

## 1 The Fourth Cup by Dr Scott Hahn

2 Introduction: Dr. Scott Hahn is professor of biblical theology at the Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio and  
3 the director of the St. Paul center for biblical theology. A former Presbyterian minister, Dr. Hahn was once a militant  
4 opponent of the Catholic Church, a Bible believing evangelical who thought the Catholic Church should be publicly  
5 denounced since being received into the church in 1986. His powerful conversion testimony has become the most  
6 widely distributed Catholic audio presentation of all time because of his detailed knowledge of both scripture and  
7 theology, Dr. Hahn has come to be considered one of the most inspirational and influential Catholic theologians and  
8 biblical scholars in the United States today. Now, here is Dr. Scott Hahn.

9  
10 I'd like to spend some time in Scripture dealing with what has become for me, really a crucial topic,  
11 something that Catholic Christians have to understand much better to grow as Catholics but also, they  
12 have to study more from Scripture to help fallen away Catholics rediscover their faith. The topic of course,  
13 is the Holy Eucharist. And I have to say that when I was an anti-Catholic, it was one doctrine above all else  
14 that I opposed. I was opposed to Mary. I was opposed to the Pope. Both of those doctrines seemed to be  
15 somewhat superstitious for teaching that the *Pope is the infallible Vicar of Christ* and for teaching that  
16 *Mary was conceived without sin*. But sooner or later I found scripture to back those up in a lot of  
17 testimony from the early church fathers. But there was one thing that I found **extremely repulsive** about  
18 the Catholic Church, and that was that **they instilled an idolatrous sense within Catholics to worship a**  
19 **wafer**. You have to realize that some people are anti Catholic because of bigotry or cultural prejudice. I  
20 didn't fall into that category. My concern was, if that **wafer up on their altars is not God** as they claim,  
21 then this act of adoration is nothing short of idolatry, a sacrilege, a desecration of the true God. And so I  
22 harbored a very deep conviction that the Mass was a sacrilege; that the Eucharist involved idolatrous  
23 worship. It took years of study and prayer for God to blast me out of that sort of misunderstanding. What  
24 I'd like to share in the next 45 minutes are the several steps by which I discovered through Scripture and,  
25 quite inadvertently, what the Catholic Church teaches about the Holy Mass. The stage was really set for  
26 this discovery process.

27 One Sunday morning, I attended Lanesville Congregational Church, which is where criminals were going  
28 while we were attending seminary, and my favorite professor and my dear friend, and Hebrew instructor  
29 was preaching a sermon that Sunday and Pastor Helgenberger was dwelling upon just briefly for a few  
30 minutes, Jesus death on the cross as it's recorded in John's gospel, and in passing, he quoted from  
31 John 19:30 where our Lord cries out, *It is finished*. And then in passing, he asked the question, *did Jesus*  
32 *mean when He said it is finished?* Now my mind immediately went toward a customary interpretation  
33 that I'd heard from many people before that it refers to Jesus' work of redemption, that once He died on  
34 the cross, then there was nothing more for us to do to be saved. But then he pointed out how in Romans  
35 4:25, St. Paul teaches how it was **essential for Jesus to be resurrected for us to be justified**. So our  
36 **salvation is not complete with the end of Jesus sufferings, because His resurrection is an essential part of**  
37 **our salvation as well**.

38 I sat there listening, wondering, *Okay, what does the eight refer to?* And then he had the gall to say, and  
39 for the whole congregation, *...that's a question I haven't found an answer to. Let's move on*. As soon as he  
40 said that, I'm like, *Oh, wait a second. You don't do that*". I was the kind of student who found that type of  
41 remark especially troublesome because I was always that *Socratic gadfly* who liked to raise the hard  
42 questions and search out the hard answers. And so frankly, I didn't hear another word of that sermon. On  
43 that particular Sunday morning. I just began burrowing through Scripture to try to find an answer to the  
44 question that he had so impolitely raised without knowing the answer himself. And it took me weeks and  
45 it ended up taking me months to find the answer. And the ultimate answer came in 1986 when I joined  
46 the Catholic Church and received communion for the first time, but let's back up a few steps. The first  
47 stage of my discovery process of trying to figure out what did Jesus refer to when He said *It is finished?* I  
48 wanted to back up, I wanted to take a few steps backwards and figure it out. *Okay, what is the context for*  
49 *interpreting Jesus' sufferings on the cross, as well as His last sayings?* It's clear that when you back up and

study this in context, that Jesus begins offering Himself up as a voluntary sacrifice when He begins celebrating the Last Supper.

