



It Is Finished is the second exposé in Bodyguard’s explosive **Voice Against the Vicar** series—a three-part confrontation of Rome’s most guarded doctrines by Scripture’s own verdict. *It Is Finished* dismantles transubstantiation by restoring the finality of Christ’s once-for-all sacrifice. *Upon This Rock* proves through language, context, and apostolic testimony that Christ—not Peter—is the immovable foundation of Matthew 16:18. *Soul Piercing* exposes the Marian system as a constructed goddess rivaling the glory God refuses to share. Together, these works call the Church back to the Cross, the Rock, and the worship of God alone, confronting every tradition that exalts itself against Christ and His unbreakable Word. Each volume honors a Christian martyr slain under the brutality of the Papacy.

IT IS FINISHED

THE LORD'S SUPPER AND SCRIPTURE'S VERDICT ON TRANSUBSTANTIATION

A Biblical Examination of Two Contrasting Theologies

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IT IS FINISHED, is the fruit of a growing burden for souls ensnared by systems that obscure the simplicity and sufficiency of Christ's finished work. The doctrine of transubstantiation — with its re-presentation of sacrifice, its metaphysical conversion of elements, and its requirement of a mediating priesthood — stands in direct contradiction to the clear testimony of Holy Scripture.

The cross was not a beginning but an end. The debt was not partially paid but "paid in full." Christ did not rise to continue offering Himself but to sit down forever at the right hand of God, having perfected for ever them that are sanctified (Hebrews 10:12–14).

The Lord's Supper is not an altar of ongoing propitiation but a table of remembrance, proclamation, and spiritual communion with the risen Christ — received by faith alone. "This do in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19) is the command; "It is finished" (John 19:30) is the declaration that makes that remembrance possible and joyful.

This work is dedicated to Anne Askew (1521–1546), the young English martyr who, at twenty-five years of age, endured the rack and the stake rather than affirm what Scripture does not teach. Her five-line confession — "I believe as the Scripture doth teach me" — captures the heart of this entire examination.

She did not theologize in academic halls; she simply read the Bible, believed what it said, and refused to say otherwise, even when the cost was everything. Her witness outlasted the fire. Her conviction — that the bread remains bread, the sacrifice is complete, the priest is unnecessary, and the Word is sufficient — became the bedrock of this book.

To her memory, and to the God whose Word she would not deny, this labor is offered. It is written with love for Roman Catholic souls who seek Christ with genuine devotion, yet with unflinching fidelity to the biblical Gospel.

The invitation remains open: come to the table Christ Himself set, where faith finds its deepest nourishment, consciences are freed from sacramental anxiety, and the finished work is proclaimed until He comes.

***Because Christ is enough, we stand.
Because Scripture commands, we speak.
Because souls are eternal, we contend.***

— *Wes W. Hazlett*

DEDICATION

— *To the memory of Anne Askew (1521–1546)* —

transubstantiation, and unyielding defender of the true Lord's Supper.

Born in Lincolnshire and awakened by the plain testimony of Holy Scripture, Anne Askew refused to submit her conscience to the Roman invention that bread and wine become the literal body and blood of Christ.

Arrested in 1545 for denying that the Mass could transform the elements into Christ's physical presence, she answered her examiners with the Word of God alone and refused to betray any who shared her convictions.

Her faith was tested in the Tower of London, where — by order of Sir Thomas Wriothesley and Sir Richard Rich — she was unlawfully racked until her joints were torn from their sockets and her body broken beyond human endurance.

Yet her confession stood unbroken, her testimony unyielding, her conscience undefiled.

Unable to walk, she was carried in a chair to Smithfield on July 16, 1546, where she was burned alive alongside John Lascelles, Nicholas Belenian, and John Adams.

John Foxe preserves her unwavering words, including the declaration that still pierces the centuries: "I had rather read five lines in the Bible than to hear five masses in the temple."

Her body was consumed by the flames, but her soul was preserved by the truth she confessed: Christ's sacrifice is finished once for all (Hebrews 10:10); His presence is spiritual (John 6:63); and His Supper is a memorial of faith — not a repeated propitiatory offering.

This work is dedicated to her undaunted witness, and to every believer who, in this present evil age, refuses to bow the knee to man-made dogmas that obscure the finished work of Christ.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
— Matthew 5:10

PREFACE

Pastoral Posture

Bodyguard Christian Apologetics approaches the doctrine of the Mass with sincere love for the Roman Catholic soul.

Many Catholics seek Christ with genuine devotion, and we honor that.

Our concern is not with individuals, but with a system of teaching that — despite its antiquity and sincerity — has departed from the clear testimony of Holy Scripture.

Because we care, we must speak.

Because Scripture commands, we must contend.

The Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation represents a tragic and consequential deviation from the biblical teaching on the Lord's Supper.

It transforms a memorial of Christ's finished work into an ongoing sacrifice, mediated by a human priesthood and dependent on metaphysical categories foreign to the biblical text.

This shift obscures the finality of the cross, burdens the conscience, and misrepresents the nature of the Gospel itself.

We call this out not in hostility, but in hope.

Not in pride, but in humility.

Not to condemn, but to invite all people to return to the simplicity and purity of the biblical Gospel.

Christ's sacrifice is complete.

His presence is spiritual.

His priesthood is eternal.

His table is open to all who come by faith.

Because we love, we speak.

Because Christ is enough, we stand.

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INTRODUCTION

Understanding the Stakes

INTRODUCTION Understanding the Stakes INTRODUCTION: UNDERSTANDING THE STAKES
The question of what happens during communion is not merely academic — it touches the very heart of the Gospel. Does the Lord's Supper celebrate a finished work, or does it perpetuate an ongoing sacrifice? Is Christ's presence spiritual or physical? Is the table open to all who come by faith, or is it gated by a human priesthood that alone can produce Christ's presence in the elements?

These questions have divided Christianity for centuries.

But they are not questions where both sides have equal footing in Scripture.

The biblical testimony on each of these points is consistent, clear, and cumulative.

The Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation requires Scripture to be read against its plain meaning, supplemented by tradition that cannot demonstrate apostolic origin, and explained through a philosophical framework borrowed from a pagan philosopher who died three centuries before Christ.

This examination presents the biblical case for the Lord's Supper as a memorial and spiritual participation in Christ's completed work.

It does not merely critique Rome's position — it demonstrates from Scripture, from history, from logic, and from Rome's own sources that transubstantiation is a doctrine without biblical foundation, without coherent philosophical support, and without pastoral fruit.

It produces not the liberty of the Gospel but the bondage of a system.

We will proceed through seven major areas of examination.

Each one stands independently. Together, they form a cumulative case that is, we believe, decisive.

PART ONE

"It Is Finished" vs. "It Continues"

The Sacrifice of Christ — Complete, Final, and Unrepeatable

The Question That Defines Everything Before examining any specific text, the central theological question must be stated with precision, because imprecision here has allowed the debate to be muddled for centuries." The question is not: Is Jesus present with His people when they gather? He is.

Scripture is clear (Matthew 18:20; John 14:23).

The question is not: Is the Lord's Supper a serious, weighty, covenantal act?

