

APOLOGETICS MADE EASY

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Real Presence in the Eucharist

What is one of the biggest questions in the Bible? It's in John 6. Jesus has just multiplied the loaves and fishes for the large crowd. The crowd follows Jesus to Capernaum, and they ask this question, "What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you?"

Jesus instructs the crowd that He is the bread of life, that whoever eats His flesh and drinks His blood will live forever and He will raise them up on the last day. The crowd and even some of His closest followers struggle with what Jesus says, but He does not back off. The sign that He can do, that the people may see and believe in Him, is the Eucharist.

This becomes clearer on the night before He died when Jesus took the bread at the Last Supper, broke it and said, "Take and eat; this is my body," and took the cup and said, "Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood." He then added, "Do this in remembrance of me."

In the meeting of Jesus with his disciples on the road to Emmaus, recounted in Luke 24, it becomes clear that after the resurrection of Jesus, He will be recognized by His followers in the breaking of the bread in the Eucharist.

St. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 10:16, explains the deep meaning of the Eucharist as follows: "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?"

We have access to the divine life of Jesus, the very life that He shares with God the Father and the Holy Spirit, when we worthily participate in the great mystery of the Eucharist. May we echo the crowd described in John 6 by proclaiming, "Jesus, give us this bread always!"