

NO LAST SUPPER CONNECTION

John is the only gospel that does not have an account of the institution of the Eucharist. This makes many conclude that what John wrote in chapter 6 is about the Eucharist for it is supposed to be too important to be omitted. As if John didn't leave out a pile of other important stuff! The Gospel of Mark omitted important information on the resurrection so that is not strange for a Christian.

Jesus says in John 6 that we must eat his flesh and drink his blood. At the last supper he says we must eat his body and drink his blood. John 6 is thought to be capable of a crude cannibalistic interpretation. The last supper is thought to be capable of a transubstantiation interpretation. This may show that the two are not about the same subject.

Jesus says he is the bread of life meaning his whole person is the bread of life. Then he seems to change his meaning by saying that there is bread he will give and it is his flesh for the life of the world. This is a denial that the bread that is his flesh means his whole person. It refers to him giving his corpse on the cross for the life of the world. The Jews ask how he can give them his flesh to eat but he had not clearly said he meant they would eat anything. But then he says whoever eats his flesh and drinks his blood has eternal life. There is no reason to link this to what the Jews said except coincidence. He does not say his flesh is bread and his blood is wine.

It is supposed that John 6 is about the Last Supper and proves that Jesus did turn bread into his body and wine into his blood at it. The most important thing is to realise that there is no reason to insist that John 6 is concerned or connected with the last supper at all. The same kind of symbolism can be used for different subjects. For example, Jesus might say eat me over the bread meaning to symbolically eat him and also to accept his saving work on one's behalf which is also to eat him. It is irresponsible to assume that John 6 is about the Last Supper when Jesus did not clearly say so. Sounding like a certain something is meant does not prove that it is meant.

Jesus had a supper with the disciples and left the table to put on a towel and wash their feet as a sign of humility. He told Peter who objected that unless he washes him he will have no part with Jesus. In other words, unless Peter consents and lets Jesus be humble to him he cannot be in union with Jesus. This does not fit the notion that Peter got communion with Jesus as in holy communion. The Christian answer is that he may have got it later and that the last supper had not happened yet. But that is only a guess and the text does say supper was over. It does not explain why Jesus uses strong unity language about the footwashing when he could have said with the bread, "Take this and eat it so as to be in union with me or you will have no part with me for this is my body." He would have for if it is really his body then no footwashing or anything can compare to it. Why are we not told when they had the bread and wine? That we are not told is significant. It shows John did not believe in the last supper as told in the other gospels. You would expect the footwashing to be a preparation for that supper if bread and wine are really becoming his body and blood and you would expect the communion language to be used while they eat and drink and not during the footwashing.

Lutherans believe that Jesus became physically present everywhere at the ascension but by substance the same way he is present in the Catholic Mass except that creation is not transubstantiated into him. This enables them to hold that we are fed by Jesus all the time if we are open to him and that there is nothing special about the Eucharist except that it is a memorial. If they are correct then there is no reason to connect John 6 and the gospel last supper accounts.

If Jesus really gave his body and blood at the Eucharist to the apostles on the night before he died, then he according to Catholic doctrine, gave them the Father and Son and Holy Spirit in the communion. This contradicts John 7:39 where it is said that no spirit was given until after the glorification of Jesus in the resurrection. This appeared after the flesh and blood discourse of John 6 too! John did not believe that if Jesus gave bread and wine at the last supper that they were his true body and blood.

Catholicism is wrong to base its notion that bread and wine can be turned into Jesus by the priest at Mass on John's gospel.