It is. Paul's warning in 1 Corinthians 11 establishes this beyond dispute.

The question is not: Did Jesus mean something profound when He said "This is my body"? He did.

No serious Protestant denies the gravity of the institution.

The question is this: Did Christ's sacrifice on Calvary complete the atonement, or does it require continuation through a priestly act performed in the Mass?

This is the load-bearing question. Everything else in the debate rests on the answer to this one.

Because if the sacrifice is finished — truly, completely, finally finished — then there is nothing left to offer, no priest needed to offer it, no altar required, no transubstantiation necessary, and no ongoing propitiatory sacrifice to be "re-presented." The entire Roman sacramental system stands or falls on whether Christ's work is done.

Scripture answers this question with an explicitness that is extraordinary.

A. The Biblical Declaration of Completion The Greek Word That Changes

Everything: ephapax The author of Hebrews uses a specific Greek adverb with deliberate, repeated force throughout his argument.

The word is ephapax — meaning "once for all," "at one time and never again," "with permanent, unrepeatable finality." This is not a casual word choice.

It appears at the critical argumentative moments in Hebrews precisely because the author is establishing the absolute, irreversible, unrepeatable nature of Christ's sacrifice in contrast to the repeated sacrifices of the Levitical priesthood. Hebrews 7:27:

"Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once (ephapax), when he offered up himself." Hebrews 9:12:" "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once (ephapax) into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." Hebrews 9:26:" "For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once (hapax) in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Hebrews 10:10:" "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all (ephapax)." The repetition is not accidental." The author of Hebrews is constructing a sustained theological argument, and ephapax is his signature word for the defining characteristic of Christ's sacrifice

that makes it superior to and utterly different from everything that preceded it: its unrepeatable finality.”

The Old Covenant sacrifices were repeated.

They had to be, because they could never finally and permanently deal with sin.

Their repetition was proof of their insufficiency.

Hebrews 10:1–4 states this explicitly: if those sacrifices could have perfected the worshippers, they would have stopped being offered.

The fact that they continued was its own testimony to their inadequacy. Christ's sacrifice cannot be repeated. It must not be.

Any repetition — or "re-presentation," or "making present," or any other terminological circumvention Rome employs — implies the same insufficiency that characterized the Old Covenant system. If the work is done, it is done.

If it must be done again, it was not done.

The Posture That Speaks Volumes Hebrews 10:11–12 delivers one of the most theologically potent contrasts in all of Scripture:

“And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.” Standing versus sitting. The contrast is not decorative.”

It is the argument.” The Levitical priests stood because they were always working. There was always more to offer.

The sacrifices never finally dealt with the problem, so the ministry never ceased.

There was no chair in the Holy Place — because the priest's work was never finished. Christ sat down.

He is seated at the right hand of God.

This is not a posture of waiting for the next Mass.

This is the posture of completed, accomplished, accepted, finished work. To require Christ to be "offered" at every Mass — even in an "unbloody manner" — is to require Him to stand up again.

It contradicts the posture Scripture assigns Him.

It contradicts the meaning Scripture attributes to that posture.

It is not a nuancing of the biblical theology of atonement. It is a direct reversal of it.

“It Is Finished”

— Tetelestai John 19:30:

“When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.” The Greek word tetelestai is the perfect passive indicative of teleo — “to complete,” “to bring to an end,” “to accomplish fully.” The perfect tense in Greek describes an action completed in the past with results that continue into the present and future.” It is not “it was finished” (simple past, now irrelevant).”

It is "it has been finished and remains finished." In Greco-Roman commercial practice, tetelestai was written across paid debt receipts.

It meant: paid in full. Nothing outstanding. The account is closed.

Jesus was not merely announcing His death.

He was making a declarative theological statement about the status of the redemptive work. The debt is paid. The account is closed. The work is done.

This single word — tetelestai — is sufficient to refute the entire doctrine of the Mass as a propitiatory sacrifice.

If the work is finished, there is nothing left to offer.

If there is nothing left to offer, no priest can offer it.

If no priest can offer it, no Mass can provide what Rome claims it provides.

Hebrews 9:25–28 — Explicit Denial of Repetition "Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." This passage does not merely assert that Christ's sacrifice was unrepeatable. It provides the logical proof.

If Christ needed to be offered repeatedly, He would have needed to suffer repeatedly — from the foundation of the world, as often as the sacrifice was needed.

But He appeared once, at the end of the age, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

The logic is airtight: multiple offerings require multiple sufferings.

There has been only one suffering. Therefore there can be only one offering. Therefore the Mass cannot be a sacrifice — propitiatory, represented, or otherwise.

B. The Roman Catholic Position — Stated Fairly Before engaging

Rome's response, it must be stated accurately.

Rome does not use crude language about "re-sacrificing" Christ.

The official terminology is more nuanced, and we must engage what Rome actually teaches rather than a caricature. Council of Trent, Session 22, Chapter 2 (Denzinger 940):

"In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, that same Christ is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner, who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the Cross." Council of Trent, Session 22, Canon 3 (Denzinger 950): "If anyone says that the sacrifice of the Mass is only one of praise and thanksgiving, or that it is a bare commemoration of the sacrifice consummated on the Cross, but not propitiatory... let him be anathema." *Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1366–1367:* "The Eucharist is thus a sacrifice because it represents (makes present) the sacrifice of the cross... The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice." *Rome's argument is that the Mass is not a new sacrifice or a repeated sacrifice — it is the same sacrifice, made present through a sacramental act.* "The one sacrifice of Calvary, Rome argues, transcends time and is made present at each Mass. Therefore no new suffering occurs, no new death occurs, and the ephapax of Hebrews is not violated

— because it is always the same once that is being re-presented. This is a sophisticated position.”

It deserves a precise refutation rather than a dismissal.

C. Why "Re-Presentation" Does Not Rescue the Doctrine The Propitiatory Nature

Cannot Be Escaped Trent's Canon 3 is explicit: the Mass is propitiatory.

It is not merely commemorative or declaratory. It obtains grace.

It applies the merits of Calvary to those present. It has sacrificial efficacy. This is the critical point.

Rome is not merely saying the Mass reminds us of a past sacrifice, or that it brings the memory of Calvary to mind with special vividness.

Rome is saying the Mass does something — it propitiates, it applies, it obtains.

But if the one sacrifice of Calvary was truly complete, comprehensive, and eternally effective, then nothing further needs to be done to apply its benefits.

Those benefits are received by faith, not through repeated priestly mediation. Hebrews 10:14 states:

“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” Perfected for ever by one offering.” Not perfected progressively through thousands of daily Masses.”

Not perfected contingently upon receiving the Eucharist. Perfected for ever — completely, finally, by the one offering already accomplished.

The Logic of "One Sacrifice Re-Presented" Rome's "re-presentation" argument can be examined with a simple logical test.

If the one sacrifice is being re-presented, then either: Option A: The representation accomplishes something the original did not fully accomplish.

In this case, the original sacrifice was insufficient, contradicting Hebrews 10:14 ("perfected for ever") and Hebrews 9:26 ("to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself").

