

Christian tradition is against transubstantiation

The Roman Catholic Church says that God can turn bread and wine into his Son Jesus. The result is that they are not bread and wine at all any more but Jesus. This doctrine is called transubstantiation. It is sometimes called the Real Presence. The Real Presence means Jesus's presence in its fullest sense body, blood, soul and divinity.

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Protestants disagree with all that. The early Church and even the early Catholic Church had no such doctrine.

A Catholic book says, "In truth, scanty as the Ante-nicene notices may be of the Papal Supremacy, they are both more numerous and more definite than the adducible testimonies in favour of the Real Presence. The testimonies to the latter are confined to a few passages." My response to that is that for such a core doctrine as bread becoming God that the pagans would have loved the silence is deafening!

Augustine the main doctrine maker of Christianity wrote that when Jesus said we must eat his flesh we must not get our teeth ready for if we believe, we have eaten his body already (Vol 7, Tractates on John, Tractate 25).

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The eccentric dogma that the bread and wine are transformed into Jesus by the priest comes from tradition, not reason and not the Bible. Nobody talked about the substance of bread and wine turning into the substance of Jesus until 1079. Hildebert de Lavardin, a French priest and theologian, originated that talk.

The problem for Catholics is that it is late tradition. The early liturgies always blessed the bread and wine and called the Holy Spirit to empower them after the words and actions of Christ at the Last Supper were repeated. The oldest Eucharistic prayer, that of Hippolytus (who died in 236 AD) about 225 AD does this too and never speaks of the bread and wine as the body and blood of Jesus (page 75, Documents of the Christian Church). The same man spoke of the bread and wine as figures or representations of the body and blood of Jesus (page 266, The Early Church). He however commanded great care to be taken with them for that reason for to disrespect what symbolised Jesus was to disrespect Jesus.

Also belief that the bread and wine ceased to exist and became the body and blood was universal in the early Church is wrong. A pope denied the current Catholic doctrine. "The sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, which we receive, is a divine thing, because by it we are made partakers of the divine-nature. Yet the substance or nature of the bread and wine does not cease. And assuredly the image and the similitude of the body and blood of Christ are celebrated in the performance of the mysteries." Gelasius, bishop of Rome, in Jacques Paul Migne, Patrologiae Latinae, Tractatus de duobis naturis Adversus Eutychem et Nestorium 14.

Catholics say that by substance he meant the appearance of the bread and wine not the inner essence. That is just a desperate distortion and would mean he used the wrong word. The quote is talking about how communion is the image of Jesus not about how bread and wine can be Jesus without looking any different.

Joe Mizzi writes, "How do Catholic apologists react to this? One Catholic writer argues that "Pope Gelasius was simply saying that the appearance [accidents] of bread/wine remain alongside the Real Presence in an attempt to explain the mystery of the Incarnation, since Christ humanity remains alongside His divinity. Some scholars interpret the above passage to refer to the accidents of the bread and wine." (Kenneth Henderson). Did Pope Gelasius really mean "appearance" when he wrote about "substance" and "nature"? Was the pope ignorant of the meaning of the very terms used in the Nicene Creed (325AD) and the Definition of Chalcedon (451AD) to describe who Jesus actually is? There is a very simple reason why Gelasius did not mean "appearance". Remember he is using the Eucharist as an analogy for the Incarnation, namely that "Christ's humanity remains alongside His divinity." Now if by "substance or nature" he meant that only the appearance of bread and wine remains, it follows that Christ merely appeared human but in fact he was not! That is the very heresy he was refuting! No, rather, Gelasius rightly believed that the distinction of divine and human natures of Christ are "in no way annulled by the union" (Council of Chalcedon). Jesus is truly God and truly man! The Eucharist illustrates this great truth, for, just as the substance of the bread and wine remains unchanged, so the human nature of Christ remained unchanged despite its union with divinity. Pope Gelasius did not try to prove that the bread and wine remain unchanged. He could take it for granted that his readers at the close of the fifth century believed that the substance of the eucharistic elements do not cease. The novel idea of transubstantiation was developed and adopted much later in the history

of the Catholic church."