1). So, from the first day my discovery process began with studying the Old Testament background to Jesus' Last Supper, I was especially focused on the occasion which was the Jewish Passover feast. I think all of us are aware of the fact that the Jews celebrate Passover with great awe and reverence. It really is the most remarkable and venerable feast of the sacred calendar. And it harkens all the way back to the time when the Jews found themselves in bondage down in Egypt. And God brought about plagues and the 10th plague marked the first part of Egypt for destruction. Whereas the Israelite families were instructed by Moses to find an unblemished male lamb, to slaughter it, sprinkle the lamb's blood upon the doorposts and in that way, their firstborn sons would be spared. And so, the evening of the Passover, all the Israelite families in Egypt, slaughtered the lamb, sprinkled the blood, roasted the meat, ate the meal standing up, because as soon as they were done, what did they do? They fled out of Egypt, at the leadership of Moses, out across the Red Sea over to Mount Sinai, where of course the 10 commandments were given, and the covenant was sealed between God and Israel through animal sacrifice, and a communion meal. So, the Passover in its original setting, was something that prepared Israel to be redeemed out of slavery and brought into a covenant relationship with God. Now, part of this research for me, led to the discovery that for the ancient Hebrews the covenant was more than a contract that involves nothing less than a sacred family bond. And in this case, a sacred family bond between Yahweh, the God of gods and Israel, the people of God, the family of Yahweh throughout Scripture. This covenant bond is expressed in family terms. Yahweh, the father Israel is His firstborn son, or Yahweh is the bridegroom, and the Israelite people are the bride of the Lord. That's found in Jeremiah, Ezekiel 16. Hosea 2, in many places that harken back to the covenant that was sealed between God and His people there on Mount Sinai. In light of this covenant viewpoint, then the liturgy and the ritual and the sacrifices conducted as part of the covenant were meant to signify and strengthen the family bond of communion between God and His people. That's the essential purpose and meaning behind the covenant liturgy, and ritual sacrifices of the Old Testament. They signify the family bond between God and His people and at the same time, they strengthen that bond. Now with this idea of the Covenant in mind, I recognized something that I was recognizing back in the early 80s, and that is Jesus. Only use this all-important term covenant on one single occasion as it's recorded in the gospels, that is at the Last Supper. For instance, in Mark 14:23-24 we read, "... and He took a cup and when He had giving thanks and (the Greek word there is "Eucharist" stay sauce we get the word Eucharist comes from Eucharist, though to give thanks) when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And He said to them, *This is My blood of the new covenant, which is poured off for many.* This is the one and only occasion when Jesus uses the word "covenant", because this is the occasion when He seals a New Covenant as a new family bond between us and Himself.

This was during the Passover meal during the Last Supper, as He was preparing Himself to be offered up as a voluntary sacrifice. It's also of course when He instituted the Eucharist so in His own mind, Jesus is both the Lamb of God to be sacrificed, as well as the firstborn Son of God. Think back to ancient Israel experience in Egypt when the firstborn sons were slaughtered, or the lambs were slaughtered. In this case, Jesus takes into Himself both images to fulfill.

2). Now, the second step of my own research and discovery came when I focused on how Jews in Jesus day celebrated the Passover liturgy. You may have heard of the Seder meal. The Passover Seder is an ancient liturgy by which you have the Passover celebrated according to a fourfold structure. The Passover meal, for the longest time going back as far as we can tell, has been divided into four parts. And these four parts are reflected in four cups of wine that are consumed by the participants in the Passover meal. So, when you study the Passover Seder meal, you discover that the first cup (Part 1) is part of the preliminary course which begins with the Festival Blessing. Jesus would have led His disciples in a prayer known as the Kadosh, which would in effect, sanctify, consecrate and bless the Passover celebration, and then they would pass around a dish of bitter herbs, hearkening back to the bitterness of bondage as slaves in Egypt. And after the herbs, the first cup of wine was passed and drunk by all the participants,