Option B: The re-presentation accomplishes nothing additional — it merely makes the one complete sacrifice present again.

In this case, the re-presentation is functionally unnecessary.

If the sacrifice is complete and its merits are accessible by faith alone, why is a priestly representation required?

Rome cannot accept Option A without contradicting Scripture's explicit declaration of completion.

Rome cannot accept Option B without undermining the entire rationale for the Mass as a propitiatory act.

The doctrine is caught between denying the sufficiency of Calvary and admitting its own superfluousness. Christ's Sitting Cannot Be Undone by Terminology Whatever language Rome uses — representation, making present, one sacrifice offered in an unbloody manner — the physical, positional, theological reality Scripture assigns to Christ is that He is seated at the right hand of God. He is not standing at an altar. He is not being offered.

He is not in the process of sacrifice.

He sat down because the work is finished.

Every Mass that claims to offer Christ — in any mode, under any description — requires Christ to be in the position of the one being offered.

But Scripture places Him in the position of the one whose offering is complete and accepted. These are irreconcilable postures.

D. The Weight of This for the Believer

This is not a theoretical dispute with no pastoral consequence.

The answer to whether Christ's sacrifice is finished determines: Whether the believer can know that their sin is fully dealt with — or must continue returning to a priestly mediator for ongoing propitiation.

Whether the believer has direct access to God through Christ — or must approach through an institutional gatekeeper.

Whether the Gospel is the proclamation of a completed work — or the invitation into a system of ongoing sacramental participation.

Whether assurance is possible — or whether the believer lives perpetually uncertain of their standing before God, dependent on the adequacy of their last confession and communion.

The doctrine of the finished sacrifice is not a secondary matter.

It is the architectonic principle of the entire Gospel. Get this wrong, and everything else that follows is distorted at the root. Figure 1: The Sacrifice of Christ vs. Rome's Mass Old Covenant / Rome's Mass The One Sacrifice of Christ — Scripture OT Priests stood daily — work never finished (Heb. 10:11) Christ sat down — work complete and accepted (Heb. 10:12) Same sacrifices offered many times — never took away sin One sacrifice *ephapax* — once for all, permanently (Heb. 10:10) Blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin (Heb. 10:4) His own blood — eternal redemption obtained (Heb. 9:12) High priest entered the Holy Place year by year (Heb. 9:25) Christ entered once into the true holy place (Heb. 9:12) Old Covenant / Rome's Mass The One Sacrifice of Christ — Scripture Hebrews 10:2 — would have ceased if they could perfect Heb. 10:14 — "by one offering perfected for ever" Rome's Mass:

Figure 1: The Sacrifice of Christ vs. Rome's Mass

| Old Covenant / Rome's Mass | The One Sacrifice of Christ — Scripture |
|---|---|
| OT Priests stood daily — work never finished (Heb. 10:11) | Christ <i>sat down</i> — work complete and accepted (Heb. 10:12) |
| Same sacrifices offered many times — never took away sin | One sacrifice <i>ephapax</i> — once for all, permanently (Heb. 10:10) |
| Blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin (Heb. 10:4) | His own blood — eternal redemption obtained (Heb. 9:12) |
| High priest entered the Holy Place year by year (Heb. 9:25) | Christ entered once into the true holy place (Heb. 9:12) |
| Hebrews 10:2 — would have ceased if they could perfect | Heb. 10:14 — "by one offering perfected for ever" |

| Old Covenant / Rome's Mass | The One Sacrifice of Christ — Scripture |
|--|---|
| Rome's Mass: "immolated in an unbloody manner" at every altar (Trent, Session 22, Chapter 2) | Scripture: "There is no more offering for sin" (Heb. 10:18) |

Figure 1 — The old covenant system of repeated sacrifices, the one sacrifice of Christ, and Rome's Mass placed alongside Scripture's verdict (Heb. 10:10–18; Trent, Sess. 22).

Figure 2: The Posture That Settles the Question

| Levitical Priests — STANDING | Christ — SEATED | What This Means |
|--|--|--|
| Stood daily — work never finished. No chair in the Holy Place. | Sat down at the right hand of God after one sacrifice for sins forever. | Standing = unfinished work. Seated = finished, accepted, complete. |
| Same sacrifices offered "oftentimes" — proof of insufficiency (Heb. 10:11) | "Henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool" (Heb. 10:13) | Every Mass that "offers" Christ requires Him to stand again — contradicting His posture in Scripture. |

Figure 2 — Standing vs. seated: what Scripture assigns to the Levitical priesthood and to Christ, and what the Mass requires Him to do.

PART TWO

Spiritual vs. Physical Presence

What Christ Actually Meant — and How Scripture Interprets Itself

Part One established that Christ's sacrifice is finished and unrepeatable. Part Two addresses the second and equally foundational question: what is the nature of Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper? Again, precision matters.

The question is not whether Christ is genuinely present with His people. He is. Scripture is unambiguous. Matthew 18:20:

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” John 14:23: “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” Ephesians 3:17: “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.” Christ is genuinely, really, powerfully present with His gathered people.” No serious Reformed theologian has ever denied this. To frame the debate as “Rome believes in Christ's real presence, Protestants don't” is a misrepresentation that Rome's apologists frequently deploy and that must be rejected from the outset.”

The question is this: Is Christ present in the Lord's Supper by means of a physical, substantial transformation of the bread and wine into His literal flesh and blood — or is He present spiritually, through the Holy Spirit, received by faith, while the elements remain bread and wine serving as covenant signs?

These are not two versions of the same thing.

They are categorically different claims with irreconcilable implications. And Scripture speaks decisively to this question.

A. Jesus' Consistent Pattern: Physical Language for Spiritual Reality

Before examining the specific texts Rome uses to support transubstantiation, the interpretive groundwork must be laid.

Jesus consistently used physical, concrete, tangible language to communicate spiritual realities.

This is not a Protestant invention to escape difficult texts.

It is an observable, undeniable feature of Jesus' teaching throughout the Gospels. John 10:9:

“I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.” No one has ever argued Jesus claimed to be a literal wooden door with hinges.” The physical image communicates a spiritual reality: exclusive access to salvation through Him alone. John 15:1, 5:”

“I am the true vine... I am the vine, ye are the branches.” Jesus is not a botanical plant.” His disciples are not literal branches.”

The physical imagery communicates organic spiritual union, mutual dependence, and the source of fruitfulness. John 4:13–14:

“Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” Jesus spoke this to the Samaritan woman at a physical well, surrounded by physical water.” He used the physical reality she understood to communicate a spiritual reality she needed.”

She initially misunderstood — asking for the physical water so she would not have to keep coming to the well (v. 15) — and Jesus clarified that He spoke of something entirely different in kind. John 11:25:

“I am the resurrection, and the life.” Jesus is not a biological process.” He is not identical to the phenomenon of resurrection.”

He is the source and ground of resurrection, communicated in physical-reality language.

This pattern is pervasive, deliberate, and consistent.

Jesus regularly uses the vocabulary of physical, tangible experience — doors, vines, water, bread, fire, light — to communicate spiritual realities that transcend the physical image while using it as a vehicle.

