

THE 4TH CUP & LAMB OF GOD



Audio Transcript

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for taking time to listen to this presentation. I'd like to begin by offering a word of prayer. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Dear Lord, our God, we thank You for this wonderful opportunity to share this message. We ask You, Lord, to open our ears to hear Your word, and our minds to understand their meanings. We also ask You, Lord, to put within us a burning desire to study and learn the Bible, and to increase our time spent, and to take what we learn and implement it into our daily lives. We ask these things in Jesus' holy and precious name. Amen. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. I would like to start by asking you two questions. One: Can you give an accurate definition of the phrase: "Lamb of God"? We all know that this is one of the names used for Jesus, like Messiah, Savior, Son of Man, or Christ. But exactly what is the importance of the name "Lamb of God"? And why is it important to me as a Catholic? The second question I would like to ask you is: Why the Catholic Church would offer The Holy Eucharist every day at every Mass throughout the world in over 3000 languages. What knowledge do they have that would make them feel compelled to do this for thousands of years? In answering this question, we'll see why the Catechism of the Catholic Church states that "The Eucharist is 'the source and summit of the Christian life.'" (CC 1324) Today I hope to answer these two questions. And if you have not already done so, please print the link labeled "handout" on your screen. It's in PDF form. You'll need this handout as a reference as this presentation continues.

Before we get started today I want to go over the handout with you. But don't let it intimidate you; we are going to go through this really quickly. We're going to cover everything in here, but it's going to be fast. This handout was prepared for you so that you wouldn't have to flip through your Bible in search of Bible verses as I'm speaking to you. I actually went online and copied and pasted relevant Bible verses from the New American Bible. These verses are taken from the same Bible that the Catholic Church reads out of every Sunday at Mass. I'm telling you this because it's very important for you to realize the source that we're going to quote from. Now there's a small section in the handout that is written on the Jewish Passover meal; I didn't copy that from the Bible. I put these notes together from speaking with a Jewish individual, from looking at sources on the Internet, and even attending a Passover meal. Everything else here is copied exactly from the

Bible. So, if somebody asks you, “What source is this from?”, you can answer, “The New American Bible; the Bible that the Catholic Church reads from every Sunday all across America.”

IMPRIMATUR

Now, there are a lot of Bibles out there, so be careful what you read. There are many versions or translations of the Bible that are different. You may be asking yourself, “What version or translation should I use?” The Catholic Church has gone to great lengths to make sure the Bible is interpreted correctly from its original language. Before the Church approves an English translation, years and years, and really hundreds of years have gone into the study of the original text and languages that were originally written in Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic. They have gone to great lengths to review for accuracy and understand these languages as they existed in the Old Testament and in Jesus’ time here on Earth. After a text or translation is reviewed by many experts with numerous degrees, if it is accepted, it is given the Church’s seal of approval, called an “imprimatur stamp.” This stamp is usually in the beginning pages of a book or a Bible. And what this stamp means is that the Church has approved the translation. So look for it. I mention this before I speak to you because usually somebody comes up to me afterwards and says, “I went back to my house, and I looked in our Bible. And I noticed that we don’t have a Catholic Bible! But my whole family is Catholic.” And they explain that years ago someone had given them a Bible who wasn’t Catholic, and they just kept reading from that Bible without even questioning it. And they didn’t realize that it wasn’t a Catholic Bible. So if you are Catholic, you ought to use a Catholic Bible with an imprimatur stamp. It assures that you are studying from a Bible that contains all the books. Most non-Catholic Bibles are missing several books that were removed from the Bible about the year 1500.

REVELATION

I’d like to begin by giving you a quick background and tell you how this started with me. A couple of years ago, I went to see the movie, “The Passion of the Christ.” While I was watching this movie, something was revealed to me. I say the word “revealed”, because I don’t know a better word for it. Nothing has ever been revealed to me before. No flashing lights. No bells. But all of a sudden I had a knowledge that I didn’t gain through study or that no one had taught me. But I knew there were some connections from the Old Testament that were related to what I knew in the New Testament. Now, I grew up Baptist, and I converted to the Catholic Church when I was 21 years old. So I have a pretty familiar background with the Bible. I have read through the Bible a few times from cover to cover, and every year during Lent I try to read the Gospels. But when I was shown these connections in the scriptures in the Old Testament with the scriptures in the New Testament, it blew me away. This was nothing that I had ever heard at Mass or ever heard in the Baptist church. I had never heard it from a priest or a preacher. So I got my highlighter out, and my pencil, and my pen, opened up my Bible and dove into the book of Exodus and many different Old Testament prophecies. I was flipping through the New Testament and marked it, and when I had connected enough and I felt like I couldn’t gain any more by myself, I started asking questions. This took about a year, and I learned through hours of study that the Eucharist that we celebrate at each Mass is actually an extension of the fulfillment of

the feast of the Passover, and that Jesus replaced the sacrificial lamb of the Old Testament. I thought I was the first person to ever make these connections. I was scared to death. I went to see the deacon at our church because it was kind of bothering me, and I was thinking, "What am I finding here?" Certainly other people smarter than I am have studied the Bible and made these connections long before I did. So I went to the deacon to ask him if I should continue studying what I was studying, because there were still things being revealed to me and opened up for me all the time. I sat down with him and I spent about 30 minutes trying to explain this to him. He backed away and his eyes got big and he said, "I can't believe what you're showing me." And I asked him, "What do you think about this?" He said, "I don't know. I've never heard it before. I don't know if you need to continue studying this; I'm not sure if it's Catholic!" Then he said, "Well, it's got to be Catholic. But I've never heard anything like this before. You need to go see a priest." I thought, "Oh Boy! What am I studying here? What am I learning here? Am I going to need an exorcism or something?" I was really nervous. So immediately I made an appointment to see the priest and covered the same information that I had with the deacon. And while I was explaining this earth-shattering news to him, he just looks at me and says "Yeah... yeah... yeah..." And he wasn't bored with it, but as I went through this and realized that it wasn't new information for him, I finally looked at him and said, "Father, you already know this, don't you?" He said, "Yes, they teach us this in seminary when we become a priest." I said, "Really?" He said, "But we don't learn it quite like this. How did you get it?" And I told him that it was revealed to me, and I've been studying this for a long time. I just wanted to know if I should continue studying this. I was afraid it wasn't Catholic." He said, "Oh sure, it's Catholic This is the birth of the Catholic Church!" "Really," I said. I was so glad to hear that. I don't need an exorcism. I'm headed in the right direction. So this is the "Birth of the Church," he said. This is why the Church celebrates the Eucharist so reverently and diligently for over 2000 years. The Catechism says that "The Eucharist is 'the source and summit of the Christian life.'" (CC 1324) And if you think about it, the Catholic Church celebrates Holy Communion all over the world, every day in over 3000 languages. So you wonder, "What information could they have that would make them do this? Why doesn't the Catholic Church do like other denominations and spend more time on the homily or sermon and less time on the Eucharist?" Well, this information will help you understand why. After I spoke with my parish priest, I asked him to teach this information because I thought it was so powerful that I wanted everyone to know this. And he looked at me and said, "Well, you have a really clear understanding of this, better than I do. This is deep theology. Why don't you teach it?" I said, "What do you mean, 'me' teach it, Father? You're the one standing up in front of the Church with the collar around your neck and all these people listening to you. You have the authority; you're a priest. You teach it." "No," he said, "You teach it. I learned it in class, but this was given to you. This was not revealed to you for your benefit alone, but for you to share with other people." So over the next few months I was introduced to the teachings of two incredible Catholic theologians, Dr. Brant Pitre and Dr. Scott Hahn. Their CDs, DVDs, tapes and books provided me with a wealth of information to help me better understand the Bible. Later I spoke to four different priests because I wanted to know for sure that when I speak on this, that this is truly the birth of the Church. As I spoke to each priest, I repeated this information to them like before as I had to my parish priest. Each one responded the same way and said they wanted me to share this with others. And I asked them, "By what authority do I have to teach this? You know, Father, I am a car salesman. I'm a business owner. I'm a lay person in the Church. I'm a husband and a father. I'm not a deacon. I don't even have a position in the Church. I've never even taken a theology class! By what authority do I have to give this message in the Catholic Church?" I said, "I've

been a member here a long time and I don't ever remember anyone being able to stand up and teach about anything." Each priest told me, "By the authority given to you in Baptism, you have the authority to do this." And each time I talked to a priest, they told me the same thing. So I want to tell you, it is with the authority given to me in the waters of Baptism that I step forward to give you this message.

To say the words, "Jesus died for me," is a powerful statement. During this study, I would like to focus on *how* He died for me. When we unveil God's master plan, your eyes will be opened and you will begin to understand that *how* He died, actually gave birth to the Catholic Church. This is important information that all Christians should strive to understand because this is truly the origin of God's church.