then you proceed into the second part. (Part 2) The second part of the meal begins with the recital of **Exodus 12**, which is the **Passover narrative**, the original story of how God delivered Israel from the 10th plague, the destroying angel, and as soon as the Passover story is told, and it's usually told in a question/answer format, the youngest member of the meal asks the questions and the oldest member in this case would have been our Lord answering those questions. And as soon as that recital is done, **Psalm 113** is sung by all it's known as the **Great Hallel**. "**Hallel**" means "**praise**". That's where we get the word "**hallelujah**". It literally means *praise yah*, which is short for *Yawei hallelujah*. They sing Psalm 113 At the end of the second stage, and then they proceed on to drink the **second cup**. Immediately after the second cup is passed around and everybody gets a chance to drink, they proceed into the **main course** of the meal, which consists of the **roasted lamb**, along with the **unleavened bread** after the unleavened bread is eaten, the celebrant of the Passover passes around the **third cup** of wine. This is known as the **Cup of Blessing**. *The Cup of Blessing* is undoubtedly the cup that Jesus blessed according to the Gospels. Now after the cup of blessing is passed around and everybody has a chance to drink from it, you come to the climax of the meal, because at that point, they sing the great Hallel, which consists of Psalms 114, 115, 116, 117, and 18. After that long song is sung by all, the **fourth cup** is passed. And this is the **Cup of Consummation**. It represents the **climax of the Seder meal** or of the sacred Passover. Now we know that the cup that Jesus blessed and passed around the cup of which He consecrated was the third cup. We know that because as soon as He has passed that around, we read in the next verse, **Mark 14:26**, and when they had sung a hymn, which would be the great Hillel according to scholars, in fact, in 1Cor 10:16, Paul identifies the Eucharistic cup that we celebrate with the Mass as the **Cup of Blessing**, the Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not a **Koinonia**? He says, **...a communion in the blood of Christ**. But then a significant problem arises at this point. I didn't know about it because I'm a Gentile. But when you read Jewish sources, where Jewish scholars and students are studying how Jesus conducted the Passover meal at the Last Supper, they balk. There seems to be a serious disorder, a serious problem in the sequence of a narrative that the Gospels present. It's not lost to Jewish readers, even if it is lost to us Gentile readers. For them, Jesus passes around the **third cup**, and they drink from the **third cup**. Then they proceed to sing the psalm, but "*...as soon as they had sung the hymn, Jesus and the disciples depart...*" and go over to the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:26), (the Mount of Olives for us), because we're so familiar with the story, we say, *Ho hum*. But when a Jewish scholar reads this, he says, "*Whoa, back up. Something's wrong here. Not only is the fourth cup omitted but the climax of the Passover meal is somehow missed.*" The fundamental purpose and meaning of the Passover meal is really expressed in the consummation, the **Cup of Consummation**. And so Jewish scholars and also others who are experts in the ancient Passover, comment on how disruptive the sequence seems. But then when you look at it more closely you discover in **Mark 14:25**, right before they sing the hymn and go out to the Mount of Olives, they're drank from the **third cup**, listen to what Jesus says, *Truly, I say to you, I shall not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom*. He said that after drinking the third cup, but before drinking the fourth cup and as soon as He said, *they sang the great Hillel ...and they went out into the night*. It's almost as though Jesus meant not to drink what He was expected to drink. Now, a few scholars speculate that maybe psychological factors account for Jesus' omission here. Perhaps He was so troubled, so distressed, so psychologically upset that He just couldn't be bothered with you know, precision in liturgical rubrics. They point to Mark 14:32, where we read of how Jesus began to be greatly distressed and troubled, and He said to them, *My soul is very sorrowful, even unto death*. Perhaps He was just too upset to be bothered with the fourth cup. Well, this analysis may sound plausible, and I think it is, in fact, improbable. It seems highly doubtful to me and others that Jesus would forget and interrupt the Passover liturgy, after expressly declaring His intention not to drink again of the fruit of the vine. Right before singing the great Hillel. In other words, why would He declare Himself so plainly before acting in such a disorderly manner? It seems intentional, it doesn't seem inadvertent. It doesn't seem to be spawned from some psychological disorder or distress. So why then did He choose not to drink of the fourth cup? And again, I want to stress the importance of this. I mean, you might not notice this and reading the gospels, I didn't either until I went further into research. But can you imagine if you went to Mass on Sunday, and

the priest pronounce the *Words of Consecration*, and then entirely skipped communion, and proceeded on to the benediction? Do you think you'd notice that? Of course, you would. And so, Jews notice when the consummation and climax of the meal is skipped over. So why then did Jesus choose not to drink?

3). The third stage of my discovery process occurred when I followed Him out into the night over the Mount of Olives, because when you follow Him, you discover that He enters into the garden of Gethsemane and He enters there for prayer. So, focus with me on how He prayed in Matthew 26:39. We read, *"...and going a little farther, He fell on His face, and He prayed, My Father (Abba), if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. Nevertheless, not as I will, but thou wilt be done..."* and three times all together, Jesus prayed to Allah, His father, to take away quote, unquote, **this cup**. Now I think an obvious question arises at this point. **What is this cup that Jesus is talking about?** Some scholars suggest that it's a reference back to the Old Testament prophets in **Isaiah 51:17** and **Jeremiah 25:15**. The prophets refer to **the Cup of Wrath**, which certain people have to drink down to the dregs because of their sin. But the connection seems rather indirect. I suspect that with the Passover as the background, a more direct connection between this cup which Jesus "prays to pass", this the direct connection, is to be drawn between that and the **Fourth Cup** which Jesus skipped, for which Jesus did not receive. And in fact, before going out into the night, recall how Jesus said, *Truly I say to you, I will not taste the fruit of the vine...* until His kingdom comes into us, until He comes into His kingdom.