The critical question for interpreting John 6 and the institution of the Supper is therefore not:

“Did Jesus use physical language?” He did. He always does.”

The critical question is: “When Jesus uses physical language, what hermeneutical principle determines whether He means it literally or spiritually?” The answer Scripture itself provides — through Jesus' own words in John 6:63 — is that when the language is spiritual in intent, Jesus says so. And He does exactly that.” B.

John 6: Full Contextual Examination John 6 is the primary passage Rome deploys in defense of transubstantiation.

It therefore requires the most thorough treatment.

We will work through the entire chapter contextually, not selectively.

The Setting: Physical Bread Misunderstood (John 6:1–27) The discourse begins with the feeding of the five thousand — a miraculous multiplication of physical bread that satisfies physical hunger. The crowds are astonished.

They seek to make Jesus king by force (v. 15). He withdraws.

The next day, the crowds find Him on the other side of the sea and follow Him again. Jesus' diagnosis of their motivation is direct and unsparing:

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.” (John 6:26–27) This is the interpretive key to everything that follows.” Jesus explicitly identifies the crowd's orientation as physical and redirects it toward the spiritual. They are thinking about bread.”

He is going to teach them about something categorically different — that He Himself, received by faith, is the true sustenance that the physical bread merely pointed toward.

The entire discourse is Jesus working to move their understanding from the physical register to the spiritual register. This is not incidental background.

It is the explicit purpose of the teaching.

The Manna Parallel (John 6:31–35) The crowd raises the manna in the wilderness:

“Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.” (v. 31) Jesus corrects the misattribution (it was God, not Moses) and then makes the interpretive move that defines the entire discourse: “For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.” (v. 33) “And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” (v. 35) Notice what Jesus does here.” He identifies the manna — which Israel physically ate in the wilderness — as a type, a shadow, a pointer to something greater.”

He is the reality the manna foreshadowed. And then, critically, He defines what it means to "eat" this true bread: it means to come to Him, to believe on Him. Hunger satisfied = coming to Christ. Thirst quenched = believing on Christ. Eating and drinking are already being defined as faith, not physical consumption — and we are not yet to verse 53.

The interpretive framework for the entire discourse is established here, not in the shocking language that follows. To read verses 53–56 in isolation from this established framework is to misread the passage.

Paul reinforces the manna parallel with decisive clarity in 1 Corinthians 10:3–4:

“And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.” Israel ate spiritual meat and drank spiritual drink in the wilderness.” What they consumed was Christ — not literally, not physically, but spiritually.”

They fed on the reality the physical manna and water symbolized.

This is the Pauline interpretation of Israel's wilderness experience, and it establishes that Scripture's own vocabulary allows for "eating" and "drinking" Christ in a spiritual, non-physical sense that is nonetheless genuinely real.

The Faith Equations (John 6:35–47) Before reaching the controversial verses, Jesus repeatedly and explicitly equates eating and drinking with believing.

This cannot be emphasized strongly enough, because these equations are not incidental — they are the backbone of the discourse. Verse 35:

“He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” Coming = not hungering. Believing = not thirsting. Eating/drinking satisfied by coming and believing. Verse 40: “And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.” The result promised for eating/drinking in verse 54 — eternal life and resurrection — is here promised for seeing and believing. Verse 47: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.” Eternal life — the identical promise attached to eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood in verse 54 — is here given simply and directly to believing.” The equations are precise: • Eating His flesh = coming to Him = believing on Him • Drinking His blood = believing on Him = having eternal life If Rome's literal interpretation is correct, then verse 47 — “He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” — would be simultaneously true and insufficient, because physical Eucharistic consumption is also required for eternal life (verse 54).”

But Jesus presents believing as fully sufficient in verse 47, with no sacramental qualification. Either believing is sufficient or it is not.

Jesus says it is. Rome's system says it is not — without the Eucharist, there is no spiritual life. These cannot both be true.

The Shocking Statement (John 6:51–56) "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." Rome argues: this language is too strong, too visceral, too deliberately offensive to be symbolic.

When the crowd objected, Jesus intensified the language rather than softening it.

The word used in verse 54 — trogon — is a graphic word for chewing, gnawing. Jesus means literal consumption.

This argument requires a careful, thorough response.

First: intensification is not the same as literalization.

When misunderstood, Jesus consistently intensified His language to drive hearers past the surface misunderstanding toward the deeper spiritual reality.

In John 3, Nicodemus misunderstood "born again" as literal re-entry into the womb.

Jesus did not say, "You're right, it's physical." He intensified:

"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." He pushed Nicodemus past the physical misunderstanding into the spiritual reality." The same pattern operates in John 6."

The crowd misunderstands on a physical level.

Jesus intensifies, not to confirm their physical misunderstanding, but to push them through it toward the spiritual reality He is communicating.

The intensity of the language is designed to make a spiritual point about the absolute necessity of receiving Christ by faith — not to communicate a doctrine of physical oral consumption.

Second: the word trogon does not demand a literal interpretation. Rome's apologists place significant weight on the use of trogon (to gnaw, to munch) rather than phagein (to eat) in verse 54, arguing the graphic physicality of the word demands a literal reading. However, trogon is used in John 13:18 — "He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me" — where it refers to Judas, and no one argues this demands literal eucharistic theology.

The word's graphic quality serves to emphasize the intimacy and necessity of the act, not to establish its physical nature.

Third: the critical context of offense. Rome's argument from the disciples' offense is actually the most revealing exegetical point in the passage — but it cuts against Rome, not for it. John 6:60–61:

“Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?” When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?” John 6:66:”

“From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.” Here is the pastoral and exegetical crisis for Rome's interpretation: if the literal interpretation is correct — if Jesus was teaching the precise doctrine of Eucharistic consumption that Rome would later define — then these departing disciples were leaving over a genuine misunderstanding.” They thought Jesus meant literal, physical consumption and were scandalized by it. On Rome's reading, they were actually right.”

The correct interpretation of His words was the literal, physical one they were rejecting. And Jesus said nothing to correct them. He did not call them back.

He did not say, "Wait — you have misunderstood. I do not mean you will literally eat my physical flesh." He watched genuine followers depart over what Rome insists was not a misunderstanding at all — and He let them go.

This is inexplicable on Rome's reading. A teacher who allows genuine followers to depart over what is actually a correct reading of His words, while making no effort to retain them, clarify, or correct, has either failed as a teacher or intended for them to leave.

Neither option supports Rome's position. On the spiritual reading, however, Jesus' silence and His subsequent question — "Will ye also go away?" (v. 67) — make perfect pastoral sense.

Those who could not receive His spiritual teaching and insisted on the physical level of understanding were revealing a deeper unwillingness to believe.

Their departure was not over a misunderstanding.

It was over the very demand of faith that Jesus was pressing.

Those who stayed did not stay because they understood a doctrine of physical consumption — Peter's answer makes no reference to eating flesh. He says:

“Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.” (vv. 68–69) Peter's response is entirely about believing and knowing — not about eating and drinking.” This is the response Jesus accepts.”