GOD SPEAKS TO MOSES

This begins with a story that is very familiar to most of us: with Moses and the slaves in Egypt--- and the Israelites were enslaved for several hundred years in Egypt. And Moses kills a man, and he's banished from Egypt into the desert. While he's across the desert he starts a family and begins shepherding sheep. One day, he sees fire up on a mountain. So he goes up the mountain and encounters a bush that is burning but not being consumed, and he ends up talking to God, Yahweh. God tells Moses that He is the God of his father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. While he's talking to God, the Lord said I have heard the cries of the Israelite slaves in Egypt. And God says he wants to send Moses back to Egypt to free the slaves. So Moses tells God there's a lot of gods back in Egypt. And there was--- they had a god of the Nile, they had a fertility god, a god of the weather, a god of crops. They had a lot of false gods in Egypt. So Moses says, in so many words What is your name? They're going to ask me what your name is when I go back, and I want to know what to tell them.

Now if you'll look down at the handout that you printed out. Look down where it begins, Exodus 3. God answers Moses' question and says, "**God replied, "I am who am."**" Then He said "**This is what you shall tell the Israelites: I AM sent me to you.**" (*Exodus 3:13-14*) Now if you'll take your pen, I'm going to ask you to circle a few things as we go through this. Circle, "**I AM**" because we will hear this again. So God tells him to go to Egypt and to free the slaves. He goes back across the desert into Egypt. He approaches Pharaoh and says to let the people go. Pharaoh wouldn't listen. So God sends a series of ten plagues on Egypt. The first plague He sends, the Nile turns red with blood. Well this defeated the god of the Nile. And every plague after that defeated one of the false gods of Egypt. After the ninth plague, Pharaoh still would not let the slaves go free, so God sends the tenth plague, the Angel of Death. This final plague was to kill the first-born of all the land--- not just the Egyptians, but all of Israel, and the flocks and animals, the first-born of everyone is dead. Now God could have told to Moses to sit back and watch. I'm going to strike the Egyptian first-born, and when they all lose their first-born, they will know that I am God and they will let you go. But God didn't do that. He gave Moses instructions and said every first-born in the land is dead. Now, I don't know how many of you listening are a first-born child in your family, but a first-born can be 80 years old or it could be a little child. It could be you. So, every first-born in the land was at risk.

PASSOVER RITUAL PRESCRIBED

God gave instructions to Moses for the Israelites. They were to perform a certain ritual, and the Angel of Death would pass over and not harm them. He said you must take a lamb, and it **“must be a year-old male and without blemish.”** (*Exodus 12:5*) Circle **“male without blemish”** for me. So it couldn't have any blemishes on it. **“You may take it from either the sheep or the goats. You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, and then, with the whole assembly of Israel present, it shall be slaughtered during the evening twilight.”** (*Exodus 12:5-6*) Also circle **“evening twilight”**. Make a note next to it that twilight is 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Most Bible scholars accept that twilight is 3 o'clock in the afternoon. Then, **“They shall take some of its blood and apply it to the two doorposts and the lintel of every house in which they partake of the lamb. That same night they shall eat its roasted flesh with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.”** (*Exodus 12:8*) Circle **“unleavened bread.”** **“None of it must be kept beyond the next morning; whatever is left over in the morning shall be burned up.”** (*Exodus 12:10*) Notice that careful attention was paid to the leftovers. If you had leftover lamb, you couldn't just throw it away or toss it to the dogs. If you didn't do exactly as God prescribed, the Angel of Death would come into your home and slay your first-born. At this point they knew they were going to flee Egypt, but they had to take care of the leftovers. They had to burn it in fire if they didn't consume it themselves. Nothing was wasted.

He also tells Moses **“This day shall be a memorial feast for you in which all generations shall celebrate with pilgrimage to the LORD as a perpetual institution.”** Circle **“perpetual institution.”** **“For seven days you must eat unleavened bread.”** (*Exodus 12:14-15*) Unleavened bread doesn't rise. There is no yeast in it. You have to have time for bread to rise, and they didn't have time. They were going to leave Egypt in haste. There was no time to wait for the bread to rise so they ate the bread unleavened. They still eat unleavened bread today in the Passover meal. **“For seven days you must eat unleavened bread. From the very first day you shall have your house cleaned of all leaven. Whoever eats leavened bread from the first day to the seventh day shall be cut off from Israel.”** (*Exodus 12:15*) So He cuts you off from Israel if you don't follow these instructions on the unleavened bread. These consequences are pretty serious.

He also tells them to **“take a bunch of hyssop and dipping it in the blood,”** from the slaughtered lamb, **“that is in the basin, sprinkle the lintel and the doorpost with this blood, but none of you shall go outdoors until morning. For the Lord will go by, striking down the Egyptians. Seeing the blood on the lintel and doorpost, the Lord will pass over that door and not let the destroyer come into that house to strike you down. You shall observe this as a perpetual ordinance for yourselves and your descendants.”** (*Exodus 12:22-24*) The 'lintel' is the part over the door and the sides around the door. And you are to **“take a bunch of hyssop”** and paint the blood on the lintel, and I'm wondering, **“What is hyssop?”** So I did what most good Bible scholars do: I Googled it! It works great! There are some really good pictures on the Internet. I found a plant called a hyssop and it's very common in Egypt, even though the pictures today might not reflect what grew 3000 years ago. The point is that they couldn't take a cloth or their hand and paint the blood on the doorpost. They had to use a special plant to apply the blood, and if they follow these instructions, the Angel of Death would pass over them.

As for the lamb, **“It must be eaten in one and the same house; you may not take any of its flesh outside the house. You shall not break any of its bones.”** (Exodus 12:46) Circle, **“You shall not break any of its bones.”** When they chose the lamb for slaughter, it was done at 12 o’clock, noon. The high priest would go out and choose this unblemished lamb. It would be a male, a year old, and he would slaughter this lamb. He couldn’t just beat this lamb with a bat because he was not allowed to break any bones. He couldn’t just strangle it; it couldn’t be a horrible tortured death. They were to kill the lamb by making make a small incision and they were to bleed the lamb and collect the blood in a basin. Then they were to take a bunch of hyssop and sprinkle the blood on the doorpost to mark their home. Now this sounds like a strange way for God to tell the people I’m going to pass over your house if you do this. He could have chosen many different rituals, but this is the way He chose to save the first born. He tells them this will be a perpetual ordinance for you and for your descendants. So they follow these instructions and the Angel of Death passes over that night and the first born of Israel is saved and the first born of Egypt dies.

MANNA

During the night, Pharaoh speaks to Moses and says take the Israelites and leave Egypt. Go at once. Go and worship the Lord as you said. Leave. he says. So they do. The Bible says, **“About six hundred thousand men on foot, not counting the children”** left Egypt. (Exodus 12:37) Bible scholars estimate that about a million men, women, and children just walked out of Egypt. If you can, imagine a city the size of Detroit or San Antonio. Imagine if this great big mass of people went out onto the interstate and started walking out of the city. What a sight that would be! I just want to emphasize the greatness of this miracle: a million people just walked out into the desert.

Miraculously, water was given for them to drink. But they were hungry and needed some food. They go to Moses and ask him if he had brought them to the desert to die. Moses said no and he speaks to the Lord and says that they need food. Then the LORD said to Moses, **“I will now rain down bread from heaven for you.”** (Exodus 16:4) We know all these stories. We learned them as a child, but today I want you to receive this with new eyes. **“I will now rain down bread from heaven for you”**. Circle that sentence. **Each day the people are to go out and gather their daily portion.** (Exodus 16:5) Circle, **“daily portion.”** “Give us this day our daily bread.” Does that sound a little familiar? It should. The Lord says, **“thus will I test them, to see whether they follow my instructions or not.”** (Exodus 16:4) They are to gather only their daily portion, meaning you couldn’t get a two-day portion. So the bread falls. You go out and you couldn’t gather bread for the next two or three days. If you did, it turns wormy and rotten. You only gather what you need for that day. The Israelites depended on God each day to feed them. And instructions were given to them for the Sabbath. On the day before the Sabbath, you could gather a double portion of manna because it wouldn’t fall on the Sabbath and you would need to collect a double portion. But on the Sabbath day it would not turn wormy and rotten. He gave them these instructions and said let no one keep it over until tomorrow morning. Just like He said about the lamb in Egypt, when they finished eating it, they didn’t waste it. They either burned it up or they ate it. Nothing was wasted. **“The Israelites called this food manna. It was like coriander seed, but white, and it tasted like wafers made with honey.”** (Exodus 16:31) I did a little research and studied quite a bit of information from Dr. Scott Hahn. I Googled him. He’s a Professor of Theology and Scripture at

Franciscan University, and he is one of the most knowledgeable Catholic theologians of our lifetime. As a convert to the Catholic faith, he has a wealth of information that I was using with my studies. He explained that in the Hebrew language, the word “manna” literally means, “What is it?” Well, they didn’t know; it fell from the sky. It went bad some days and on some days it wouldn’t go bad. God fed them bread from Heaven and they called it “manna” - “What is it?”