4). Now, the next stage of my discovery process was more subtle, a little more difficult for me to really figure out. But I began to focus upon **John's** Gospel narrative because after all, he was the **only eyewitness of all the subsequent events following the arrest, the trial and the execution. He was the one at the foot of the cross**. So as the eyewitness I think it's helpful to study what he has to say about all of these matters. It's interesting that John seems to understand the coming of Jesus' kingdom in a way that is almost ironic. Normally, when we hear Jesus' words, *I won't taste the fruit of the vine until my kingdom is established*. We think of the Second Coming, His final advent at some point in the future, when He returns to establish His kingdom. But in John's gospel, you discover that **Jesus' Kingdom** is not primarily a political or military institution. It is **a manifestation of mercy and of divine love**. In other words, it's when Jesus Christ is lifted up that the ruler of this world is cashed out, and Jesus is enthroned as king. This is the language that you find in **John 12:23-33**. Jesus says, *"... when I am lifted up, I will draw all men to myself..."* and He speaks of this time as being the judgment of the world when the ruler or the king of this world is cast out. And then later on in John 18:33-37, when Jesus is being tried by Pontius Pilate, when He's at His weakest, His most vulnerable moment, it's that occasion, when Jesus speaks more about His kingdom than in any other occasion. He speaks about the ***nature of His kingdom being truth***, and Pilate's cynical response is, *What is truth?* But then Pilate says, *"So then you are a king"*. The he dressed Jesus with ridicule in a purple robe and a crown of thorns. And then in John 19:14, Now it was a day of preparation of the Passover about the sixth hour, he (Pilate) said to the Jews, *Behold your king, they cried out, Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him*. Precisely at the sixth hour, John notices. Just coincidentally, ***it's the sixth hour on the day of preparation, that the Passover lamb was to be slain and here the Lamb of God is being sentenced to die on the precise moment when the Passover lamb was led off to die***. John also notices a few other important details as an eyewitness, for instance, and John 19:23-24, John mentions that Jesus was only wearing the garments that were divided up among the soldiers, but He was also wearing a seamless linen garment. And the Greek it's a **"chitone"**. They had to roll dice for that one. What's interesting is that t word in Greek, *chitone*, describing Jesus seamless linen garment, is precisely the word used in Exodus 28:4 and Leviticus 16, ***which describes what the high priest would wear when offering the sacrifice of the Passover lamb***. He too, was wearing a ketone, the seamless linen garment. John notices that Jesus is not just the victim, the lamb, and the sacrifice, He is also the offering priest as well, **both priest and victim all in one**. John also is the only one as the eyewitness the only disciple there to have the courage to stay with Jesus and His mother at the foot of the cross. John alone notices in John 19:33-36 that Jesus was the only one crucified that day among the three not to have any of his bones broken. Remember that the soldiers broke the legs of the two thieves to expedite their deaths shortly after Jesus died. And John notices thus, *... to fulfill a scripture not a bone shall be broken*.