It is the response of faith, which the entire discourse has been building toward.

The Decisive Clarification: John 6:63 "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." This is not an isolated verse appended to the discourse.

It is Jesus' own interpretive conclusion — His authorial statement about the nature of what He has been teaching throughout the entire chapter. Three declarations, each decisive:

“It is the spirit that quickeneth.” The life-giving agent is the Spirit — not physical consumption, not sacramental participation, not the priest's act of consecration.”

The Spirit.” This alone brings life. Everything else in the discourse must be read in light of this.

“The flesh profiteth nothing.” The plain, direct, unqualified declaration: the flesh — taken literally, consumed physically — profits nothing.” Rome must argue that "flesh" here refers not to Christ's flesh just discussed in the previous verses but to a "carnal mindset"

or "fleshly mode of understanding." This is a significant interpretive maneuver and it requires examination. Rome's argument:"

"flesh" in verse 63 refers to a human, carnal way of thinking about the discourse — the disciples' fleshly incomprehension — not to Christ's actual flesh which is truly beneficial in the Eucharist." This argument fails on multiple grounds: First, the most natural referent of "the flesh" in verse 63, in the immediate context of a discourse entirely about eating Christ's flesh, is Christ's flesh just discussed. To argue that "the flesh" suddenly changes referent in the middle of Jesus' own clarifying conclusion requires a specific justification that Rome has never adequately provided."

Second, if "the flesh profiteth nothing" refers only to a fleshly mode of understanding, then Jesus has not answered the disciples' difficulty at all.

Their problem was with the content of the teaching — "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (v. 52). An answer that says only "you're thinking about it in a fleshly way" does not address the content difficulty.

Jesus would be deflecting rather than answering.

Third, the parallel structure of verse 63 demands that "the flesh" and "the spirit" are contrasted as two modes of the same reality.

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." If "the flesh" is carnal human thinking, then "the spirit" is spiritual human thinking — and the verse is merely saying that spiritual thinking is better than fleshly thinking, which is banal and fails to explain why many disciples departed. If, however, "the flesh" is the literal, physical flesh Jesus has been speaking about, then "the spirit" is the spiritual reality that flesh communicates — and Jesus is clarifying that the life He offers comes through the Spirit received by faith, not through literal oral consumption of His physical body." "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Jesus explicitly categorizes His words — the entire discourse — as spirit and life." He is not withdrawing the teaching or softening it. He is defining its register."

His words are to be received spiritually.

They communicate spiritual reality through physical language.

The eating and drinking He has been describing are spiritual acts of faith, not physical acts of consumption.

This is Jesus' own hermeneutical key to His own teaching.

It settles the question of how to read verses 53–56.

Not by ignoring them, not by spiritualizing away their force, but by receiving them as Jesus defined them — as spirit and life, communicating the absolute necessity of receiving Christ by faith.

C. The Institution of the Lord's Supper The Scene at the Last Supper

Matthew 26:26–29:

"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my

Father's kingdom." Several observations are exegetically decisive and must not be passed over."

"This Is My Body" — The Nature of the Copula The statement "This is my body" (touto estin to soma mou) is the cornerstone of Rome's case." Rome argues the verb "is" (estin) must mean literal identity — this bread is, in substance, My body."

But this interpretive claim must survive the test of Jesus' own consistent usage of the same construction. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus uses estin in predicate statements that no one reads as literal identity:

"I am the door" — Jesus does not become a door." "I am the vine" — Jesus does not become a plant." "That rock was Christ" (1 Corinthians 10:4) — the rock in the wilderness was not literally Christ." "The field is the world" (Matthew 13:38) — in the parable of the sower, the field is not literally the world." "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11) — the seed is not literally Scripture." In each of these cases, estin expresses a representational, symbolic, or typological relationship — not literal material identity."

The question for "This is my body" is whether it follows the same pattern of Jesus' consistent usage or whether it uniquely demands literal identity.

The answer depends not on the word estin alone — which cannot bear the weight Rome places on it — but on the entire context, including Jesus' physical presence at the table, the memorial command, the post-institution identification of the cup, and the overall pattern of Jesus' teaching method already established.

The Physical Presence Problem At the moment of institution, Jesus was physically present — whole, intact, unbroken, uncrucified.

He was standing or reclining at the table, holding bread, speaking to disciples who could see His body, touch His hands, hear His voice.

If transubstantiation occurred at the words of institution, then the bread in Jesus' hands simultaneously became His body while His body continued to stand before them.

His body was present twice — once in its normal physical form at the table and once substantially in the bread He was holding. Rome's response invokes the glorified, ubiquitous presence of Christ's body.

But this creates an immediate problem: at the institution, Jesus had not yet been glorified.

His body was still the pre-resurrection, mortal, localized body.

The glorification of His body occurred after the resurrection. To apply post-resurrection properties to Christ's body at the institution is to import a condition that did not yet exist.

"Fruit of the Vine" — The Post-Institution Identification Matthew 26:29 is among the most exegetically precise and underappreciated verses in the entire debate:" "But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Jesus speaks this after the words of institution." If transubstantiation is true, the cup has already become His literal blood at the words of institution."

Yet immediately after — in the same sentence, in the same context, in the same breath — Jesus calls it "fruit of the vine." Not "this blood." Not "my body and blood which is now in this cup." Fruit of the vine.

The agricultural product of the grapevine. The fermented juice of grapes.

The exact same substance it was before the words of institution.

This is not incidental word choice.

This is Jesus' own identification of what is in the cup after the alleged consecration.

If the substance had changed, Jesus' own post-institution language contradicts the change. Either Jesus was wrong about what was in the cup — which is impossible — or the substance did not change.

Rome has no satisfying answer to this verse.

The standard response is that Jesus used "fruit of the vine" loosely, referring to the accidents that remain.

But this requires Jesus to be speaking imprecisely about the very element He has just consecrated, at the very moment of institution, in the very context where precision matters most.

It requires Jesus to be using the old name for something He has just fundamentally and permanently transformed.

The plain reading is simpler and demands no such contortion: Jesus calls it fruit of the vine because that is what it is. The substance has not changed. The sign remains a sign.

| *“Do This in Remembrance of Me”*

— *Anamnesis Luke 22:19:*

| *“And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.” 1 Corinthians 11:24–25: “This is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.” After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.” The command is anamnesis — remembrance.”*

Rome argues that the Greek anamnesis carries the sense of "making present" rather than mere memorial recollection — and that this supports the concept of re-presentation.

This argument must be examined directly.

It is true that anamnesis in the Septuagint and in Jewish liturgical contexts carries a weight beyond passive recollection.

It involves active, covenantal engagement with a past redemptive event. Israel's Passover anamnesis was not merely thinking about the Exodus — it was a present participation in the covenant identity defined by that past deliverance. However — and this is decisive — anamnesis in every usage locates the reality in the event being remembered and the One who accomplished it, not in the physical elements that serve as the medium of remembrance. Israel's anamnesis of the Exodus did not make the physical lamb from Egypt present.

The lamb was a sign pointing to the reality.