The Israelites ate this bread for forty years until they came to settle in the land of Canaan, which the Lord had promised them. This is a huge miracle. God fed a million people bread from Heaven for forty years. For forty years these people ate the bread that God fed them. I was wondering, what if we were to take a person and see how long they could live on bread. If we just sat them down in a corner and started feeding them bread and tied them up so they couldn’t get away. I wanted to know how long a person could survive on just bread. So I did what all good scholars do, I Googled it. And believe it or not, I found a website -I hope they never tested this on a real person - I found a website that said that a person could live only six to eight months if you just ate bread. Bread does not contain the vitamins or minerals or amino acids or proteins that we need in our diet to survive. After six to eight months your organs would shut down and if you weren’t dead, you’d wish you were. I’ve read the book of Exodus, and nowhere in the book did it state that Israelites suffered from malnutrition. So apparently the manna was life sustaining; it was a mystery. They complained a lot about the manna and eating this much bread so God sent quail into the camp. It was kind of a punishment. They even had quail feathers coming out of their noses. The quail would fly in the camp near sundown and this was done as a way to feed them flesh. They did eat some quail, but the focus was on the manna. They lived on this manna for forty years and a million people ate it as it fell from Heaven every day. Do you think God had a poor menu selection? Do you think that maybe He doesn’t really know our bodies? Do you think maybe God didn’t care about us enough so He just feeds a million people bread? Or do you think it’s on purpose? Yeah, it’s on purpose! It’s a prefiguration of Christ! It is a symbol of the Eucharist that we will receive.

VESTMENTS

So while they’re in the desert eating Manna, God gives them instructions on making priestly vestments and these **“vestments they shall make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a robe, a brocaded tunic, a miter and a sash. In making these sacred vestments which your brother Aaron (who is the high priest) and his sons are to wear in serving as my priests, they shall use gold, violet, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen.”** (*Exodus 28:4-5*) **“The tunic of fine linen shall be brocaded. The miter shall be made of fine linen. Aaron and his sons shall wear them whenever they go into the meeting tent or approach the altar to minister in the sanctuary, lest they incur guilt and die. This shall be a perpetual ordinance for him and for his descendants.”** (*Exodus 28:39,43*) If they don’t follow the instructions on the articles of clothing to wear when sacrificing, the consequences are: **“they incur guilt and die.”** These are pretty serious consequences. Even today we see traditional vestments used by Catholic priests. We also see special vestments worn for certain times of the year. The priests wear different colors depending on the liturgical season and also have special garments that go under these vestments. Much of Catholic tradition comes from ancient Judaism.

JEWISH PASSOVER MEAL

The next part that we are going to review is the Jewish Passover meal. Now this part is not quoted directly from the Bible. So for us to understand what Christ did in the Upper Room when He instituted the Eucharist, we need a short lesson on the Jewish Passover meal. Many of you will learn today just *how* Catholicism is fulfillment of Judaism, and when Jesus completes the Passover meal, he institutes a new covenant in the Eucharist. So this Passover meal, the Feast of the Passover, is instituted and practiced annually on the 14th day of Nissan for nearly 1300 years. During the Jewish Passover meal (also called the Seder Meal) there is an obligation. I repeat: An obligation, to drink four cups of wine. Now this meal can be broken down into four basic parts.

1st Cup - The first part of this Passover meal is the festival blessing and in that festival blessing the presiding priest says, "Let the festival begin." They say a few prayers and they drink from the first cup of wine.

2nd Cup - Then they go on to the second part of the meal. At this point the youngest person in the room would ask the presiding priest, "Father, why is tonight different from all other nights? " And the person administering the meal or priest would read from Exodus in the Torah. This was a very special way to remember the exodus so that future generations would never forget how Yahweh saved the Israelites from the bondage of slavery. After they read from Exodus, they would sing the Little Hallel. Hallel means "praise." It's a praise song, "Halleluiah." It's Psalm 113. Then after they would sing the Little Hallel, they would drink from the second cup of wine, and this would finish the second part of the meal.

3rd Cup - The third part of the meal would begin as they ate the main course. They would eat different foods, each with a symbolic meaning. They ate the roasted lamb. It represented the Pascal lamb that was sacrificed in Egypt. They also ate bitter herbs and spices. These bitter herbs would remind them of the bitterness of bondage, and how bitter it was to be enslaved for so many years. They also ate green herbs dipped in salt water. It tasted bad, but the salt reminded them of the tears that the Israelites shed in the 400 years of slavery. They would also eat something called haroseth, which was apple that was mashed up and cooked with wine and a little bit of cinnamon and nutmeg. It represented the mortar used in the bricks to build Egypt. They also ate unleavened bread called matzah, just as they ate on that first night in Egypt. They ate many symbolic foods and when the meal was done, they would drink from the third cup of wine. By the way, the third cup of wine is referred to as the "Cup of Blessing." This is the cup that Jesus changes later on, and if you recall sometimes in Mass, you may sing, "The Cup of Blessing Which We Bless." This is the origin of the phrase. Drinking the cup would close the third part of the meal. Then they would go on to the fourth part.

4th Cup - The fourth part is the climax of the meal where they would conclude with several more prayers, and then they would sing the "Great Hallel", which was Psalms 114-118. Then they would drink the fourth cup of wine and the presiding priest would say the words, "TEL TELESTI" which means "IT IS FINISHED" or "IT IS CONSUMATED". The meal is completed. Jews still practice this Passover meal today much like they did nearly 3300 years ago.

Now the Jews celebrated this feast for about 1300 years. Every year on the 14th day of the month of Nissan they would celebrate the Passover meal just as God ordered. The Jewish calendar has different months of the

year than the calendar that we use. The month of Nissan falls around our Easter time, somewhere around April or May. If you were Jewish, according to Jewish law, you had to celebrate a Passover meal. They would go into Jerusalem - this is where the temple was - and would celebrate the Passover meal. Jesus' famous ride into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday was the ride into Jerusalem before Passover.

We are going to be going a little faster here at this point. We've been studying from the book of Exodus and if you were following along in your Bible, we would be in the Old Testament. Now we're going to skip all the way into the New Testament. I'm skipping hundreds of prophecies of the Messiah and so much more information, but for the sake of time we are going to skip over this and go straight into the New Testament. There is one Old Testament prophecy I would like to quote. It's Jeremiah 31: 31-33, and it goes like this, "**The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt; for they broke my covenant and I had to show myself their master, says the LORD. But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD. I will place my law within them, and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people.**"(Jeremiah 31:31-33) This is a prediction, a prophecy, of a new covenant that the Lord makes.

When we enter the New Testament, Jesus is born. And He's born in a town called Bethlehem. Now we all know that. But did you know that in Hebrew, the word "Bethlehem" means, "House of Bread?" You might want to jot that down: "House of Bread." I had a friend who recently visited the town of Bethlehem, over in the Jerusalem area. He had some information that I wanted to include. Animal sacrifice of the Passover and many other feasts of those days had taken place in the temple. There was so much animal sacrifice going on. You have to realize a million people walked out of Egypt and they had all these lambs. And they had to have a male unblemished lamb for Passover that you had to have fields of shepherds watching over sheep. And you had to have literally thousands and thousands of male unblemished lambs so you had to have a huge heard of sheep to be watched over. And these sacrifices took place in Jerusalem at the temple. So a town formed outside of Jerusalem and this town is where the shepherds families lived and the shepherds lived when they weren't out with the sheep. But the shepherds formed a town called Bethlehem. And the shepherds that the angel Gabriel appeared to on the day that Jesus was born were not just any shepherds guarding sheep, but these shepherds were guarding the sheep that were the sacrificial lambs of the old covenant. And these very shepherds were given a personal invitation to come and to witness the new Lamb of God, the sacrifice of the new covenant. They weren't just any shepherds; they were the shepherds in charge of guarding the old covenant sacrifices.

FEEDING OF 5000

Jesus grows and enters into His ministry. He teaches and performs many miracles. One of the most important miracles and the most remembered is the feeding of the 5000. The reason I'm saying it's the most remembered is because it's the only miracle that Jesus performed that was recorded in all four gospels. I'm going say this again, "It's the only miracle that Jesus did that was recorded in all four gospels." Some miracles that Jesus performed are just in Matthew. Some are just in John. Some are in two of the books in the Bible,

but they're not in all four. The feeding of the 5000 is in all four gospels and recorded very similarly. We will study just how it is recorded. So Jesus is teaching to this crowd of 5000 men, not including women and children. He's on the side of a mountain talking to the crowd, and they're hungry. They're hungry. Does that sound familiar? They've been with Him all day, and He tells the disciples don't send the crowds away. Let's get some food. And they said we don't have enough money, and there is no place to buy this much food. And Jesus says to them, **"There is no need for them to go away; give them some food yourselves."** (Matthew 14:16)

"But they said to Him," and you can look at Matthew 14, **"They said to him "Five loaves and two fish are all we have here." Then he said, "Bring them here to me," and he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up the fragments left over --twelve wicker baskets full."**(Matthew 14:17-20) Now we should all know this miracle, but let's look at this from a different perspective. I want you to take your pencil and circle the words **"Taking," "Blessing," "Broke,"** and **"Gave."** We will see this pattern recorded at least ten times. If you will notice also the recording of the picking up of the fragments left over. We talked about the lamb that was eaten in Egypt during the Passover, that original night, they couldn't waste the lamb. We talked about the manna that they ate in the desert for forty years. They couldn't waste the manna. Nothing was wasted. Now we read about Jesus feeding the 5000 people and nothing is wasted. They picked up the wicker baskets full - and by the way the twelve baskets are symbolic: one basket for each tribe of Israel. Jesus took, blessed, broke, and gave. It's saying that He handled the bread in a special way. Now if you think about it, Jesus feeds 5000 people. Do you think that maybe He had a poor menu selection, or do you think that maybe He didn't know our bodies? Or, do you think He chose to feed bread for a reason? I mean, He's God. He could feed them anything He wants to. He could have fed the crowd fruit, vegetables, nuts, meat. He could have fed them anything, but He didn't choose just anything. He chose to feed them bread. God chose to feed a million slaves in the desert bread for forty years. It was carefully chosen then, and it's carefully chosen now by Jesus. This is a prefiguration of the Eucharist, the perpetual gift that Jesus will leave for His Church. And we will see that in a little while.