Now, what does that refer to? You go back to Exodus 12:46 where God stipulates to Moses, *Go tell them to take an unblemished Passover lamb, from the flock to slaughter for sacrifice*. But in Exodus 12:46, God demands that the Passover lamb must not have any broken bones. So, Jesus is both priest and victim from beginning to end. And John sees it all. And John prepares us for this. When you read John's gospel, going back all the way to the beginning, how does John depict Jesus being introduced to all of us? John the Baptist does the introducing, in John 1:29, John the Baptist points to Jesus and says, *Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*. **In other words, from the beginning of John's gospel, until the end of John's gospel, Jesus is presented as the Passover Lamb of the New Covenant, who has been sent to take away our sins.** That is the background we need to understand what Jesus is doing there on the cross. Gradually, these themes revolving around the Passover, and the Kingdom that Christ was establishing, began to converge in my mind. I began to study more closely the passage where Jesus speaks, *It is finished*. For one thing I noticed that Jesus, our King, our priest, and Pascal victim in His hour of glory while suffering on the cross, says, "...in order to fulfill the scripture, I thirst..." He (John) says, "...after this, Jesus, knowing that all is now finished, said, "...in order to fulfill the scripture, I thirst". Now think about that for a minute. Realize that Jesus had not just noticed at this precise moment, *Gee, I'm thirsty*. Obviously, for hours before this moment, Jesus body had been wracked not only with pain, but with thirst as well. In other words, this is not just a passing comment that He makes moments before expiring. This is something that **He is saying deliberately with intended significance**. He says **in order to fulfill the scripture**. I first realized how hard it is to speak when you're on the cross. When Jesus was crucified, what was the manner of death? It wasn't blood loss, that was actually minimal, He lost far more blood in the scourging than in the crucifixion. It wasn't the pain either, they could actually manage the pain. The way a victim of crucifixion died was through slow asphyxiation. It was grueling torture. While you are on the cross, your muscles collapse. your ribcage then collapses, and your lungs slowly fill up with body fluids until you slowly drown to death in your own body fluids. The only way to breathe is to pick yourself up. But what are you picking yourself up upon? The spike through your feet, so you only breathe when it's absolutely necessary. Imagine if it's that hard to breathe, how much more difficult it is in the later hours to speak or to utter a word so here's Jesus literally breathing by picking Himself up to say, *I thirst*, to fulfill the scripture. And what happens? John notices in this chapter that a **hyssop branch** they take from a little bowl of sour wine right by the cross. And there was a sponge, and they took the sponge, and they dipped it in the sour wine, and they lifted it up to Jesus lips. John records that but so does Matthew, so does Mark and so does Luke - all four Evangelists record how wine *was lifted up to Jesus' lips*. But Matthew, Mark and Luke do not tell us whether or not Jesus drank from the line. Did He receive it or not? Because after all, recall how on the way up to Calvary, what did they offer Jesus when He was carrying the cross? They offered Him wine mingled with Gaul, which is an opiate, a kind of painkiller. And on the way up to Calvary, when Jesus realized what it was they were offering, what did He do? He refused it. After all, He said, *"I won't taste the fruit of the vine until His kingdom is manifested"*. So here He is saying this when in great pain, *I thirst*. Matthew, Mark and Luke all record how the sour wine is lifted to His lips, but only John records whether or not Jesus received the wine. And John not only notices whether or not He did, but he notices that it was *lifted high up to Jesus' lips on a hyssop branch*, which just coincidentally enough happens to be the branch stipulated back in Exodus 12 as the branch used to sprinkle the lambs' blood on the doorposts. Just another coincidence, right? Hardly. And John notices that as soon as He received the sour wine, He said, *It is finished*. All at once, it occurred to me what it was that was now finished. He said, He would not taste of the fruit of the vine. He omitted the fourth cup. **He was in the process of celebrating Passover, even while He was in the process of fulfilling the Old Covenant Passover by transforming it into the Passover of the New Covenant through the Eucharist**. He deliberately interrupted the celebration of the Old Covenant Passover in order to bring about the completion and transformation so that it would become the new covenant Passover. All at once it dawned on me when Jesus said, *It is consummated* after drinking the wine. What was He referring to? The Passover, which He had begun in the upper room with His disciples while instituting the Eucharist, which He had temporarily suspended, He now completes and concentrates by drinking the wine that would

correspond to the Fourth Cup of Consummation. Now when this occurred to me, I began to realize something. I had an inadequate understanding of the nature of Jesus sacrifice as a non-Catholic, I've always thought that the, you know, here's a certain question, when does Jesus' sacrifice begin? And the typical answer that I would have given was well, when He is up on the cross at Calvary, or perhaps when He is scourged, or perhaps when He is beaten, spat upon, or when He is carrying the cross. All of these are sacrificial moments, but especially when that first spike would be driven into His hands or His feet, that is when His sacrifice begins, right? Wrong - once you understand that the Passover is the background to Jesus' sacrifice. Then when does Jesus Passover sacrifice begin? - When He is celebrating Passover. He took the bread and He said, *This is my body.* Then He took the cup, and he said, *This cup is the blood of the new covenant, He symbolically separates His body and His blood through transforming these elements.* By signifying the separation of your body and your blood, what else are you signifying? If you separate my body from my blood that signifies death, right? *Jesus begins the voluntary sacrifice of Himself there through the Eucharist.* In celebrating the Passover and consecrating the elements, that's when Jesus' sacrifice begins. It doesn't begin with the scourging. It doesn't begin with the carrying of the cross. It doesn't begin by hammering a spike. It was hands and feet because the sacrifice of Christ is a Passover sacrifice. It begins during Passover. But then that raises a second question. When then does Passover end? Does the Passover end when Jesus goes out into the night and travels to the Mount of Olives and goes in the Garden of Gethsemane? Hardly, because they hadn't received yet from the Fourth Cup, the Cup of Consummation. Just as Jesus' sacrifice doesn't begin on Calvary, the Calvary sacrifice begins in the upper room during Passover Seder, the Passover doesn't end when they leave the Upper Room. The Passover doesn't end until Jesus receives the wine on the cross. That is the consummation of the Passover. And that is the point at which Jesus finishes the transformation of the Old Covenant, Passover into the New Covenant, the Passover that we call the Eucharist.