Consider, "The mystical emblems of the body and blood of Christ continue in their original essence and form, they are visible and tangible as they were before [the consecration]; but the contemplation of the spirit and of faith sees in them that which they have become, and they are adored also as that which they are to believers." (Theodoret, Dialogue ii, Opera ed. Hal. tom. iv p. 126).

The Church would have given communion nearer the start of Mass rather than near the end if it believed that you eat Jesus literally at communion. Why? Because giving it at the end means people are being sent out into their ordinary lives with Jesus still inside them for he stays in them until the wafer is broken down in the stomach which takes about fifteen minutes! And when they should be praying and sensing the presence of Jesus in them instead. The communion service then had communion at the end for it was not believed to be physically Jesus and even when the Church started to disagree it didn't change the timing of communion in the service for it followed the outlines of the old service out of deference to tradition and custom.

The early Church used to say that each member carried the death of Jesus in his body. Carry death does not mean they were transubstantiated into the corpse of Jesus any more than eat me means Jesus has to turn into food. Carry death corresponds in usage to eat my body. If one is not literal neither is the other. Paul says that Christians are the Body of Christ. The way he talks seems so literal that some churches today, for example, the Church of the Living Word, think that the Church is destined to become Jesus Christ. He says in Ephesians that the Church is his body and the fullness of him who fills all in all (1:23). Some would say that he means the Lord is the soul of the Church which is made up of our bodies and not that we have become Jesus. But the point is that he talks very very literally looking in relation to the body of Jesus so it would be no surprise to hear the Eucharist bread being called the body of the Lord just like the Church is. But we know he is not literal so the Eucharist is not literally the Body of Jesus.

It is imagined that the doctrine first appears in tradition in the letters of the saint and martyr, Ignatius of Antioch who wrote them in the second century when he had little to do. But we have to be grateful to him for in Trallians 8 he announced that faith is the flesh of Jesus and love is the blood of Jesus. He claimed to have known John though not necessarily as the reputed author of the gospel of John so this might be an insight into the true meaning of John 6 which speaks of eating the flesh of Jesus and drinking his blood.

In Romans 7, Ignatius says he hungers for the flesh of Jesus and to drink his blood. He was a bishop and had no need to hunger if he meant the Eucharist so he did not mean it. He was in prison at the time and when the soldiers let him write his letter they would have given him some bread and wine. Ignatius further indicates that he does not have the Eucharist in mind when he says that the blood of Jesus he wants to drink is endless love. He means symbolic blood.

In Smyrnaeans 7, Ignatius writes that the Eucharist or thanksgiving is the body of Jesus that was murdered and raised again and says the heretics won't attend the ritual for they can't admit this. But if we offer the body of Jesus to God without it being present we could do this at a Eucharist at which no real presence took place so Catholics are stupid to assume that this character proves that Ignatius subscribed to the notion of transubstantiation. Jesus' body is the thanksgiving sacrifice to God offered by the symbols of bread and wine which do not change.

In 185 AD, St Irenaeus said that heretics cannot claim that the bread is the body of the Lord and the cup his blood if they do not admit that Jesus made the world. Whether it is symbolically the body and blood or literally they cannot believe the bread and wine are the body and blood if Jesus was not a creator.

Irenaeus thought that Jesus was God. It was the case that the heretics he opposed were matter-hating Gnostics. Irenaeus is giving his opinion about what the heretics cannot believe and what he cannot believe either if it proves false that Jesus made the world. Does he mean that if Jesus could not make all things then he could not turn bread and wine into himself? But God could turn them into Jesus if Jesus can't do it himself so that is wrong – that is not what he meant. Also, he did not say he meant they thought Jesus was not God and could not make the world for most of them thought he was God but did make the world. The logic of Irenaeus is, if the Son did not make all things then the bread is not literally or symbolically his body for that means the Son opposes matter. The heretics believed that the body and blood of Jesus were present in the Eucharist but they did not believe these were the material body and blood but some level of spiritual existence. The version in spirit of body and blood. Irenaeus would have known this. Since he did not write they were denying the physical body and blood being in the Eucharist it follows that he meant no body of any kind could be there if Jesus was not creator. He did not mean that he thought the bread was Jesus' physical body.

Then he asks how the heretics can say that flesh will not rise again when it is nourished by Jesus' body and blood.