Matthew records it in this way, but let's look at how Mark records the feeding of 5000. You'll find a lot of similarities. **"Then, taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing, broke the loaves, and gave them to (his) disciples."** He took, He blessed, He broke, He gave. He **"gave them to (his) disciples to set before the people; he also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied."** (Mark 6:41-43) Mark also notes that they picked up the fragments left over.

Let's take a look at Luke: Took, blessed, broke, and gave, and picked up the twelve wicker baskets. **"Then taking the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he said the blessing over them, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. They all ate and were satisfied. And when the leftover fragments were picked up, they filled twelve wicker baskets."** (Luke 9:16-17)

St. John lived a lot longer than the other apostles. He's the youngest of the disciples and he lives a long time in prison. He witnesses Christianity unfold and sees many of the disciples martyred. He may have actually

looked at the synoptic gospels and noticed that they don't have the time of year that this miracle took place. So he actually includes the time of year in his gospel. Look at John on your handout. **"The Jewish feast of Passover was near."** (John 6:4) John thought it was important for us to realize that this feeding of 5000 people happened near the time of Passover, and that it is important that it happened then. Probably around a year before Jesus dies, John records that, **"Jesus took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed them,"** which is *broke* and *gave*, **"to those that were reclining, and also as much of the fish as they wanted. When they had had their fill, he said to his disciples, Gather the fragments left over, so that nothing will be wasted."** (John 6:11-12) Again, he notices that nothing is wasted. This is the miracle of the feeding of the 5000.

FEEDING OF 4000

There is another feeding that we are going to talk about in Matthew and Mark. And this feeding is only recorded in two gospels. Many people don't realize that there are two bread feeding miracles. Jesus also feeds 4000 people. Again He's preaching and teaching to a group of people, this time there's 4000 of them, and He says to His disciples they need food. **"Jesus said to them, "How many loaves do you have?" "Seven," they replied, "and a few fish." "He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then he took the seven loaves and the fish, gave thanks, broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, who in turn gave them to the crowds. They all ate and were satisfied. They picked up the fragments left over--seven baskets full."** (Matthew 15:34-37) This time there were seven wicker baskets left over, seven baskets full, symbolic one for each day of the week. But notice how He took, blessed, broke, and He gave to the disciples. He handled the bread the same way He did when he fed 5000 people.

Let's look at how Mark records it. **"He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground. Then, taking the seven loaves he gave thanks, broke them, and gave them to his disciples to distribute, and they distributed them to the crowd. They also had a few fish. He said the blessing over them and ordered them distributed also. They ate and were satisfied. They picked up the fragments left over--seven baskets."** (Mark 8:6-8)

BREAD OF LIFE DISCOURSE

Now at this point, Jesus is feeding the people. Well, let me tell you, times were tough back then, and anybody who's feeding crowds of people bread and fish, without them having to work for it, you can bet he had a lot of friends. There were a lot of people hanging around, just following Him around. So, Jesus tells the crowd that they're just looking for food. Jesus says to them, **"Amen, Amen."** Now when Jesus begins a sentence with **"Amen, Amen,"** keep in mind, He is using a word that we would normally finish a prayer with, or a sentence. He's saying this is very significant. What I'm telling you is very important. Now some translations of the Bible may have, 'Truly, truly,' or 'Verily, verily.' So, **"Jesus answered them and said, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and were filled."** (John 6:26) So He accuses them of just hanging around because they got their bellies full. And He tells them, **"Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him the Father, God, has set his seal."** (John 6:27) Jesus does give them this food at the Last

Supper, but not right now. So they say to Jesus, **"What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you?"** (John 6:30) And they say to Him, **"Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'** (John 6:31) Now when they say, **"Our ancestors ate manna in the desert,"** we normally don't connect the feeding of the 5000 and the feeding of the 4000 with the bread that the Israelites ate in the desert. But the Jews that are talking to Jesus look at Him and say You did a bread miracle, Moses did a bread miracle. We can see that the Jews understand what just happened when they say, **"Our ancestors ate manna in the desert"**. (John 6:31) We can see that they clearly connect the two bread miracles. Then they turn to Jesus and ask Him to do a miracle and He says to them, **"Amen, amen, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven."** Now, underline, **"comes down from heaven"** or circle it. **"For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. So they said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.' Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst."** (John 6:32-35) So Jesus tells them, **"For the bread of God is that which comes down from Heaven."** Do you hear the reference to the 'manna' in here? He is saying the manna fell from heaven; I am the true bread that comes down from Heaven and gives life to the world, like the manna.

Well the Jews murmured about Him because He said I am the bread that came down from Heaven, and they said, **"Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph? Do we not know his father and mother? Then how can he say, 'I have come down from heaven'?"** (John 6:41-42) ---like the manna? What they're saying is we don't believe You, Jesus. We know who Your mother is; we know who Your father is. We watched You grow up. We don't believe what You're telling us. So Jesus says to them, **"Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died; this is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world."** (John 6:47-51)

What is the bread? It's His flesh. His flesh! Jesus said, **"I am the living bread that came down from heaven."** (John 6:51) Well, **"The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us (his) flesh to eat?" Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him."** (John 6:52-56)

I think it's important for us to realize the teaching of Moses from many years ago on drinking blood. This was the law given from God to Moses: **" And if anyone, whether of the house of Israel or of the aliens residing among them, partakes of any blood, I will set myself against that one who partakes of blood and will cut him off from among his people. Since the life of a living body is in its blood, I have made you put it on the altar, so that atonement may thereby be made for your own lives, because it is the blood, as the seat of life, that makes atonement. That is why I have told the Israelites: No one among you, not even a resident alien, may partake of blood."** (Leviticus 17:10-12) You'll find this in Leviticus 17, and they practiced this for many years.

Are we taught that we can drink a person's blood? No, of course not. Even back in the time of Moses, they knew that the life was in the blood. So, the Israelites were taught that it was not good to co-mingle a person's or an animal's blood into your body. Now Jesus is telling them, if we comingle ourselves with His blood, we receive eternal life and He will raise us on the last day. But, they don't accept Him as God or for who He really is. They don't yet understand that they are being taught by God Himself! Jesus, the Son of God, is greater than Moses and able to command them to drink His blood and eat His flesh. He has the authority to require them to do this and He can change the law, but they don't know Him yet. The Jews were taught not to drink human blood or eat human flesh. So this is why the Jews think wait a minute, we don't want to do this. Moses taught us not to do this. So Jesus tells them, "**unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you.**" (John 6:53) So then, "**many of his disciples who were listening said, 'This saying is hard; who can accept it?'**" (John 6:60)

"Since Jesus knew that his disciples were murmuring about this, he said to them, "Does this shock you? What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life, while the flesh is of no avail. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But there are some of you who do not believe." Jesus knew from the beginning the ones who would not believe and the one who would betray him." (John 6:61-64)

Now listen to what He is saying here. Let's make sense of this. The Jews were murmuring about Him, about eating His flesh and about drinking His blood. And He is telling them, "**I am the living bread that came down from heaven.**" (John 6:51) "**Does this shock you?**" (John 6:61) He's saying does this shock you that I came down from heaven. He knows they don't believe Him, so He says, "**What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?**" (John 6:62) What He's saying is: you don't believe I came down from Heaven? I'll prove it to you! I'll go back up. What if you see Me go back up? Will you believe Me then? What if you see Me ascend? And does He ascend? Yes! After the resurrection He goes to Bethany and several people watch Him ascend into Heaven into a cloud, and they're just standing there waiting and an angel tells them go on, go back to Jerusalem. And they witnessed this. I imagine these people who didn't believe Him at first, understood what He meant and later on received Him. So Jesus is talking to them and He says, "**For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by my Father." As a result of this, many (of) his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him.**" (John 6:65-66) Now, this was not the original twelve. This was a group of disciples, a large group, that were going out and spreading His teachings and witnessing to people. And these people had left their families and changed their lives to follow Jesus. And when He told them they had to drink His blood and eat His flesh, they went back to their former way of life and no longer accompanied Him. They did not recognize Him as being God. So Jesus says to them hey guys, wait, don't leave. I'm just using symbols. I was just teaching something as a metaphor. I'm a teacher. I have lofty thoughts and ideas. Don't leave. Don't run off. I'm going to change the way that I'm explaining this—No! Of course He doesn't say that. He lets them all walk away. He allowed them to walk away. And "**Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?" Simon Peter answered him, "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God."** (John 6:67-69) Now, Peter is asking, "**To whom shall we go?**" You know, we're going to stay, but where else would we go? Peter is not real sure, but he stays by faith. And

he says, **“You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God.”**

The book of John was written in the Greek Language. And when the author recorded things down – when he said you must eat my flesh – he used the Greek word “trogo.” Now in the Greek language, many words can be used for “eat”. However, the word “trogo” was chosen; it’s a very special word because it cannot be taken symbolically. When that word was chosen - when you *trogo* something, you actually *gnaw* on it. The definition is to aggressively or loudly munching, gnawing and chewing, as an animal would eat. This cannot be taken symbolically, and the author chooses this word so that later on when people read this – it’s not a soft word – it’s meant to actually gnaw and to eat. It’s very important; it cannot to be taken symbolically.