Now, I think that this makes clear enough, since it began to make a lot of sense to me. About two years before my conversion, I began to work through the Gospel of John one more time just to see if anything else would support that. And sure enough, I found in John 6 strong support. Earlier this morning, I read John 6: 52-56, Let me just quote a portion of that passage once more. That's when Jesus says,

*Truly, truly I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, you have no life in you. He eats my flesh and drinks my blood is eternal life, and I will raise him up the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in Me and I in him.*

Now, when did Jesus speak these words? -during the Bread of Life discourse, but when did He give the Bread of Life discourse? In John 6:4, we read around the time of the Passover, Jesus proceeds to multiply the loaves, and then gives the Bread of Life discourse and speaks of how they must eat His flesh and drink His blood. In other words, a year or two before His crucifixion at Passover time, Jesus the Lamb of God, speaks of how we must eat His flesh and drink His blood. It is significant that it was at Passover when Jesus speaks this way, because the Passover represents the beginning of a sacrifice, just as Calvary represents the end of the Passover. Now, I've already suggested that when Jesus received the wine that represents the end of a Passover for Him. He said, *"I won't taste the fruit of the vine again"*, and then he tastes a bit later on. But here's a question for all of you. It was a question that occurred to me about 1985, just a few months before I joined the church, *If the Passover ends for Jesus with the fourth cup on the cross, there's something more that remains for us. When do we go about celebrating Passover?* It takes a little bit of Jewish thinking here to answer this question. Think back to ancient Egypt. If the ancient Israelites were along with me, and we were in bondage and we celebrated the Passover that night, it wouldn't be enough for us to slaughter the lamb, it wouldn't be enough to sprinkle his blood, it wouldn't be enough for us to roast his flesh and eat the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs. The lamb itself had to be eaten, not just the unleavened bread and the bitter herbs. You had to eat the lamb. Suppose you don't like lamb meat. Suppose your family decided, *We will slaughter the lamb. We'll sprinkle the blood or roast the flesh, but we won't eat it.* What would happen? The next morning your firstborn son would be dead. You had to eat the lamb. You see God required an animal sacrifice ; He was not primarily interested

