

JOHN 6 TOO JUMBLED TO PROVE TRANSUBSTANTIATION ?

The Christian faith finds many important doctrines in the Gospel of John. But what if that Gospel has been tampered with perhaps even by the author which means that insertions are not divinely inspired? Would God write a gospel and have truly inspired bits stuck out like sore thumbs?

Jesus says, "Let us leave now" in John 14:31 and talks so much after that it is 18:1 before they start moving! But if you leave the material out in between you get no flow between 14:31 and 18:1. So something is missing after John 14:31. The gospel of John ends with "Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." But then there is a piece after it about the third appearance of Jesus. The impression is given that we are not to consider that account reliable.

Theological heavyweight Bultmann said that the words in John 6 which Catholics take to be Jesus saying he would turn bread and drink into his body and blood were not written by the author of the fourth gospel. Was he right?

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 Sixth Chapter of the Gospel According to St John is the only real chance the Catholic has of proving that the scriptures teach that at the Eucharist, the bread and wine turn into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. The tradition of the Church certainly said that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus sacramentally but that does not mean they become the body and blood literally. Sacramentally becoming the body and blood of Jesus would mean the bread and wine become symbols of Jesus that really give what they symbolise, the spiritual food of supernatural help from God that was obtained for us through the death and resurrection of Jesus that otherwise we would not have got. They would take on the significance of Jesus.

The chapter is not intended to teach a doctrine like transubstantiation because it's jumbled up. It looks like it has been badly tampered with. It looks like it lies too. It is hardly a good rock to build transubstantiation on.

Jesus multiplied food for people. They part and they catch up with him later. Then Jesus tells them they are running after him to get fed and not because they seen a sign from him where he multiplied food to feed them. They only care about their bellies. They don't care about the sign.

This does not ring true. Surely the magic must have had some impact. And would people risk upsetting a man with magical abilities with their attitude?

They ask him then for a sign and they mention Moses giving the people bread in the desert. It is odd that they would say that after Jesus did something similar! So oddly they are even presented as asking for a sign before they believe though they have just seen a sign!

He says he will not give them bread like Moses but bread that comes from Heaven. He says God gives the real bread from Heaven that nourishes forever and Moses' bread does nothing of the sort. He is not talking about real bread at all. Moses didn't actually give Israel bread. God did and even then it was something that seemed to be bread but was not. Moses' bread seems to mean Moses' teaching in Jesus' use of metaphor.

John 6 flows best if you leave the digression of 36-40 out. In verse 41 - 43 they mutter about how he said he is the bread from Heaven and ask how that could be for they know his parentage. Jesus again rambles and 44 -47 can be omitted. The parts that can be extracted fit best if they are slotted in after Jesus finishes in verse 64. They turn the talk about the eating flesh and drinking blood into a clear metaphor for believing.

When there are problems with flow, John 6 could be context free and therefore it is risky to repose a new doctrine, transubstantiation, on its words.

The text flows best without the bolded part. The bolded is too messy and indicates that it may be an insertion or bad editing. It is probably an interpolation.

Jesus said "Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

52 Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

53 Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. 55 For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever." 59 He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

60 On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?"

61 Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you? 62 Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! 63 The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit[e] and life. 64 Yet there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. 65 He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them."

66 From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

Read John 12 where Jesus supposedly tells not the Greeks who wanted to see him but Philip and Andrew that his hour has come and the grain of wheat needs to fall on the ground and die to become a harvest. Notice the bread of life motif here again and nobody denies it is symbolism here. It is only the Catholics who can't take John 6 as NOT being about sacramental bread. Jesus says that whoever wants to give up his life in this world will gain it and that he will not ask the Father to rescue him from that hour for his purpose is to come for that very hour. He asks God to glorify himself and God speaks from Heaven and says he has done so and will again. People around wonder if they heard thunder or an angel. This shows that people had a problem recognising miracles. If Jesus was a fake that was hardly surprising! Jesus says that now judgment is being given to the world and Satan is to be overcome and that when he is lifted up from the earth he will inspire all men to come to him.

This text does not fit the context at all. It only makes sense if you assume it is in the wrong place and belongs where Jesus is about to be arrested in the garden – an arrest that soon leads to his execution.

A jumbled gospel can hardly be taken as an authority for such a big doctrine as the Catholic Mass.

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