As I was studying more on this bread of life discourse, a relative suggested that I listen to a study on the Gospel of John, by Dr. Brant Pitre. He is a professor of Scripture and Theology at Our Lady of Holy Cross College in New Orleans, Louisiana. I have also enjoyed the privilege of hearing him teach in person, and I would like to encourage you to visit his website at www.brantpitre.com. He has devoted much of his time and energy to teaching and recording CDs and DVDs that help to bring the understanding of the Bible and teachings of the Church into the privacy of your own home. His knowledge on ancient Judaism is tremendous, and his ability to bring deep Catholic theology down to my level has been a great help on my faith journey and increased my understanding of the Bible. Thank you Dr. Pitre.

THE COMING OF JESUS’ HOUR

Now, Jesus explains the coming of the His hour, which is His death and glorification. And when He’s talking to His disciples and explaining this, if you read the book of John, you will remember hearing, He repeatedly says, **“My hour has not yet come.”** During the feast at Cana, He tells Mary His mother, **“How does your concern affect me? My hour has not yet come.”** (*John 2:4*) Many times you can read, **“My hour has not yet come.”** However, at this time, **“Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.”** (*John 12:23-24*) Now let’s listen to this a little more carefully. What if Jesus were to say unless an apple falls to the ground and dies, it remains just an apple? But if it falls to the ground and dies, it produces more fruit. What is the fruit from an apple? Well, more apples. An apple tree makes more apples. Or Jesus could have said unless an apricot falls to the ground and dies, it remains just an apricot. But if it dies, it produces much fruit, which would be more apricots. But instead He chooses His words wisely and says, **“I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.”** What is the fruit from wheat? It’s bread. The fruit from wheat is bread!

Jesus and His disciples were all Jewish, so they celebrated the feast of the Passover every year. There were special meal preparations for this feast. They would go to Jerusalem at this time of year and celebrate the feast. Luke records, **“When the day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread arrived, the day for sacrificing the Passover lamb, he sent out Peter and John, instructing them, “Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover.” They asked him, “Where do you want us to make the preparations?” And he answered them,** www.the4thcup.com

"When you go into the city, a man will meet you carrying a jar of water. Follow him into the house that he enters and say to the master of the house, 'The teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?"' He will show you a large upper room that is furnished. Make the preparations there." Then they went off and found everything exactly as he had told them, and there they prepared the Passover." (Luke 22:7-13)

"A man will meet you carrying a jar of water." What's interesting to note is that this was a woman's job. At this time, typically women gathered water, but the disciples were to go into Jerusalem and meet a *man* carrying water. They saw him, and they followed him, and they found everything as Jesus had said. There they prepared the Passover meal. Meaning they prepared the Pascal lamb, the bitter herbs, the green herbs, the matzah, the haroseth, and more, the four cups of wine.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

So we're going to enter into the Upper Room to what began as a traditional Passover meal. Jesus is going to begin this Passover meal like the Jewish people did for the preceding 1300 years. They were expected to drink the four cups of wine, and eat the symbolic foods, and they would all participate by Jewish law in this Passover meal. But we're going to learn that this Passover meal is different.

In Matthew, it states, **"While they were eating,"** (Matthew 26:26) Timeout. Let's look at this, **"While they were eating..."** Now we know it's important to realize that the people who wrote this were Jewish, and the people who were reading this were Jewish. And they all know what a Passover meal is. So, it begins, **"While they were eating."** Now we know that they've already had the festival blessing, because they don't eat in the first part of the meal. They've already told the narrative story and sang the little hallel, because that's the second part of the Passover meal. They haven't yet drunk from the third cup of wine, because that doesn't happen until after the third part of the meal. So we know based on the structure of the Passover that we have in our handout, that we must be between the second and the third cup of the Jewish Passover meal. Now all Jews know this. We don't know this because we're Gentiles and we live 2000 years later. This doesn't cross our path until we study it.

Matthew records, **"While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said, "Take and eat; this is my body."** (Matthew 26:26) Now, He told them He was going to give them His body. **"Take and eat; this is my body."** Circle **"this is my body."** **"Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant." Circle **"this is my blood."** **"For this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many..."** (Matthew 26:27-28) Now it says, **"Will be shed,"** Ok, we're talking future; this is a future event, **"Which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, from now on..."** Now listen to this, it says, **"He took a cup."** They've had the first two cups. He takes a cup and says drink from it all of you, this is My blood. What cup of the Passover meal are they drinking out of? The third cup. We know it's the third cup, because we just learned the structure of a Passover meal. They drink the third cup and He tells them something that's totally off the wall. He tells them, **"I tell you, from now on I shall not drink this fruit of the vine..."** meaning the**

fourth cup, **"...until the day when I drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father."** **"Then, after singing a hymn,"** which is the great hallel, **"they went out to the Mount of Olives."** (Matthew 26:29-30) We know that the hymn is the Great Hallel.

Now there's something wrong here. We don't recognize this because we're Gentiles. Jews know what just happened. Jesus didn't close the meal. He did not drink from the fourth cup. The Passover meal is not finished. This would be like a Catholic priest skipping over a major part of the Mass. Have you ever been to a Mass where a priest *doesn't* offer a final blessing? It would be the same thing during a Catholic Mass, if after Communion the priest were to say before we close this Mass, and before I give you a final blessing, let's all walk over to the gym. They have a special St. Josephs' altar. We're going to bless it and close Mass over there. And the congregation would all get up and proceed to walk over to the gym. As they are walking, is Mass still going on? Yeah. Mass only ends when the priest gives the final blessing, otherwise Mass is still going on. So this Passover meal is not over. Jesus will soon drink from this fourth cup but not right now. I'll show you later when and where He drinks the cup and how He closes this Passover meal. Now notice the text, **"While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it..."** (Matthew 26:26). Wow! Look at that! He took, He blessed, He broke, and gave. Mathew is saying that Jesus handled the bread the same way that He did when He fed the 5000, and when He fed 4000, and now He handles the bread in the Upper Room the same way.

Mark records the event in a similar way, **"While they were eating, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is my body."** Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. He said to them, **"This is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed for many. Amen, I say to you, I shall not drink again the fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."** Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." (Mark 14:22-26) Notice Mark records: "took," blessing," "broke," and "gave"

Let's look at Luke. Luke records, **"Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and said, "Take this and share it among yourselves; for I tell you (that) from this time on I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."** (Luke 22:17-18) When is He going to drink it? He's waiting to drink it in the kingdom of God. We will see that kingdom begin in a few minutes.

All three synoptic gospels record: He took, He blessed, He broke and He gave. Then they sang a hymn and they went out to the Mount of Olives. They immediately went out to the Mount of Olives. This is not several pages later in the Bible; this is not days later. They immediately- that night- walked out to the Mount of Olives. They go to a garden. Why do they go to a garden? Because the fall of mankind began in a garden. Jesus goes to the Garden of Gethsemane for the redemption of mankind to begin.

GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

Matthew records, **"Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them, "My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep**

watch with me." He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will." (Matthew 26:36-39)

I have heard this so many times in my life. I didn't know what He was praying. He's got another cup to drink. He knows the future, but it will be hard to drink this cup. He's saying if this could happen another way, Father, don't let it be My will, let it be Your will, but if it could happen another way, I'm interested. Let this cup pass from Me. And He prays the same thing three times: let this cup pass.

Matthew, Mark and Luke all record the events that took place in the garden. Matthew records that Jesus prays, "**My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will.**" **When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, "So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Withdrawing a second time, he prayed again, "My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done!" Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open. He left them and withdrew again and prayed a third time, saying the same thing again."** (Matthew 26:39-44)

Mark and Luke recorded very similar events. Withdrawing again He prayed saying the same thing. And then in Luke it's recorded, "**He was in such agony and he prayed so fervently that his sweat became like drops of blood falling on the ground.**" (Luke 22:44) "**Take this cup away from me...**" (Mark 14:36) Jesus knows that this is the will of His Father.

JESUS IS ARRESTED

The cup is not going to pass. So He allows Himself to be arrested. See on your handout, "Jesus is Arrested." I think it ought to say that "Jesus Lets Himself be Arrested." There are several recordings in Matthew, Mark and Luke on the arrest of Jesus, but I found that John's recording on Jesus' arrest is so interesting. Many times earlier when Jesus was preaching and teaching, they were following Jesus trying to arrest Him, and He would just walk right through the crowds, right from their midst. They couldn't catch Him. He could escape anytime He wanted to; He's God.