in seeing lots of gore and guts. He didn't want to see lots of bloodshed, and He didn't want to smell lots of flesh being roasted. The primary purpose was NOT sacrificing animals, was NOT killing them, it was **consuming them in a communion meal, which symbolized the covenant family.** The reason why God orders animal sacrifice is to bring about a communion meal to signify our family unity with Him. So when the Passover lamb is slaughtered, and his blood is sprinkled, something ultimate still remains and that is eating the lamb. You had to eat the lamb. If you didn't, it wouldn't take. So Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God. He is slain. His blood is shed, but something remains for us to do, our lamb's slaughter. his blood is sprinkled but we have to eat the lamb. It isn't enough for us just to have them die, just to have his bloodshed if he is the Passover lamb, then we have to receive the Passover meal. This is what I discovered Paul had in mind in 1 Corinthians 5:7, **"Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed. Therefore..."** what? As a non-Catholic, I used to say, *Once Christ has been sacrificed, nothing more remains for us to do except to celebrate and to accept our salvation.* But that is not what Paul says. Paul goes on to say, *"... Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed for us therefore let us celebrate the festival. Not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of truth.* He's talking about Christ, our Passover lamb being sacrificed, and we still have an additional obligation. We have to keep the feast. And how do we do it with unleavened bread? What feast is he talking about?- The Passover of the new covenant which Christ instituted in the Eucharist. That's why he goes on in 1Cor 10:16 to say, *"...The cup of blessing which we bless, (which is a reference to the third cup of the Passover), is it not a communion in the blood of Christ and the unleavened bread which we break? Is it not a communion in the body of Christ?* Then he goes on in the next chapter to say, *"... For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment upon himself.* In other words, St. Paul teaches quite clearly that once Christ has received this wine, once the Passover has been fulfilled for Him, something still remains for us to do and what is that? **We have to receive the lamb. We have to eat the lamb, the whole purpose behind the resurrection, and the ascension and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. These represent the means by which God makes the body of the lamb universally distributable.** So that we may all feast upon Christ, the priest and victim. I began teaching this to some seminarians, and I had one ex Catholic in my class, as he heard me discussing this, raise his hand I said, *What is it John?* He said, *You know that a lot of the stuff you're saying sounds very Catholic.* At the time, I wasn't really heavy on being Catholic or sounding Catholic. And I said, *Well, you know, maybe to you.* And he said, *No, the whole idea that the sacrifice of Calvary begins with Passover in the Eucharist, and the Passover doesn't end until Calvary, what you're really saying then, is that the Eucharist and Calvary are one in the same sacrifice.* That's it. Yeah, that's what I'm saying, that is what the Baltimore Catechism teaches! Well, I never heard of the Baltimore Catechism, and I tried to assure him that this was not a Catholic doctrine. I didn't want to lose my job, but I felt challenged to check it out for myself. And as I did, lo and behold, I discovered that not only was this fully consistent with Catholic doctrine, but Catholic doctrine took me even farther, to show me how the whole liturgy of the Eucharist is based upon the Passover. I had never attended Mass once in my life and as I began reading some of the doctors and the saints and the Fathers of the Church, I discovered that for them, the **whole Eucharistic liturgy is nothing but the New Covenant Passover.** In fact, I discovered that in the book of Revelation, where Jesus is introduced to us in chapter five as *the lamb*, from that point on, in Revelation 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, practically the rest of the book Revelation, **you have nothing but a prolonged description of heavenly liturgy.** And the whole thing is celebrated by this priest and this king, that John saw looking like a lamb. And so Catholic scholars, and I discovered to my shock, Protestant scholars were arguing from the very beginning of the Church, John's vision of the marriage supper of the Lamb in the heavenly assembly, where the liturgy was celebrated by all the saints and the angels that represents the blueprint for the Mass from the very beginning. **The Mass is based upon the liturgy of Heaven and the liturgy of Heaven is a New Covenant Passover based upon the Passover. meal, and the main celebrates, is Christ, described as both priest and victim.** He is the King and He is the Lamb of God looking as though He has been slain. As I discovered this, I got up enough courage with God's grace to attend Mass for the first time. One day at noon, during a weekday celebration in the basement chapel at **Gesu**, the university parish at Marquette. As I walked in, I wasn't sure what to

expect. I had been conditioned by my own training to regard the Mass as the most Blasphemous Act of sacrilege a man can commit where Jesus is re-crucified, where Jesus is re-sacrificed, where Jesus bleeds again, where Jesus suffers again, where Jesus dies again, as I sat there in the back pew as an observer I watched to my shock, how this fully biblical liturgy unfolded before my eyes. I could hardly contain myself at a couple of points. I wanted to stand up and say, *Wait a second. This is from exodus from Isaiah, this is Zechariah Do you realize what you're doing?* It was so exciting. And then when the actual Eucharistic liturgy began, I noticed how the prayers themselves were based upon the most ancient Jewish Passover prayers. The words, phrases, sentences were lifted entirely from the ancient Passover that Jesus and the disciples were celebrating. This was an unbiblical sacrilege, no way. It dawned on me that this is the covenant family meal of Jesus and His brothers and sisters. When the priest got around to pronouncing the words of consecration, and he elevated the host and then the cup, I realized, I mean, I have to say, the last drop of doubt drained away from my brain and from my heart. I said under my breath, **My Lord and my God, it is you.** The Lamb of God, the host of this banquet, and the meal as well, inviting all the children of God to the table to celebrate the fact that we are God's family. We share flesh and blood; we share the same spiritual supper. We are the household of the Blessed Trinity. I could hardly contain myself. By the time the benediction was pronounced, people began leaving after a few moments of Thanksgiving. I was still sitting in stunned amazement. I couldn't tell anybody because I didn't know exactly what had happened. But I have to tell you the next day I was back to the same noonday mass and the next and the next. And within a week's time, I have to say I had fallen head over heels in love with our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. I had never known that He was there. I never had the certainty that that was truly Jesus Christ, *My Lord and my Lamb*, but it was and the more we study the Bible, the more we understand The Covenant. The more we do a little bit of study on the Passover, the more we come to see that the Catholic doctrine of the Mass is rooted and grounded in the Bible, **but you need the Old Testament as well as the New Testament.** That's where most Bible Christians get off because the Church is never taught that Jesus is being re-sacrificed, that He is being re-crucified, that He is bleeding and suffering again and again. Hardly. The Book of Revelation and the Baltimore Catechism both present Christ as the celebrant, and the meal, the host and the victim, but it doesn't bleed. He doesn't suffer. He doesn't die anymore. **We receive the body of the glorified Lamb of Christ, the Lamb of God.** Do we understand what we've been given? Or do we take it for granted? Here we have so many fallen away Catholics, so many anti-Catholics, newer ones, former Catholics, bitterly opposed to the Mass and the Eucharist. And so many of them have never heard a biblical explanation. **They're in Bible study after Bible study, but nobody's presenting them from the Bible the meaning of the Mass.** They are studying the manual, enjoying the meal and we don't even know the recipe or the ingredients. So frequently, because we're not soaking ourselves in Sacred Scripture, we're not reading, we're not studying. A little bit of study will go a long, long way. Can you imagine the triumph that Satan is celebrating right now? Because right now, while America can boast of 20 to 25 million Roman Catholics, do you know what the second largest religious grouping is among Americans? The Southern Baptists are 14 million, but they come in third place. The second largest religious grouping of Americans consists of 15 million fallen away non practicing Catholics - 15 million baptized brothers and sisters who no longer come home for dinner. If our hearts don't break, then they must be ice cold. We need new ones. Are we appreciating what we receive enough to love them back home? Are we loving God and our brothers and sisters who have left the family who run away, who've been kidnapped by false teachers? Do we love them enough to roll up our sleeves and get down on our knees and learn our faith well enough to answer their questions and help them with their objections, so that they can see what this is? I've been in the front few before on occasion, when I see the line form and all these people go forward and traipse up and stick out their hand or their tongues and the priest says, *Body of Christ, amen. Body of Christ, amen.* Just recently, I was at a church, and I was just watching out of the corner of my eye all these people receive the *body of Christ, Amen* and go back to the seat. Sometimes they just leave and go to the parking lot and drive away, *Body of Christ; Body of Christ.* Also, it dawned on me, *"Do they realize what they're getting?"* I mean, I looked around and the sanctuary of the church was probably half empty. And people were leaving very shortly afterwards. And I