The reality was the deliverance God accomplished, and Israel's corporate re-engagement with that identity and covenant. Similarly, the Lord's Supper anamnesis does not make the physical body and blood of Christ present in the elements.

It makes the community present to the reality of what Christ accomplished — directing faith and heart and mind toward the finished work of Calvary, proclaiming it, confessing it, and receiving its benefits by faith. Paul's summary in 1 Corinthians 11:26 confirms this orientation perfectly:

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.” The action of the Supper is proclamation — showing forth, declaring, announcing — a completed past event, until a future event arrives.” The temporal frame is: between the cross and the return.”

The Supper is the covenant community's act of proclamation in that interval.

It looks backward to the death and forward to the coming.

It does not re-present, re-offer, or make physically present anything that belongs to the past event. It proclaims it.

When He comes, the Supper ceases — because the reality that the sign points to has arrived. Signs are for the interval of waiting.

The Lord's Supper is a sign for pilgrims, not a sacrifice for priests.

D. Post-Ascension Evidence — What the Early Church Actually Practiced

If transubstantiation is true, the post-ascension church should reflect it clearly.

The apostolic practice recorded in Acts and the Epistles should show a community aware of and practicing literal Eucharistic consumption, priestly consecration, and ongoing sacrifice.

It shows none of these things. Acts 2:42:

“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” The language is “breaking of bread” — the domestic, fellowship language of a shared meal. No priestly vocabulary. No consecration language.”

No sacrifice language.” No indication that the elements are anything other than what they appear to be. Acts 20:7:

“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them.” Again:” “break bread.” The practice is described in the most ordinary terms. Paul preaches.”

They break bread.” The gathering is described as a community assembly for teaching and fellowship — not as a sacrificial liturgy requiring priestly mediation.

What is conspicuously, completely absent from the entire Acts and Epistle record: Any mention of priestly consecration of elements.

Any indication that the elements become Christ's literal flesh and blood.

Any suggestion that the Supper is a propitiatory sacrifice.

Any teaching that the community is literally consuming Christ's body and blood.

Any exception granted to the blood prohibition on the grounds of Eucharistic theology. The absence is not arguable. It is total.

The early church as recorded in the New Testament practiced a memorial meal of fellowship and proclamation. Nothing in the apostolic record supports the developed doctrine of transubstantiation.

The Acts 15 Silence — Decisive Acts 15:28–29:

“For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.” This is the Apostolic Council.” This is the Holy Spirit guiding the apostles in binding decree for the Gentile church.”

The decree explicitly and comprehensively forbids the consumption of blood.

There is no exception for the Lord's Supper.

If the Lord's Supper involved literal consumption of Christ's blood — as Rome categorically insists it does — then this decree, issued by the Holy Spirit through the apostles, created an immediate and catastrophic conflict with the central act of Christian worship.

Every Gentile believer receiving the Eucharist was violating a Holy Spirit-decreed prohibition. Rome's response is that Christ's glorified blood is categorically different from ordinary blood, and that the prohibition in Acts 15 applies to ordinary blood but not to the divine blood of Christ in the Eucharist.

This response fails on three grounds: First: Scripture creates no such distinction anywhere.

The blood prohibition in Genesis 9:4 is grounded in the principle that "the life is in the blood" — a theological principle that does not become inapplicable because the blood in question is divine.

God never authorizes the consumption of any blood, and no exemption for divine or glorified blood is found anywhere in Scripture.

Second: the Apostolic Council was the precise and providential occasion to clarify any such exception.

The Holy Spirit was guiding the apostles in laying down binding regulations for the Gentile church.

If Gentile believers were going to be consuming Christ's blood in the Eucharist and the blood prohibition required an explicit exception for this practice, there has never been a more fitting moment in the entire New Testament for that exception to be stated.

The silence is not merely an absence of information. Given the context, it is a declaration.

The exception does not exist because the occasion requiring blood consumption does not exist.

Third: Paul's consistent post-consecration language calls the cup "bread" and "cup" — not blood.

If the Supper involved literal blood consumption, Paul's language in 1 Corinthians 11:26–28 — where he speaks of "this bread" and "this cup" without any indication that the elements have become something else — would be a sustained theological error in an apostolic letter addressing the very practice in question.

E. Self- Examination and the Gravity of the Supper 1

Corinthians 11:27–29:

“Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.” The gravity Paul attaches to the Supper is real and must not be minimized.”

But the nature of that gravity must be understood from the context Paul is addressing.

The Corinthian problem was specific: wealthy believers were eating the Lord's Supper as a private feast, consuming abundant food while poor believers went hungry.

The community meal was being conducted with no regard for the covenant community it was meant to constitute and celebrate.

The Supper was being received with no discernment of what it signified — the body of Christ, the community of believers bound together by His death. Paul's warning about "not discerning the Lord's body" is therefore directed at a failure of covenantal perception and communal love — not at a failure to believe in physical transubstantiation.

The Corinthians were not being corrected for doubting that the bread was literally Christ's flesh.

They were being corrected for receiving the sign of Christ's selfgiving love without practicing the selfgiving love it proclaimed.

The remedy Paul prescribes confirms this:

“Let a man examine himself.” *Self-examination before God.*”

Not confession to a priest.” Not verification of sacramental validity.

Not confirmation of being in a state of grace certified by ecclesiastical authority. A man. Himself. Examining himself. Before God.

This is direct, personal, covenantal accountability — the response of a believer approaching a covenant sign with the full weight of what it signifies.

It is gravity without sacerdotalism.

It is seriousness without transubstantiation.

The Lord's Supper demands to be taken with utmost seriousness. Paul's warning is real and abiding.

But the seriousness comes from what the Supper proclaims — the Lord's death — and from the covenantal obligations of those who proclaim it together, not from a physical transformation of elements that Scripture nowhere teaches and that the apostolic record nowhere reflects. Figure 3: John 6 — Jesus' Own Faith Equations Verse Text (KJV) Jesus' Equation Implication v.

Figure 3: John 6 — Jesus' Own Faith Equations

| Verse | Text (KJV) | Jesus' Equation | Implication |
|--------|---|---|--|
| v. 35a | "He that <i>cometh</i> to me shall never <i>hunger</i> " | Coming to Christ = Eating | Eating is the act of faith, not physical consumption |
| v. 35b | "He that <i>believeth</i> on me shall never <i>thirst</i> " | Believing on Christ = Drinking | Jesus defines His own terms explicitly |
| v. 40 | "Every one which <i>seeth</i> the Son and <i>believeth</i> ... hath everlasting life" | Seeing and believing = having eternal life | Life is through faith — not eucharistic reception |
| v. 47 | "He that <i>believeth</i> on me <i>hath everlasting life</i> " | Believing = having life | Stated before the bread/flesh verses — the framework is faith |
| v. 63 | "The <i>flesh</i> profiteth nothing... the words that I speak are <i>spirit</i> and <i>life</i> " | Jesus' own closing interpretation | Physical consumption of flesh profits nothing. John 6 eating is spiritual. |

Figure 3 – The key verses of John 6 with the definitions Jesus Himself provides: eating = coming to Christ, drinking = believing on Him (John 6:35, 63).