Well at this time Judas got a band of soldiers and guards from the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they went there with lanterns and torches and weapons, implying that it was nighttime. And Jesus knew that this was going to happen to Him. This time He didn't even resist. I think I've been watching too many police movies. I watch these arrests where the police are chasing this guy in a car. And they go through town and finally the car wrecks, and the guy gets out and runs. They track him down, and finally they finally get and they catch him and handcuff him. And there's a lot of screaming and a lot of yelling. These arrests are a horrible scene. And I see Jesus' arrest is really different.

They go to Jesus and He doesn't even run from them. He goes out to them and says, "**Whom are you looking for?**" And "**They answered him, "Jesus the Nazorean". He said to them, "I AM."**" Circle that, "**I AM,**" right here. Jesus is saying I AM God. This is a complete statement. Do you remember when we circled this? The

first word we circled was Moses when he was at the burning bush talking to God. Yahweh identifies Himself as, "I AM"? Jesus uses this same, "I AM" here to identify Himself to the people coming to arrest Him. So **"Judas his betrayer was also with them. When he said to them, "I AM," they turned away and fell to the ground."** (John 18:4-6) They couldn't even stand up when Jesus defines Himself as God. But He didn't try to escape.

So he again asked them, "Whom are you looking for?" They said, "Jesus the Nazorean." Jesus answered, "I told you that I AM. So if you are looking for me, let these men go". He's referring to His disciples, and **"This was to fulfill what he had said, "I have not lost any of those you gave me."** Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear. The slave's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into its scabbard. Shall I not drink the cup that the Father gave me?" (John 18:7-11) Circle, **"drink the cup."** He knows He has another cup to drink. He knows it's coming. Then Jesus says to Peter put your sword away. You can't win this fight. Not tonight. We will not fight. He allows Himself to be arrested. Jesus is arrested and is carried away to Pilate. They have a few mock trials, and Jesus is eventually condemned to death.

JESUS IS CONDEMNED TO DEATH

In John, it says, **"It was preparation day for Passover, and it was about noon. And he (Pilate) said to the Jews, "Behold, your king!"** (John 19:14) Jesus was condemned to death at noon. What time were the lambs chosen for slaughter by the high priests? Noon. Pilate says, **"Behold, your king."** Now the lambs were chosen for slaughter - they were declared unblemished. This is the priest's duty to select the unblemished lambs. Well Jesus is the unblemished lamb of this Passover. Who determines if Jesus is the new lamb and if He is unblemished? None other than Pontius Pilate himself. It's recorded in Luke, **"Pilate then addressed the chief priests and the crowds, "I find this man not guilty."** (Luke 23:4) Pilate declares three times that this man is not guilty. And also in Luke it's recorded that **"The centurion who witnessed what had happened glorified God and said, "This man was innocent beyond doubt."** (Luke 23:47)

JESUS REFUSES WINE

So Jesus is scourged and beaten beyond recognition, and He's forced to carry His cross up the hill of Golgotha. While He's carrying His cross up the hill to the place of the Skull, the soldier's offer Him wine drugged with myrrh. Now He is carrying His cross right now. He's not on the cross; He's carrying His cross. He stops, and He falls. At this point they come over and someone offers Him, **"wine drugged with myrrh."** (Mark 15:23) But it's recorded here that He didn't take it. He told them He would not drink again of the fruit of the vine until He drank it in the kingdom. If somebody records that a person does not drink something, it's important. It's recorded and we're reading it 2000 years later that He didn't drink this wine. Yeah, it's important. Because when He finally drinks the wine on the cross, it's going to emphasize the significance even more.

THE CRUCIFIXION

From this point, I will quote mostly from the Gospel of John. The reason I'm going to follow this book so closely, is because Bible scholars will tell you that John stays at the foot of the cross. He records as an eyewitness, that only Mary, Jesus' mother, John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, Mary of Cleopus, and Mary Magdalene, stay at the foot of the cross. The other disciples were scattered ; they were scared. They were probably watching from a distance. We all know what Peter was doing around this time. He was upset. He had just denied Jesus. The other disciples were not at the foot of the cross, but John stays at the foot of the cross. So John records in a little more detail the words that Jesus said. Matthew, Mark and Luke have also recorded this, but the authors probably weren't present with Jesus on the cross. They may have gotten the information from other people's testimonies. Now, I'm not saying that what they recorded is wrong, but more detail of what Jesus said on the cross is found in the book of John. The synoptic Gospels don't contradict John's gospel, they just don't have as much detail in them.

St. John records, **"When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four shares, a share for each soldier. They also took his tunic, but the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from the top down. So they said to one another, "Let's not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it will be," in order that the passage of scripture might be fulfilled (that says): "They divided my garments among them, and for my vesture they cast lots." (John 19:23-24)** What was Jesus wearing? John describes the clothes. He was wearing priestly clothes. A tunic. He was wearing the vestments that a High Priest was required to wear when sacrificing animals for the atonement of sins. Jesus is not only the unblemished lamb of this sacrifice, but He's also the high priest over the sacrifice. **"After this, aware that everything was now finished, in order that the scripture might be fulfilled..." (John 19:28) _We'll hear this three times. Listen for it. This means it didn't just happen by accident. It happened **"in order that the scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I thirst." There was a vessel filled with common wine. So they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to his mouth. When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, "It is finished." And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit." (John 19:28-30)** Jesus said, **"I thirst."** Now keep in mind, His hands are nailed and His feet are nailed. And He stands on the spike that is through His feet. He holds Himself up, right before His death, and says, **"I thirst."** Is this a coincidence? No. There's wine nearby. They get the wine, put it on a sponge, and they put it on a sprig of hyssop. Remember the hyssop branch from Exodus? And now Jesus tastes the wine. It's recorded that He drank the wine. On the way to Golgotha, He didn't drink the wine. He said He was not going to drink the wine until He drank it new in the kingdom. Now He drinks the wine. He says the words, "Tel telesti". He says the words, "It is finished." He closes the Passover meal that was still open. That's the same thing as in the example I gave before where the Catholic priest closes Mass after he blessed the St. Joseph's Altar. Jesus drinks the fourth cup of wine and closes the Passover meal. The meal is completed. Not just completed this time; fulfilled. It's fulfilled. It's over, and now we begin a **"new covenant," (1 Corinthians 11:25)** with the Lamb of God offered as a perfect sacrifice.**

Now we said that Jesus was not just the presiding priest but also the unblemished Passover lamb. And that the lamb couldn't have any blemishes. So the next day was the Sabbath, and it was the Jewish rule that you couldn't have a person being crucified on the Sabbath day. When they nailed somebody to a cross, they could

live for days. While Jesus and the thieves were hanging on the cross, they wanted to expedite their deaths so they were not hanging on the Sabbath day. The soldiers would take a hammer or a tool, and they would break the legs of the person being crucified so that they couldn't hold themselves up. And their lungs would immediately fill with water and the person would drown in their own body fluid. They did this to the two thieves being crucified next to Jesus. Now, I'm going to read from John: **"So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and then of the other one who was crucified with Jesus. But when they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs,"** (John 19:32-33) Circle that, **"They did not break his legs."** No blemishes. **"But one soldier thrust his lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out."** (John 19:34) Circle, **"Blood and water flowed out."** John is talking here; he's an eyewitness. He says, **"An eyewitness has testified, and his testimony is true; he knows that he is speaking the truth, so that you also may (come to) believe. For this happened so that the scripture passage might be fulfilled: "Not a bone of it will be broken."** (John 19:35-36) Now, see where we circled, **"They did not break his legs"?** What would happen if Jesus had suffered broken bones? He would not be a worthy sacrifice. A lance went into His side instead, and **"immediately blood and water flowed out."** If you recall, they also stuck the lance in the lamb in Egypt, and the blood and the water flowed out. And this blood was sprinkled on the doorpost at the entrance to your house so that the Angel of Death would pass over. Jesus' blood represents the blood of the Eucharist, and the water represents the waters of Baptism. I found this information in the footnotes of the New American Bible.

The Roman Empire crucified thousands of people during this time. It was a horrible way of using fear to control the population. The Roman government was recorded to have crucified tens of thousands of people during their reign of power. This was a horrible time to live. Surely it was one of the darkest times up to this point in mankind's history, and God chose this dark time to bring redemption to the world.

JESUS DIES ON THE CROSS

Now Jesus dies on the cross. Keep in mind He dies on the cross while the rest of the Jewish nation is celebrating Passover. Several gospels show us that Jesus dies at 3:00 in the afternoon. Twilight. Look in Luke, **"It was now about noon and darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon."** (Luke 23:44) In Mark it says, **"at three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"** (Mark 15:34) Look at the time of day. It's 3 o'clock. It's the same time that the lambs are slaughtered during the sacrifice at Passover. This is very important.

