

OF THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

CCCLVI.

The blindness of the papists is great and mischievous; for they will neither believe the Gospel nor yield thereunto, but boast of the church and say: She has power to alter and to do what she pleases; for, say they, Christ gave his body to his disciples in the evening after supper; but we receive it fasting, therefore we may, according to the church's ordinance, detain the cup from the laity. The ignorant wretches are not able to distinguish between the cup, which pertains to the substance of the sacrament, and fasting, which is an accidental, carnal thing, of no weight at all. The one has God's express word and command, the other consists in our will and choice. We urge the one, because God has commanded it; the other we leave to the election of the will, though we better like it to be received fasting, out of honor and reverence.

CCCLVII.

It is a wonder how Satan brought into the church, and ordained, but one kind of the sacrament to be received. I cannot call to mind that ever I read how, whence, or for what cause it was so altered. It was first so ordained in the council of Constance, where nothing, however, is pleaded but only the custom.

CCCLVIII.

The papists highly boast of their power and authority, which they would willingly confirm with this argument: the apostles altered baptism; therefore, say they, the bishops have power to alter the sacrament of the Lord's supper. I answer: admit that the apostles altered something; yet there is a great difference between an apostle and a bishop; an apostle was called immediately by God with gifts of the Holy Ghost; but a bishop is a person selected by man, to preach God's words, and ordain servants of the church in certain places. So, though the apostles had this power and authority, yet the bishops have not. Although Elijah slew Baal's priests and the false prophets, it is not permitted that every priest shall do the like. Hence St Paul makes this difference: "Some hath he given to be apostles, some teachers, some to be pastors and ministers," etc. Among the apostles was no supremacy or ruling; none was greater or higher in office than another; they were all equal, the one with the other. The definition as to the supremacy and rule of St Peter above other bishops is false; it reaches further than they define it; they conclude thus: the pope's power and authority is the highest; he may ordain servants, alter kingdoms and governments, depose some emperors and kings and enthrone others. But we are in nowise to allow of such definitions; for every definition must be direct and proper, set down plain and clear; so that neither more nor less may in the definition be contained, than that which is described and defined.

CCCLXIX.

They that as yet are not well informed, but stand in doubt, touching the institution of the sacrament, may receive it under one kind; but those that are certain thereof, and yet receive it under one kind, act wrongfully and against their consciences.

CCCLX.

What signifies it to dispute and wrangle about the abominable idolatry of elevating the sacrament on high to show it to the people, which has no approbation of the Fathers, and was introduced only to confirm the errors touching the worship thereof, as though bread and wine lost their substance, and retained only the form, smell, taste. This the papists call transubstantiation, and darken the right use of the sacrament; whereas, even in popedom, at Milan, from Ambrose's time to the present day, they never held or observed in the mass either canon or elevation, or the *Dominus vobiscum*.

CCCLXI.

The elevation of the sacrament was taken out of the Old Testament; the Jews observed two forms, the one called *Thruma*, the other *Trumpha*; *Thruma* was when they took an offering out of a basket, and lifted it up above them (like as they now lift up the oblate), and showed the same to our Lord God, after which they either burned or ate it: *Trumpha*, was an offering which they lifted not up above them, but showed it towards the four corners of the world, as the papists, in the mass, make crosses and other apish toys, towards the four corners of the world.

When I first began to celebrate mass in popedom, and to make such crossings with marvellous twistings of the fingers, and could not rightly hit the way, I said: "Mary, God's mother, how am I plagued with the mass, and especially with the crossings." Ah, Lord God! we were in those times poor plagued people, and yet it was nothing but mere idolatry. They terrified some in such sort with the words of consecration, especially good and godly men who meant seriously, that they trembled and quaked at the pronouncing of these words: *Hoc est corpus meum*, for they were to pronounce them, *sine ulla hesitatione*; he that stammered, or left out but one word, committed a great sin. Moreover, the words were to be spoken, without any abstraction of thought, in such a way, that only he must hear them that spake them, and none of the people standing by. Such an honest friar was I fifteen years together; the Lord of his mercy forgive me. The elevation is utterly to be rejected by reason of the adoring thereof. Some churches, seeing we have put down the elevation, have followed us therein, which gives me great satisfaction.

CCCLXII.

The operative cause of the sacrament is the Word and institution of Christ, who ordained it. The substance is bread and wine, prefiguring the true body and blood of Christ, which is spiritually received by faith. The final cause of instituting the same, is the benefit and the fruit, the strengthening of our faith, not doubting that Christ's body and blood were given and shed for us, and that our sins by Christ's death certainly are forgiven.

CCCLXIII.

Question was made touching the words "given for you," whether they were to be understood of the present administering, when the sacrament is distributed, or of when it was offered and accomplished on the cross? I said: I like it best when they are understood of the present administering, although they may be understood as fulfilled on the cross; it matter not that Christ says: "Which is given for you," instead of: "which shall be given for you:" for Christ is *Hodie et Heri*, to-day and yesterday. I am, says Christ, he that doeth it. Therefore, I approve that *Datur* be understood in such manner, that it show the use of the work. It was likewise asked, whether honor and reverence were to be shown to the sacrament? I said: When I am at the altar, and receive the sacrament, I bow my knees in honor thereof; but in bed I receive it lying.

They that do not hold the sacrament as Christ instituted it, have no sacrament. All papists do not, therefore they have no sacrament; for they receive not the sacrament, but offer it. Moreover, they administer but one kind, contrary to Christ's work and ordinance, and not man's. The papists err in attributing to the sacrament, that it justifies, *ex opere operato*, when the work is fulfilled.

CCCLXV.

These words, "Drink ye all of it," concern, say the papists, only the priests. Then these words must also concern only the priests, where Christ says: "Ye are clean, but not all," that is, all the priests.

[HOME](#)

[TABLE TALK INDEX](#)