PART THREE

The Priesthood Question

Who Stands Between the Believer and God — and What Scripture Says About It

The Question Precisely Stated Parts One and Two established that Christ's sacrifice is finished and that His presence in the Supper is spiritual, not physical. Part Three examines the necessary institutional consequence of Rome's position: if Christ must be physically produced in the elements through a consecrating act, then someone must perform that act. And if someone must perform that act, that person holds power over Christ's presence that no ordinary believer possesses.

This is not an incidental feature of Roman Catholic theology.

It is the structural center of the entire sacramental system.

The priesthood is not decoration on top of transubstantiation.

It is the load-bearing wall that the doctrine of transubstantiation requires. Remove transubstantiation and the priesthood loses its defining function. Remove the priesthood and transubstantiation cannot be performed. The two doctrines stand together. They fall together.

The question is therefore not merely: does Rome have a different ecclesiology than Protestants?

The question is: does Scripture recognize a class of human beings with unique mediatorial power to produce Christ's physical presence, to offer Him in sacrifice, and to absolve sin — power that ordinary believers do not possess and cannot access directly?

Scripture answers this question with unmistakable clarity. The answer is no.

A. The New Covenant Priesthood — What Scripture Actually Teaches The Old Covenant

Priesthood: Function and Limitation To understand what the New Covenant abolished, the function of the Old Covenant priesthood must be understood clearly.

Under the Mosaic economy, the Levitical priesthood served a specific, bounded, and temporary function.

They stood between God and Israel — not arbitrarily, but by divine appointment — because the way into the Most Holy Place was not yet open (Hebrews 9:8).

The veil in the Temple was not merely architectural. It was theological.

It declared that the full, direct, unmediated access of the people to God had not yet been achieved.

The priests offered sacrifices that could not finally atone.

They performed purifications that were external and temporary.

They entered the Holy of Holies once per year — one man, one day, carrying blood that was not his own — and the cycle began again the following year.

The entire system was designed by God not as the final reality but as a shadow and type of what was coming. Hebrews 9:8–9:

"The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present." The Levitical priesthood was not the destination."

It was the signpost." It pointed forward to the one who would do what it could only approximate — truly and finally open the way into God's presence for all His people.

The Torn Veil — The Architectural Theology of the Atonement Matthew 27:50–51:

"Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent." The veil was torn from top to bottom." Not from bottom to top — which would suggest human action."

From top to bottom — divine action, God Himself opening what had been closed.

At the moment of Christ's death, the architectural barrier that had stood for centuries declaring "the way is not yet open" was removed by God, permanently, irreversibly, from the top.

The theological meaning is explicit: the way into the presence of God is now open.

Not for one priest on one day. For all who come through Christ.

The mediatorial function of the Levitical priesthood — standing between God and people because the way was not yet open — was rendered permanently obsolete at the moment Christ died. Hebrews 9:11–12:

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." Hebrews 10:19–22:" "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." The language is striking and must not be softened. Boldness to enter the holiest." Not timid approach through an intermediary."

Not qualified access contingent on priestly mediation. Boldness — the Greek *parresia* meaning frank, open, confident, unhindered access.

This is the direct opposite of a system that places a consecrating priest between the believer and Christ.

The new and living way was opened by Christ's own flesh — His death on the cross.

Every believer now has direct, confident, unmediated access to the throne of grace through that opened way. No human priest is required. No human priest is appropriate.

No human priest can add anything to what Christ has already accomplished and opened.

Christ as the Sole High Priest Hebrews establishes with sustained argument that Christ holds the high priesthood exclusively, permanently, and without succession. Hebrews 7:23–25:

"And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continueth ever, liveth to make intercession for them. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." The Levitical priests were many

*because they died. A new priest was always needed because the previous one was gone.”
Christ needs no successor — He lives forever.”*

His priesthood has no vacancy, no succession, no need for continuation through human representatives. Hebrews 7:26–27:

“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.” The high priest Rome requires — an ordained man who daily offers Christ in sacrifice — is precisely the pattern Hebrews says Christ abolished. Daily sacrifice was the Old Covenant pattern.” Christ replaced it with the once-for-all offering of Himself. To restore a class of men who daily offer Christ in sacrifice is to undo the very thing Hebrews declares accomplished. Hebrews 8:1–2:”

“Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; A minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” There is one High Priest.”

He is in heaven.” He ministers in the true sanctuary — not in earthly churches, not through earthly priests.

The earthly priesthood has been superseded, not continued. 1 Timothy 2:5 — The Singular Mediator “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” One mediator.

Not one supreme mediator with a hierarchy of subordinate mediators beneath Him. One.

The definitive, singular, exclusive mediatorial function belongs to Christ alone.

No human priest can mediate between God and man without claiming a function Scripture assigns exclusively to Christ. Rome's response is that the Catholic priest does not mediate in his own name or by his own power — he acts in persona Christi, in the person of Christ, as Christ's instrument.

The priest's mediation is therefore Christ's mediation exercised through a human agent.

This response requires examination on its own terms.

The claim that the priest acts in persona Christi does not resolve the problem — it intensifies it.

If the priest is acting as Christ's personal representative in such a way that his priestly acts constitute Christ's acts, then the priest is functioning as a proxy mediator, exercising the function of the sole mediator through a human institution.

But 1 Timothy 2:5 does not say “there is one mediator, Christ, who may delegate His mediatorial function to ordained representatives.” It says there is one mediator: the man Christ Jesus.

The exclusivity of the claim cannot be distributed through institutional delegation without violating the plain declaration of the text. Furthermore, the concept of in persona Christi as justification for sacramental mediation is not found in Scripture.

It is a theological development of the medieval church used to explain a system that Scripture does not authorize.

The argument form is circular: Rome requires a priestly mediator to perform the Eucharist, Rome argues the priest acts in persona Christi to justify the mediation, but the requirement for priestly mediation in the first place has no scriptural foundation.

B. The Universal Priesthood of Believers The New

Testament does not leave a vacuum where the Levitical priesthood stood.

It fills that space with a declaration of extraordinary theological consequence: under the New Covenant, every believer is a priest. 1 Peter 2:5:

“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 2:9: “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” Revelation 1:5–6: “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.” Revelation 5:9–10: “And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.” These texts are not describing a special class of elevated believers.” They are describing every redeemed person.”

Every one purchased by Christ's blood is made a king and priest to God.

The royal priesthood is the whole people of God — not an ordained subset with exclusive sacramental powers.

The "spiritual sacrifices" believers offer (1 Peter 2:5) are not the sacrifice of Christ in the Mass.

The New Testament is explicit about what these spiritual sacrifices are: Romans 12:1:

“Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” The sacrifice of the believer's own life, consecrated to God.”

Hebrews 13:15: “By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.” The sacrifice of worship and thanksgiving.

Hebrews 13:16: “But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.” The sacrifice of good works and generosity. Philippians 4:18: Paul describes the Philippians' financial gift as “an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God.” The sacrifice of material generosity.” The New Covenant sacrifices are the believer's whole life — worship, thanksgiving, service, generosity, the body consecrated to God. Nowhere in this vocabulary of spiritual sacrifice does a priestly re-offering of Christ appear.