JOHN THE BAPTIST IDENTIFIES JESUS

Now we said Jesus is the unblemished Lamb in this sacrifice. How do we know that? John the Baptist identifies Jesus for us. Remember John the Baptist? He was Jesus' cousin, who said, **"I am 'the voice of one crying out in the desert, "Make straight the way of the Lord,"** (John 1:23) But just how is John the Baptist making straight the path of the Lord? One way is by identifying Him as the Lamb. It says, **"The next day,"** John

the Baptist, **“saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.’** (John 1:29) Now the word “behold” means, “Look!” “Look.” **“The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.”** **“The next day John was there again with two of his disciples, and as he watched Jesus walk by, he said, “Behold, the Lamb of God.”** (John 1:35-36)

Now this is not just a lamb that is sacrificed and its blood sprinkled on the altar for the atonement of one man’s sin; this is the Lamb of God. This Lamb is sacrificed to take away the sin of the entire world. In 1st Peter he records that Jesus is a spotless unblemished lamb. **“Now if you invoke as Father him who judges impartially according to each one’s works, conduct yourselves with reverence during the time of your sojourning, realizing that you were ransomed from your futile conduct, handed on by your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ as of a spotless unblemished lamb.”** (1 Peter 1:17-19)

PSALM 22

Now at 3 o’clock Jesus cries out in a loud voice, **“Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?”** which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” Those words, out of my ignorance, most of my life I didn’t know what they meant. Someone once told me that was the *human* part of Jesus crying out, and they didn’t really have a good explanation for this. I was very confused. I wanted to share this with you because it help clear things up for me. I found this also referenced in the footnotes of my Bible. It’s a reference back to Psalm 22. This explains why Jesus cried out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” We need to understand that Jesus was pointing to a passage in Psalms. We call it Psalm 22. They didn’t have them numbered back then, but the Jews knew many of the Psalms. They were taught the Psalms. They knew this particular Psalm along with many many other ones. Do you know any Psalms from memory? When I was a child I was taught, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall now want.” Yeah I remember that one, but there’s a lot of Psalms that people learn. Back then they didn’t have paper and pencil so they could write them down and memorize them. They were orally taught. These Psalms were written hundreds and hundreds of years before Christ. One Psalm, Psalm 22, is written by David. And the name of this Psalm is, “The Prayer for an Innocent Person.” This Psalm begins, **“My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”** (Psalm 22:2) The word *abandon* and *forsaken* are derived from the same word and translated from the same origin. **“My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”** That’s the beginning of Psalm 22. I’m not going to read the entire Psalm; I want you to do this on your own. Make a special note right here to remember to go back, flip through your Bible, find Psalm 22, and read it, because Jesus is pointing to this Psalm. The Psalm begins with a cry of desolation, and you will see when you read this that it gives a very accurate description of the crucifixion. It says things like, **“So wasted are my hands and feet that I can count all my bones.”** (Psalm 22:17-18) **“They divide my garments among them; for my clothing they cast lots.”** (Psalm 22:19) **“A pack of evildoers closes in on me.”** (Psalm 22:17) It goes into a description of a crucifixion, and it ends with the word of the deliverance of the Messiah being carried to the ends of the world, to people not yet born and to generations to come. Now what is Jesus saying? He’s saying that this Psalm, this prophecy, has just been fulfilled. Jesus does not need to finish the entire Psalm. The Jews that were listening were taught many Psalms, and this was one that they would have been very familiar with.

So when Jesus began the words of this Psalm, they immediately knew what He meant. I would like to borrow an example that Dr. Scott Hahn uses to hammer down this point. I cannot imagine explaining this in a clearer way. What if a group of anti-American terrorists came into this room right now, and they sat me in the corner, and they wanted me to denounce my American patriotism? And I would not denounce this patriotism so they would beat me and torture me. And they sat me up and they said ok, we're going to get a live television camera. We're going to hand you a microphone. We're going to ask you to say your last words. If you do not say what we want you to say, you're going die. And I look up holding the microphone, and the camera is on, and these terrorists say do you have any last words? And I say, "I pledge allegiance to the flag." Do I need to finish the Pledge? No. Every American watching knows the Pledge, and they know the words of the Pledge. I don't need to finish it. Well the Jews that were standing around the cross - they knew the Psalms. When Jesus said, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" They said, <gasp> the prophecy has been fulfilled. They've been waiting for this. They knew it. They were waiting for it, and recognized it.

TOMBS WERE OPENED

Now when Jesus died, tombs were opened. In Matthew it's recorded, "**And behold, the veil of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom.**" Now if we were going to tear a 30 foot veil into two pieces, two men would grab it and would tear it from the bottom up. But this veil was torn from the top to the bottom. By God? By an Angel? It doesn't say, but it was not torn by men. This veil separated the holy from the holy of holies which is where the Ark of the Covenant was kept. "**The earth quaked,**" at His death, and "**rocks were split, tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised. And coming forth from their tombs after his resurrection, they entered the holy city and appeared to many.**" People don't realize this, but when Jesus died, amazing things happened. Then they took Him down from the cross and they buried Him. When Jesus died, we also know there was an eclipse from 12 o'clock to 3 o'clock. We read that in another gospel. Jesus dies on the cross, they take Him down, and they bury Him. Three days later He is resurrected. He conquers death, and they don't know where He is. They're confused.

ROAD TO EMMAUS

He appears to Mary Magdalene and to others, but there's one really special appearance that is on that first Easter Sunday morning. That same morning when they can't find Him, He appears to two disciples who were walking on the road going to Emmaus. Now Emmaus is a town about seven miles from Jerusalem. The two disciples were walking to Emmaus, and they're talking, of course, about what all had gone on with Jesus, because this was worldly news. And this stranger walks up with them, and they don't recognize who He is. It's really Jesus, but their eyes were shielded so they couldn't see who He was. And they're talking with Him, and Jesus asks them what's going on? And they said are you the only person that doesn't know what has taken place? And they explain to Him that this prophet named Jesus -they thought He was a prophet- this prophet named Jesus came to Jerusalem, and He did all these miracles, and they killed Him. And after three days His body was taken, and they had hoped that He was the one who was to redeem Israel. And anyway they continued their walk and Jesus explained to them the Old Testament. Luke's gospel states, "**Beginning with**

Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them what referred to him in all the scriptures.” (Luke 24:27)

He explained to them the prophecies about Himself beginning with Moses. He opens the scriptures to them, and they listen to Him all the way to Emmaus. They have a seven mile walk. They don't know who He is because their eyes are shielded. Finally the disciples reach their destination. Jesus indicates that He's going a little farther. And they say to Him, no, stay with us tonight. So He does. **“And it happened that, while he was with them at table, he took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave it to them.”** Wow, look at this! He took. He blessed. He broke. He gave. And with that special handling of the bread, **“their eyes were opened and they recognized him, <snap> but he vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, “Were not our hearts burning (within us) while he spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us?” (Luke 24:30-31)** They recognized Him when He broke the bread. Then Jesus disappeared. Do you think He was playing tricks? No. He did it on purpose. He broke the bread only three nights earlier; they saw Him break bread the same way. He took. He blessed. He broke. He gave. Then Jesus allowed them to recognize Him, and He vanished from their sight. What did He leave them with? He left them with the Eucharist. He had told them that I will be with you until the end of time. And He is.

They went back all the way to Jerusalem and they were telling the other disciples **“what had taken place on the way and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.” (Luke 24:35)** Meaning Jesus revealed Himself, on that Easter morning to the disciples, in the breaking of the bread in the Eucharist.

I mentioned to you earlier that the Passover was fulfilled, and the new covenant of the Eucharist is instituted. And it's new, and it's everlasting. The feast goes on forever. This is ordered by God. It's a perpetual ordinance.

EARLY CHURCH

In the book of Acts we find bits and pieces of the early Church coming together. I thought it was important to include just what the apostles do after Jesus goes to Bethany and He ascends back into heaven. It says, in Acts, **“They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles.” (Acts 2:42)** Now these were oral teachings because things weren't written down for 20, 30, or 40 years. And the book of John wasn't written down until maybe 50 years later. But these teachings were oral. And the Bible was not assembled until around 382 A.D. **“They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one's need. Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes.” (Acts 2:42-46)** How often did they break this bread? Daily! It says they broke it daily! Give us this day our daily bread. How often do we receive communion? It's available at the Catholic Church every day. Every Catholic Church in the world consecrates Holy Communion every day. **“They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:46-47)**

Now many of the Jews did not accept Jesus at this time as the Messiah and the Son of God, therefore, they still celebrate the Passover. They're still in the Passover. Many of them are still in the Passover today – still celebrating the Passover. All of the people that became Christians and accept Jesus as the Messiah and Savior gave up the old Passover and celebrate the new Feast of the Eucharist. And we see it right here.

Paul spreads the message around the world. He writes a letter to the Corinthians, and he includes in this letter, **“The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?”** (1 Corinthians 10:16) It is estimated that half of all Catholics don't believe that Jesus is really present in the Eucharist. That's sad. I want to hammer this point home: that He is present, and we've been taught this. And it's our ignorance that some of us don't believe it. We should all believe this. And when we truly believe this, we live our lives accordingly.

