

Jesus Didn't Command Holy Communion

Most Christians read in the Bible which they say is the word of God that on the night Judas betrayed Jesus, Jesus had a supper with his disciples. He took bread and gave thanks and gave it to them saying, "Take this all of you and eat it. This is my body which will be given up for you." Then in the same way AFTER SUPPER WAS ENDED he took the cup saying, "Take this all of you and drink from it. This is the cup of my blood. The blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all men so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of me." Not all accounts in the Bible are the same but this is what you get if you match them all together. Why didn't Jesus give them the bread and cup at the same time? He was supposed to be picturing his body and blood separated on the cross where he bled and died. Why did he wait to the end of supper and destroy the symbolism? To me it indicates that the material about the cup was clumsily added in by some fraud. He just gave them bread. Let's assume anyway that he did tell them to use the cup.

The dominical words are the words used to consecrate the Eucharist ie, "This is my body" and "This is my blood."

Jesus never told anybody to say, "This is my body. This is my blood", over bread and wine. He told the apostles to take bread and wine in his memory. "Get in the car and go to Mass every day in my memory," does not mean that the person has to go in the car for the going to Mass is the main thing. It is the same with the words, "Eat this for this is my body and do this in memory of me." This is commonsense for what sense does anybody who is not Jesus saying, "This is my body" make? Jesus would have told them to say, "This bread is the body of the Lord Jesus," had he intended for the Lord's Supper to be celebrated. Is it really likely that Jesus would want one to say, "This is my body. This is my blood," when it makes sense to bless the bread and cup in the name of God and say, "Let this be Jesus' body. Let this cup be his blood."

The apostle Paul in scripture just relates what happened at the Last Supper to prove that partaking of the bread and drink unworthily is wrong because it is a sign of commitment to Jesus. He does not say that Jesus' words have to be said.

Christians have no right to say the words.

To assume that saying them is okay just because the Bible does not expressly prohibit them would be like saying that if God gave the command to avoid adultery and never mentioned fornication that fornication is allowed for it is not mentioned.

Perhaps though our alleged obligation to carry on the Lord's Supper is not in the Bible we can still celebrate it as long as we recognise it as optional and that whenever we eat or drink we must recall Jesus? The answer would be yes only God has forbidden us to use images in worshipping him. The Christian can say that as long as God's power prevents such use from being offensive it was fine for Jesus to do it but wrong for us to for we don't have this protection. It is wrong to use things in worship when God is there. It is no excuse that they make it easier because the harder it is the more value there is in it. The pagans intended their worship of the idols – nobody worships a statue because it is a statue but because it is felt that there is a god in it or that it represents the God so that you can use it vicariously to honour the God – and gods to go to the true God if their gods didn't exist or were not divine and still he rejected it in the Bible (1 Corinthians 10:20) showing that using images in worship is wrong.

This implies that the food and drink of the supper were not symbols of Jesus but reminders. A note on the fridge to tell you to pay the milkman is not a symbol. When Jesus told the apostles to eat the bread and said, "This is my body", he may have meant, "Eat this as if it is my body. My body is here. I don't mean the bread is my body symbolically or literally but that it reminds you of me. You know what I mean for you are aware that I am against idolatry." There is an immense difference between using reminders of Jesus and between using bread and wine as symbols of him in communion. Christians may think of Jesus whenever they see bread but that does not make their eating it a Eucharist.

DO THIS IN MEMORY OF ME

We have four accounts of the Last Supper in the New Testament. They are in the gospel of Matthew, Mark and Luke and in the First Corinthian Epistle of Paul.

The Matthew account does not have Jesus asking the apostles to celebrate the supper in his memory. Mark, the earliest gospel, does not have this either. The fact that they put in so much unimportant stuff and left out these important few words suggests that they had traditions that did not even countenance the celebration of the supper. Many ancient copyists left out the words saying the bread must be taken in memory of Jesus and all the material to do with the cup in Luke so its authenticity is doubtful. So Luke just says Jesus took bread and said it was his body. The longer version in our Bibles may

be an insertion.

So it is possible that none of the gospels say we should remember Jesus by taking bread and wine.

Paul has Jesus saying, “Do this in my memory” both after the bread and after the cup (1 Corinthians 11) which we will soon see is of doubtful authenticity. But he says that Jesus did not say the cup was his blood but was the covenant in his blood so it is remembering and accepting Jesus as saviour that matters more than remembering his body and blood. In other words, remembering that Jesus saved you by his body and blood is what counts so that eliminates any notion that the bread and wine are to be regarded as the body and blood of Christ. When the cup just pictures your union in the covenant so does the bread so it is not literally the body of Christ for the cup is not the blood of Christ.

