

What about the real presence of Jesus Christ at the communion?

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Topic(s): Worship

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If I understand the question, it asks if the communion emblems become the literal body and blood of Jesus. This doctrine is known as transubstantiation. It originated in the Catholic church around the year 1215. When one considers the verses pertinent to the Lord's Supper, the fallacy of transubstantiation can be easily understood.

In Matthew 26:26-29, Jesus referred to the unleavened bread as His body and the fruit of the vine (grape juice) as His blood. Obviously, the disciples understood Him to be speaking representatively, for His body and blood were right before their very eyes. In Luke's gospel account (22:13-20), Jesus said the bread was His body given for them. Such could not be the case if they consumed it. Also in verse 20, Jesus referred to the cup as being the New Testament in His blood. He was not speaking of the container, but the contents—grape juice. Referring to the same cup, He said it was His blood shed for them. Again, such could not be the case if they consumed it.

When Paul gave corrective instruction to the Corinthians regarding their abuse of the Lord's Supper, he wrote:

“23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread:

24 And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” 1 Corinthians 11:23-28 KJV

Note the repeated references to bread and cup throughout this text. Nowhere does Paul give indication to a literal body and blood. Consider the construction of the phrase “as oft as ye drink it” in verse 25. The pronoun “it” must agree with its antecedent noun. In this case, the antecedent noun is “cup” and not “blood.” Therefore, Jesus refers to drinking the cup, (i.e., its contents = grape juice) and not to drinking blood.

There is another point to be considered in this regard. The eating or drinking of blood was forbidden in each of the three dispensations of God's relationship with man. God forbade the eating or drinking blood in the Patriarchal Age (Genesis 9:4), in the Mosaic Age (Leviticus 17:10), and in the Christian Age (Acts 15:20, 29). There is no argument to circumvent this prohibition.



God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33), neither does He contradict Himself. Therefore, to teach the literal presence of the flesh and blood of Jesus in the

communion is to contradict the clear teaching of Scripture.