

## What Does It Mean to "Receive Christ?"

### Paragraph 1382 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church

"The Mass is at the same time, and inseparably, the sacrificial memorial in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated and the sacred banquet of communion with the Lord's body and blood. But the celebration of the Eucharist sacrifice is wholly directed toward the intimate union of the faithful with Christ through communion. To receive communion is to receive Christ himself who has offered himself for us."

On several occasions, I have been asked the question: "what is the difference between what Catholics believe and what you believe?" Every time, I was almost stumped because I'm hit with an avalanche of differences. Various views of the sacraments, the pope, and the priesthood of the believers were hashed out in fair order. But looking back, I really dropped the ball. The critical difference is between what the "Church" says "receiving Christ" means and what the Bible says about the same.

If you are "Evangelical" in any sense of the word, Paragraph 1382 should be shocking. As the team has read through the Catechism, we never seem to get over the bold proclamation of error. When I meet and talk with Catholics about the teachings of the "Church," they often say things like, "my priest doesn't really believe that" or "the Church says that, but I don't know many who really believe that." The importance of the Catechism is that is the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. It shows every Catholic what he or she is expected to accept as absolute and undebatable truth. In Paragraph 1382, not only does the "Church" declare that taking communion is necessary for salvation, but it also states the communion **IS** salvation.

In Paragraph 1322, the Catechism states that the "holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation." In the Catholic system, one receives the Holy Spirit at Baptism (usually as a baby); then, that commitment is made deeper by confirmation. After confirmation, salvation is made complete with communion, or as they call it, the Holy Eucharist. This communion is a source of grace, Saving Grace. They consider the Lord's Supper so important because, to them, it is the perpetuation of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

The concept of the perpetual sacrifice is construed from Christ's command to "do this in remembrance of me." Somehow, communion stopped being only a memorial of Christ's saving work and became salvation itself. The Catechism goes on to say that the Mass and Communion "re-present" the event of the cross. In essence, every Mass is the Crucifixion of Christ in the present. Another argument for the continuing sacrifice is the connection to the Passover. The Jews have celebrated the Passover of the Exodus in Egypt for thousands of years now. But these Passovers are memorials, not re-Passovers. It happened once. Certainly, "Christ is our Passover," but He is not re-Crucified every time we celebrate the Lord's Supper. 1 Corinthians 5:7 says, "For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." Notice: "is crucified" -- it's past tense. In today's English, the Greek would translate "was crucified." Hebrews 9:28 further drives home this point: "So Christ was once offered to bear

the sins of many..." We do not have to re-crucify our Lord to receive Christ in this present time. The Redeemed have been bought at the time Christ offered Himself according to the will of the Heavenly Father. The Holy Spirit is able to apply that salvation to us without a present crucifixion. "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:10).

Finally, we must separate receiving Christ from taking communion. The Catechism uses the sixth chapter of John to say just that. "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you (John 6:53)." It sure seems like Jesus equates communion with salvation. Yet, the verse is taken out of context. Earlier in the chapter Christ said, "I am the bread of life." The staples of the diet in that day were bread and wine. Without this basic food, a person would die. He also spoke about the manna provided by God in the wilderness. Though the people in the wilderness received miraculous food from God, they died natural deaths. His point is that He is **spiritual food** -- a necessary staple for eternal life. Without a belief in Christ, everlasting life is not possible. Why did not the Catechism quote the 47th verse of chapter 6? "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

"Receiving Christ" means putting your trust in Him as your Savior from sin, death, and damnation. We cannot conquer sin on our own; we are dead in our sins -- DEAD (Eph. 2:1). We cannot be justified by own works, words, and thoughts; all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags (Isa. 64:6) -- FILTHY. Without Christ's righteousness, we all deserve death and hell. If we receive Christ, the Father will see Christ's righteousness when He looks upon us. Why do we receive Christ's perfect record? He died for us -- He took our place. The same resurrection power that brought back Christ saves us and marks us for eternal life.

The Roman Catholic Church uses the teaching of the "Saving Mass" to keep their people afraid of leaving the church. In that system, there is no salvation outside of the "Church." Their view of the mass further drives home that lie. If you trust in Christ as Savior, you become a priest, an ambassador, and a saint in the real Church, the Body of Christ. All this happens apart from the Bishop of Rome and all of his false teachings.

I couldn't leave without this final note. When Pat Buchanan, a Catholic, talked about "grace" while speaking at Bob Jones University in 1996, I knew he didn't mean the saving grace which I believe in. Buchanan's "grace" comes from the sacraments; real grace comes from loving and knowing God through the Bible and prayer. Let's not be fooled by the words of false teachers. They may talk like they believe same way you do, but they have different definitions. More than ever, we need to be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

R.N.D.

If you have never accepted Jesus Christ as Savior, but have come to realize His reality and want to accept His FREE Gift of Eternal Life, you can also do so now, in the privacy of your home. Once you accept Him as Savior, you are spiritually Born Again, and are as assured of Heaven as if you were already there. Then, you can rest assured that nothing will not hurt you spiritually. You will also know

the greatest heart peace that the greatest God can give to one of His own children.

If you would like to become Born Again, and come to know this wonderful heart peace, turn to our [Salvation Page](#) now.

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