This shows that Irenaeus opposed transubstantiation for in it you are not physically nourished by the body and blood of Jesus but by the appearances of bread and wine. If Jesus does not feed your body with the substance of his own then his argument defeats itself. Irenaeus wants to say that the body must be sacred enough to be raised from the dead when it is literally fed by Jesus himself who is literally digested. If it is just the appearance of bread that feeds it would not prove that the body will rise because Jesus has merely turned bread into himself and is not giving your body nourishment for the body can't digest his body and blood. The Gnostics believed that matter though evil is used by the good God who hates it.

Irenaeus stated that as the Eucharist bread is not common bread and consists of earthly and heavenly elements so our bodies that eat and drink are normal and yet incorruptible meaning the promise of a glorious resurrection is given (page 75, Documents of the Christian Church). So like the Eucharist, the body gets a heavenly element but the element is only potential. So the Eucharist is not physically the body of Christ but is as good as the body of Christ having been filled with its power. Irenaeus held that the sacrifice of the cross was made to the Devil (page 30) so it was unlikely that he would have held that Jesus physically changes into the form of bread and wine when the supper represents that sacrifice.

There is not a splinter of evidence that this notion of transubstantiation goes back to Jesus or existed in the first century of the Church. In Irenaeus, we have evidence that it would have rightly been perceived as something from what many would call the lunatic fringe for he says "we" have been taught his doctrine meaning all Christians he knows.

Some scholars believe that just as your toenail is you though it is made of dead substances so God could make bread and wine his body and blood. The bread and wine are still as much bread and wine as before. There is no transubstantiation. But they become the body and blood in the same way your toenail is a part of your body and still is when it is broken off. So you can call them the body and blood of the Lord. They are sacramentally the body and blood of the Lord and not substantially. Irenaeus of Lyon who accepted this view held that the Lord becomes incarnate in the bread and wine but they stay bread and wine (page 242, Handbook to the Controversy with Rome, Vol 2). This would be the same as Justin Martyr's view. The doctrine implies that you do not worship the bread and wine for they are like parts of the body but focus on the body they remember, the full body of Jesus in Heaven. Justin and Irenaeus would have agreed that Roman Catholicism is idolatry for adoring the communion wafer as God. There is no evidence for the idea of transubstantiation in the early Church (page 247, Handbook to the Controversy with Rome, Vol 2). The New Testament doctrine of the Church being the body of Christ which is put forward very very literally is definitely sanctioning the belief that a thing can perhaps not be literally Christ but still be Christ the same way as a cut toenail can be part of the body of a person who had it removed.

Tertullian (160-221 AD?) declared that the bread was the body of Jesus for Jesus said the bread was his body meaning the figure of his body (Contra Marcion. Lib. 5, page 458. Paris. 1675). He called the bread the body of Christ showing that he meant he was a symbol and that this had been meant since the time of Christ.

Origen (185-254 AD) wrote, "Acknowledge that they (bread and wine) are figures which are written in the sacred volumes; therefore, as spiritual not as carnal, examine and understand what is said. For if as carnal you receive them, they hurt, not nourish you" (Leviticus, Homilies, VII).

Eusebius (261?-339/340 AD) point blankly declared that Jesus gave the bread as a symbol of his body (Demons, Evan. Lib. VII, C. II, page 236).

PAPAL SIN, STRUCTURES OF DECEIT, Garry Wills, Darton Longman and Todd, London, 2000 gives a good analysis of Augustine's thinking about the Eucharist. Page 143, tells us about the Catholic scholar Evan der Meer admitting that Augustine gave no hint in his hundreds of sermons on the Eucharist of the idea that Jesus is physically present in the bread and wine. For Augustine, the body of Christ was the people so his formula for communion was, "Receive what you are, the body of Christ" (page 148).

There is no early witness who says that the bread and wine cease to exist or that he means they literally become Jesus which we would need. When Jesus called them his body and blood it was only natural for everybody to call them that but that is not sufficient to demonstrate that this is a miraculous transmutation.

The Bible and Rome make it abundantly clear that Christian disunity is not and has never been God's will (John 17). In 1215 CE, the Catholic Church (at the Fourth Lateran Council in Rome) infallibly decreed, for the first time, that Christian faith included the doctrine of transubstantiation.