thought to myself, what would they do if instead of saying, “*The body of Christ.*”, the priest was saying, “\$10 million, amen. \$10 million...”, and then he was handing out bundles of cold cash. What do you suppose would happen to your average Catholic parish every day you go forward, and the priests would say, “\$10 million. Amen. Amen. I think the communion lines would be miles long, right? We'd have everybody converting. Well, you know what? We're getting more than \$10 million. Who do we love more God or gold?

**We receive enough grace to make us all saints from one communion.** You know, we are just tapping into it but are we preparing ourselves? Are we prepared? Do we pray before we go to the Church? Are we disposing ourselves to receive all the fullness of grace that we have there? - Megatons of grace, dynamite and then so we have in the Holy Eucharist, the grace we need to have our lives transformed. We have in the Holy Mass, the grace we need to go out and change our world. Instead, we're asleep at the wheel. **We are sitting in poverty on top of Fort Knox,** not tapping the treasure that is ours by birthright. Let's go to the Lord and let's ask Him for more grace, to soften our hearts, to prepare our souls to receive our Lord with FAR holier dispositions

In the name of the Father and of the Son of the Holy Spirit, we pray.

*Almighty God our Heavenly Father, we thank you for the covenant that you've established through Jesus Christ in his body, and in his blood. We have a family bond that unites us to you Oh bless the Trinity. Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We wish to be enveloped in your love and your communion of life. Yet we are weak. We are ignorant, we are sinful. We are miserable wretches who can't even admit it to ourselves. Have pity on us. Oh, Lord, look upon your wayward children. We're so proud of our technology, our raw material wealth, our economic and political strength. Have pity on us. Give us new grace. Show us more mercy cause us to come back with FAR holier dispositions to receive the fullness of grace even as we receive the whole Christ. I pray or Lord for your Holy Spirit to move in our hearts to soften them to move in our minds to toughen them by making us understand and believe and love, the truth, which Christ has revealed the truth which Christ embodies, you know, each person here today and what they're afflicted with what they suffer from, whether it's their marriage, their family or their job, whether it's a bodily ailment show us a Lord, how close you really are in the Holy Eucharist, that we might fly to thee. That we might gain all the help we need from the forgive us also for our waywardness and our ingratitude. You*

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#### Website Resources

*Jesus and Jewish Roots of the Eucharist* Dr Brant Pitre

*Biblical Walk through the Mass* (Ascension Press)

*I Thirst* (Mother Theresa of Calcutta)

*Chitone* (Purpose of the Seamless Coat of Jesus at the Cross)

*Gaul* (What is purpose of Gaul in the story of the Crucifixion)