transubstantiation or the other doctrine? If miracles happen is the other doctrine really that bad? If transubstantiation is impossible then the other doctrine may be true. And most Catholics do not understand transubstantiation and think that when the wafer is put on their tongue that their tongue touches raw bleeding flesh and that God gives the illusion that it is a wafer. So you cannot say the cannibalistic doctrine was abandoned as it would disgust people.

The doctrine of bread being Jesus without physically becoming different is supposedly helped by Aristotle's distinction between substance and accidents. In other words, what something is different from its mere physical components. But Aristotle did note a difference but that does not mean you can have one without the other. He gave no support to that notion so even if the apostles had been reading him it would have been no help whatsoever.