For centuries Christians could deny the doctrine and not be lawfully considered heretics. The doctrine might have been enshrined in Church tradition but that is not much good. Jesus said the Devil would deceive the majority when he said the world was under the Devil's control and tradition was often just what most churchmen thought and it is now impossible to prove what most Christians or their ministers believed. Forgery to make a new and popular tradition seem to have come from the early centuries of the Church was dead easy. God would not have made tradition a sufficient basis for one of his

major doctrines when he had set up an infallible Church that could make the doctrine binding on the Catholic conscience in the strongest possible way at the time of the birth of the Church. The Church has certainly erred in non-infallible teaching therefore it has no right to reprimand, excommunicate or punish those who dissent from it. Indeed the Church has always allowed dissent as long as no fundamental doctrine was undermined. Paul told the Church to stay one though there would be many disputes so he wanted her conflicting parties to agree to disagree and keep trying to talk things through. But those who dissented from the teaching on transubstantiation couldn't legitimately stay in the Church. Those who supported transubstantiation were idolaters if they were wrong. God forbids fellowship with those one considers to be idolaters (1 Corinthians 5:11). The doctrine promoted schisms which God certainly hates for he cannot endure confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33). If transubstantiation were true, God would have revealed it from the beginning. It would have been defined by a first century council or in scripture. He didn't make sure that would happen therefore it is untrue.

Catholics have to consider Protestants who are deniers of the physical transformation of the Eucharist into Christ to be worse than idolaters. If idolatry, the sin of having a marred perception of God that leads to you seeking him in spirits and statues, is so worthy of unfriendly vehemence then the sin of not acknowledging God in the Eucharist is equally vile. The Eucharist is such a focus of bitter division that it is clear that if Jesus established it the Devil was guiding him to do so.

The picture we get is of a God permitting dissent of a type that would tear the Church apart. The doctrine is not of God for it is lies that lead to division not God's truth. The Catholic Church having used her infallibility to proclaim it proves that the Church is not infallible at all. We have no solid basis for the doctrine. Transubstantiation must be false for God would not hide it from his chosen flock.

Communion in the hand was given in the first four centuries of the Church until the Church began getting funny ideas about the nature of the bread (page 390, Christian Order Vol 36 Number 8-9 1995). This alone indicates that the Church didn't think the bread was literally Jesus for if Jesus is in the bread or the bread has become Jesus you can't take it in your hands for pieces will always come off and Jesus will be sacrilegiously desecrated. The only solution is to take Jesus in wafer form on the tongue with him being placed there by a careful minister.

The early Church was nearly all Arian at one stage and God would not turn bread and wine into Jesus if Jesus were not God meaning that the Church did not adhere to the notion of a literal change.

The Pelagian heresy thrived and was tolerated and accepted as fine for centuries. Then it was stigmatised and condemned officially on the basis that it denied the need for special help (grace) from God in order to be good and go to Heaven. Pelagians tried to rationalise and explain away the miracles of scripture and opposed readings of scripture that proposed the events were supernatural. Thus they would not have been keen on the miracle of bread and wine changing into Jesus. Nor would they have seen much point in eating the bread and drinking the wine to be fed by God's grace. Nor would they have put much importance on the sacrifice of Jesus as recalled in the Eucharist. For them the example mattered not the alleged sacrifice for sins. They were harsh against sin implying a lack of respect for the Mass which claims to be making Jesus' blood present for the forgiveness of sins. They had little time for the Eucharist. They are proof that the Church of the time was not dogmatic about the Eucharist and allowed a variety of different opinions about it just like the Church of England does today.

The Church of Rome says that it does not have the authority to give new doctrine. At the very least, any doctrine it reveals must have been implied by the teaching of the apostles embodied in scripture and tradition. This foundational principle of the Church proves that she was not infallible when she gave the dogma of transubstantiation to the world and that the doctrine is a fable for it did not exist in the early years and is unreasonable and is not inferred by any early doctrine. If transubstantiation is true then Roman Catholicism is untrue.

The Mass is not part of the Christian faith. It is against it for the scriptures Jesus established said so. The Bible forbids anything that it does not teach so the Mass is against the Bible. It must have had a pagan origin.

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