TRADITION OF THE INSTITUTION

Paul also says, **“The cup of blessing that we bless” “The cup of blessing” “is it not a participation in the blood of Christ?”** The cup of blessing was the third cup of the Jewish Passover. He also writes in the next letter, **“For I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was handed over, took bread, and, after he had given thanks, broke it and said, “This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood.”** (1 Corinthians 11:23-25) We had an old covenant that was fulfilled at Passover. Now the new covenant has begun. What does it say in the new covenant? **“Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes.”** (1 Corinthians 11:25-26) It's one step deeper than just saying, “I believe.” Yeah, I believe in Jesus, but I'm receiving Communion while I wait for Christ to come back. Because it says, **“as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the death of the Lord until he comes. Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord. A person should examine himself, and so eat the bread and drink the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body, eats and drinks judgment on himself.”** (1 Corinthians 11:26-29) We have to prepare ourselves. It's saying, you're about to receive Jesus' real body and blood. Are you prepared? Have you abstained from eating food in the last hour? Have you confessed your sins? Do you have mortal sin on your soul? Are you ready? Are you prayerful? How do you receive this? What's so special? Leviticus tells us that the life is in the blood. This is Jesus' body and blood. Take it and receive His life. But one can't just take it without caution. St. Paul says if you're not careful, you eat and drink judgment upon yourself.

St. Paul also writes in first Corinthians five, verse seven, **“Clear out the old yeast, so that you may become a fresh batch of dough, inasmuch as you are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”** (1 Corinthians 5:7-8) Now what feast is St. Paul talking about? If you'll turn back to page one on your handout, we're going to go back to Exodus 12. St. Paul is referring to the feast of the Passover that continues in the Eucharist. It says on verse 14, Exodus 12:14, **“This day shall be a memorial feast for you in which all generations shall celebrate with pilgrimage to the LORD as a perpetual**

institution.” (Exodus 12:14) **“all generations shall celebrate with pilgrimage to the LORD as a perpetual institution.”** It never stops. It never stops. This feast continues in the Eucharist.

OLD & NEW COVENANTS

And we talked about an old covenant in the Bible. Where can we find this old covenant? Jesus gives us a new covenant. Look back at Exodus 24, verse six through eight. Moses takes **“the book of the covenant, he read it aloud to the people, (and these people) answered, “All that the LORD has said, we will heed and do.” Then he took the blood (from a sacrificed animal, and he) sprinkled it on the people, saying, ‘This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.’”** (Hebrews 24:9) This is the old covenant. Blood was shed. Blood is always shed with a covenant. It’s sealed with a covenant. This time it’s sealed with Jesus’ blood – God’s blood. This is an everlasting, permanent covenant, and we can partake of it.

I would like you to also read Hebrews 8 and Hebrews 9. Because of time restrictions, I could not go over this. I’d like you to read it later. Hebrews 8 says for if that **“first covenant had been faultless, no place would have been sought for a second one.”** (Hebrews 8:7) So we are living in the second covenant.

Bible scholars estimate that Jesus died in or around 33 A.D. and that the Bible was compiled around 382 A.D. The Church began soon after the death of Jesus. So, the Church existed for many years before the Bible was compiled. The Bible was assembled by the Catholic Church to support the Church that was already over 360 years old. During these years before the Bible, the Church fathers followed Jesus’ examples with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and practiced their Christianity by the breaking of the bread. We know this because these Church fathers wrote their teachings down. The early Church fathers believed and taught that Jesus is really, truly present in the Eucharist. Do you think it would be important to know what these early Church fathers believed and taught? The Catholic Church has preserved these documents through the years and refers to them as sacred tradition. We have access to the writings of the early Church Fathers. And if you want to read more about this, go to www.catholic.com, and read for yourself what the early Church Fathers wrote down.

Once we see the entire plan of God and his master plan for salvation, we can see that Jesus is truly present. The early Church Fathers believed it, and they passed it onto us. And we need to study it, learn it, and to accept it and practice it.

CONCLUSION

I ask you this question today: Can the redemption of mankind be obtained by participating in a sacred meal? If you think about it, Adam and Eve ate a meal, the wrong meal, and fell from God. Safety for the life of the first-born in Egypt was to bring your family together and eat a special meal. Just as sin entered all mankind through the sin of one man, Adam, redemption for mankind is offered through one perfect sacrifice, Jesus.

To say, “He died for me,” is a very accurate statement, but I believe to include *how* He died for me needs to be addressed. At His death He fulfilled the old covenant and became the perfect sacrifice of the new covenant.

He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. From the time of Moses in Exodus, through the New Testament, it is obvious that God has a master plan for the forgiveness of sins and for our salvation that has been fulfilled through the perfect sacrifice and continues to be fulfilled today at every Mass. Because of the way that the gospel writers recorded the manner in which Jesus handled the bread, He took, blessed, broke, gave, when He fed 5000, and when He fed 4000, at the Lord's Supper, at the table with the disciples in Emmaus, and in the letters of Paul to the Corinthians. It is clear that we should connect each of these events to one another and eventually to the Eucharist in Acts. Even at the feeding of the 5000, they connected Jesus' bread miracle to the miracle of Moses and the manna in the desert to the Israelites. We should also see a pattern that nothing is wasted in handling the Passover lamb. And nothing is wasted when handling the manna in the desert. And nothing is wasted in the feeding of the 5000, and nothing is wasted in the feeding of the 4000. And also nothing is wasted in the careful manner in which the Catholic Church handles the Eucharist today. St. John connects the male, unblemished Passover lamb of Exodus to the unblemished Lamb of Jesus on the cross, and we should too.

Jesus could have died any day of the year, but He didn't. He didn't just choose any day to die; He chose to die at Passover. His death at Passover was intended and well planned. He fulfills the old covenant Passover meal, and the night before He dies, He institutes a new covenant. He commands us to "do this in remembrance of me." Therefore, it should be easy to see why the Church celebrates Holy Communion in every Catholic Church every day throughout the world in more than 3000 languages.

Each time that I participate in Mass, I am made more aware of the teachings of the Church. When I receive Holy Communion, I try to focus on the fact that I am living in this new covenant. I want to do my part in this new covenant, but what is my part? The Lamb of God has been sacrificed and the Church has empowered its priests through the words of consecration and the presence of the Holy Spirit to change ordinary bread and wine into the body and blood of our Lord Jesus. So just what is my part as a Catholic lay person? It is to eat the Lamb and drink His blood. Just like in the first Passover meal, the escape from the Angel of Death was to gather your family together and celebrate a meal, and mark the entrance of your home with the blood of the lamb. This perpetual institution continues in the Catholic Church today as we gather the Church family together and celebrate the meal of the Eucharist. Each time, when the priest holds up the Eucharist, and says, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, happy are we who are called to this supper," I will respond, "Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word and I shall be healed."

TEL TELESTI

I wanted to include a few bullet points to compare the old covenant and the new covenant. In the old covenant, the manna rains down from heaven. In the new covenant Jesus, the Bread of Life, has come down from heaven. In the old covenant, the old manna is a mystery and it feeds and nourishes God's chosen people until they enter the promise land. In the new covenant, the new manna, the bread of life, is a mystery and it spiritually feeds and nourishes our souls until we enter the promise land, heaven. The manna falls daily, as in "Give us this day our daily bread." The manna is a prefiguration of the Eucharist in the old covenant. In the new covenant, Jesus is the bread of life which is given daily in the Eucharist. In the old covenant, the paschal

lamb is sacrificed at Passover. In the new covenant, Jesus offers Himself, the Lamb of God, at Passover. In the old covenant, the Passover lamb must be male, unblemished, and have no broken bones. In the new covenant, Jesus dies, is the Lamb of God, male, unblemished with no broken bones. In the old covenant, the Passover lamb was slain at twilight which is 3pm. In the new covenant Jesus, the Lamb of God, dies at 3pm. In the old covenant, the lamb's blood is applied to lentil and the doorpost with a hyssop branch. In the new covenant, Jesus receives the fourth cup on the cross with the hyssop branch. In the old covenant, priestly vestments were required to be worn when Priests were sacrificing animals during the Passover meal. In the new covenant, Jesus is the high priest and the sacrificial Lamb of God at Calvary. He was wearing priestly vestments and offers Himself as the perfect sacrifice in this covenant. In Leviticus we learned that the life is in the blood and God requires the blood to be put upon the altar for the atonement of sins. In the new covenant, Jesus says unless you eat the flesh of the son of man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. Jesus also says in the Upper Room, this cup is the new covenant in my blood which will be shed for you. Do this in memory of me. The Jews do not accept Jesus as the Messiah. They continue even today to practice the old covenant Passover meal, also called the Feast of Unleavened Bread. They understand that the feast must continue. Early Christians follow Jesus and participate in the new covenant of the Eucharist. They break away from the old Passover meal, and celebrate the feast of the Eucharist.

I'd like to close with a word of prayer. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Our Father, Who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, On earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen. In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Thank you for allowing me the privilege to share this with you.

I'm pretty sure that everyone listening has a special person in mind that they would like to share this message with. I want to challenge you to share and teach it to them. We're all called to share our faith. By the authority given to you in Baptism, share this message. Pray for the courage to sit down with this person, and go online – and pull up www.the4thcup.com and share this message with someone. Sit down with them. Print the handout and show it to them. This could be the most important 90 minutes that you share with someone that you love.

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