The expression about the cup, “Do this as often as you drink it in my memory” is interesting. Now why would you need to be told to remember Jesus as you drink if you had to say the words, “This is my blood” over it? It fits the idea that you should remember Jesus every time you drink a cup better.

Why did Paul have Jesus saying do this as often as you drink it? If you are drinking the cup at Mass or communion you will remember Jesus naturally for it stands for his body and blood. But Paul speaks as if Jesus wants us to remember him without a ritual declaration that it is the blood of Jesus. He speaks as if Jesus meant, “Whenever you take any cup to drink remember me”.

When Jesus tells the apostles at the last supper that he will never drink wine with them until the day he drinks new wine in God’s kingdom it is said to be his way of saying his mission on earth is at an end. But consider this. He means the cup of wine in front of him. It is an earthly cup. The cup in the kingdom is an earthly cup too. Thus what Jesus did with the food and drink is not to be enacted.

In Matthew and Mark, Jesus says of the cup that he said was his blood that it was the fruit of the vine and he wouldn’t drink it again until the kingdom of God comes. But in Luke he says this of a cup he gives them at the start of the meal. Then he gives them the bread and then at the end gives them the cup saying it is his blood. The Christians say he did it twice which sounds a bit odd like themselves. There is a contradiction for in Matthew and Mark he is saying that it is the wine declared blood that he won’t drink again till the kingdom comes and while in Luke it is either another cup or one which was said to be his blood later. One thing for sure it is symbolism for Jesus could not be imagined as drinking wine to celebrate the coming of the kingdom unless he didn’t expect to rise again as a spirit being though the New Testament says he did rise again that way and did expect it. He didn’t expect to come back as such a being that was so non-physical (I didn’t say all non-physical – the Catholic Church teaches that it is because the resurrection body of Jesus is so different that it is able to be given in the form of bread and wine) or which had supernatural that bread and wine could be turned into him. A wine-drinker has to expect to have a physical body with weaknesses to enjoy the beverage. The Catholic Mass which pretends to do just that is heresy.

Jesus has in mind the idea of drinking the wine with his apostles when the kingdom comes. He talks as if it is the last cup of wine they will have before then. If the wine is his blood as Catholics say then is he going to drink his own blood then?

Luke says that Jesus gave the disciples a cup and asked them to share it for he will drink no wine again until the kingdom of God comes in BEFORE he gave them the bread he said was his body. Now why would he do that? It only makes sense if they were finishing the wine then! A bit untraditional but possible. He has one last drink of wine with them. This means that the stuff about the cup being said to be blood at the end of the supper in Luke is an inclusion. Luke knew Paul’s writings for they influenced his gospel so when Luke eliminated and rejected the account about the cup being the blood covenant it follows that he knew Paul was tampered with in his First Corinthians letter which speaks of the Lord’s Supper. Jesus gives them the cup and tells them it’s his last drink because it was the last drink they would have together. Luke says then he took the bread. Luke has been corrupted as you can see from the ridiculous verse saying the disciples of Jesus fell asleep on him for sheer grief (Luke 22:45). The New International Version claims they were exhausted from sorrow which is foolish because they didn’t know that Jesus planned to die until a short time before. And when they brought out swords expecting something to happen how could they have slept if they cared that much?

Paul said that it was no sin to marry though it is best not to. Paul made optional requests in the name of God and there is nothing in the Bible at all that suggests we are under obligation to remember Jesus by taking bread and drink. Certainly Jesus wants us to remember him but wouldn’t if we could close our eyes and get a vivid sense of his presence and saving power and his bleeding death for our sins be better if it was the method that clicked with us? “This is my body and remember my body”, is really saying that the remembering is the essential part. Jesus asked us to pray always but said he would still accept us if we didn’t do it as much as we should. The Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches make an obligation out of the Eucharist which means they are heretical. “Do this in memory of me”, may apply only to the apostles for they alone could really remember Jesus but perhaps Paul let the Corinthians do it as well for reasons of his own. They were used to having sacred meals when they had been pagans. Jesus did not command that gospels be written and, “This is

my body and do this to remember me”, implies remembering all Jesus did in the body he gave for us for Jesus had been giving his body for others long before the crucifixion so it applies to the apostles only.

Paul in the context of the religious use of food said that food whether you abstain from it or take it has no spiritual effect and will not bring you any closer to God. Read 1 Corinthians 8:8. If Paul had the Eucharist he thought the eating and drinking did nothing special. The following seems to challenge that!