The New Testament knows no such thing.

C. Auricular Confession — The Gatekeeper Function Examined

Rome's priesthood does not merely consecrate the Eucharist.

It controls access to it through the requirement of auricular confession and priestly absolution before communion. Code of Canon Law, Canon 916:

“A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to celebrate Mass or receive the body of the Lord without previous sacramental confession unless there is a grave reason and there is no opportunity to confess; in this case the person is to remember the obligation to make an act of perfect contrition.” Council of Trent, Session 14, Canon 6 (Denzinger 916): “If any one saith, that sacramental confession was not instituted by divine law or is not necessary for salvation... let him be anathema.” The system operates as a complete

loop: mortal sin requires priestly absolution; absolution requires confession to a priest; without absolution the believer cannot receive the Eucharist; without the Eucharist there is no spiritual life."

The priest stands at every gate." No movement along the path of Catholic spiritual life is possible without passing through his office.

This is not the New Testament pattern at any point.

What Scripture Actually Teaches About Confession 1 John 1:9:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The subject of confession is the believer."

The object of confession is God." The one who forgives is God — "he is faithful and just to forgive." There is no priest, no intermediary, no institutional gatekeeper.

The believer confesses to God and God forgives.

The transaction is direct, personal, and complete.

Rome argues that John 20:23 establishes priestly absolution:

"Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." This authority, Rome contends, was given to the apostles and transmitted through apostolic succession to ordained priests." This interpretation requires examination: First: the context of John 20:21–23 is the commissioning of the disciples as ambassadors of the Gospel — sent as the Father sent the Son, bearing the Spirit, announcing forgiveness or judgment."

This is the authority of proclamation, not the authority of sacramental absolution.

The disciples are authorized to declare, on the basis of the Gospel, that sins are forgiven to those who believe or retained for those who do not.

This is the ministry of the Word — the same authority exercised when a pastor preaches the Gospel and declares that all who believe have forgiveness.

Second: this commission was given to the gathered disciples — not to an ordained priestly class alone.

The circle of recipients is not limited to the apostles in any exclusive sacerdotal sense.

The authority to proclaim forgiveness through the Gospel belongs to the whole church's ministry of the Word.

Third: even granting the broadest possible reading of this text, it does not establish the specific practice of auricular confession to a priest as a required sacrament for forgiveness.

The text says nothing about the believer confessing sins to a priest.

It speaks of the disciples' authority to announce forgiveness or retention. These are not the same thing. James 5:16:

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed." This text, sometimes cited by Rome in support of auricular confession, actually directly undermines it." The confession is mutual — one to another — not unidirectional from penitent to priest."

It is not sacramental but relational and intercessory. No priestly office is invoked.

No absolution is pronounced. Believers confess to each other and pray for each other.

This is the horizontal accountability of the covenant community, not the vertical sacramental gatekeeping of an ordained mediatorial class. Self- Examination Before the Lord's Table 1 Corinthians 11:28:

*“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.”
Paul's instruction for approaching the Lord's Table is self-examination. Not priestly examination.”*

Not sacramental certification.” Not confirmation of absolution. A man. Himself. Examining himself before God.

The examination is inward and personal — directed toward whether the believer is coming with genuine faith, genuine repentance, genuine recognition of what the Supper signifies.

It is the believer's own conscience before God, not the priest's assessment of the believer's spiritual state.

This is not a lower standard than Rome's.

It is a different kind of standard entirely — one that places the believer in direct, personal, unmediated accountability to God rather than mediated, institutional accountability to a priestly gatekeeper.

D. The Collapse of the Entire System The Roman

Catholic sacramental system is architecturally dependent on transubstantiation. Remove the physical presence of Christ in the elements and the entire structure loses its rationale.

The argument can be stated with precision: Rome requires a priest because only a priest can consecrate the elements and produce Christ's physical presence.

Rome requires confession to a priest before communion because reception of the physical Christ while in a state of mortal sin is a sacrilege against His physical person.

Rome requires the Mass as an ongoing propitiatory sacrifice because the physical Christ must be offered by a priest for the sins of the living and the dead.

Every requirement in the system flows from the single claim that Christ is physically present in the elements and that producing that presence requires ordained priestly power.

But if Christ's presence is spiritual — as Scripture teaches — then: No consecrating priest is required.

The elements do not need to be transformed by a qualified human agent.

The Spirit works through the Word and the ordinances to communicate Christ's benefits to faith.

No priestly absolution is required before the Table.

The Table is a covenant memorial approached by self-examination and faith, not by sacramental certification.

No propitiatory sacrifice is required. The one sacrifice is complete.

The Table proclaims that completion. Nothing is being offered.

The priesthood is not a standalone doctrine that happens to be associated with the Mass.

It is the institutional machinery that transubstantiation logically requires. The two doctrines are inseparable.

When transubstantiation falls, the sacerdotal system falls with it. And transubstantiation, as we have shown in Parts One and Two, cannot stand under the weight of Scripture's plain testimony.

E. The Direct Invitation of Christ Against all the institutional complexity of the

Roman sacramental system, the words of Christ stand in stark, liberating contrast. Matthew 11:28:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Not: come to the Church. Not: come through the priest. Not: come after confession and absolution and confirmation of your state of grace. Come unto me.”

John 6:37:” “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” The promise is unconditional.” Christ will not refuse those who come to Him.

There is no mention of priestly qualification, no sacramental prerequisite, no institutional approval required.

The only condition is coming — which is the act of faith. Hebrews 4:14–16:

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Boldly. To the throne of grace. Directly. Without human intermediary. Without institutional gatekeeper.”

Without priestly mediation.” Every believer — every single believer — has this access.

Not because they have earned it, not because a priest has certified it, but because Christ opened the way through the torn veil of His own flesh.

This is the priesthood of all believers in its most pastoral and practical expression: every child of God approaches the Father boldly, in the name of the Son, through the Spirit, without any human standing between them and the throne. Rome's system creates that distance. Christ's Gospel removes it.

The distance Rome creates is not a refinement of the Gospel.

It is a contradiction of it.

Figure 4: The Priesthood — Old Covenant, New Covenant, and Rome's Claim

| Category | Old Covenant / Rome's Priesthood | New Covenant — Scripture's Priesthood |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Duration | Temporary — priests died and required successors (Heb. 7:23) | Eternal — Christ lives forever; priesthood <i>aparabatos</i> (untransferable) (Heb. 7:24) |
| Function | Offer animal sacrifices repeatedly — could never take away sin (Heb. 10:4, 11) | Christ: one sacrifice for sins forever (Heb. 10:12). Believers: offer spiritual sacrifices of praise (1 Pet. 2:5) |

| Category | Old Covenant / Rome's Priesthood | New Covenant — Scripture's Priesthood |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Mediation | Human mediators between Israel and God — barrier enforced by veil | One mediator — Christ Jesus alone (1 Tim. 2:5). Veil torn — direct access for all (Heb. 10:19–22) |
| NT term <i>hiereus</i> | Used for: (1) Levitical priests (past, superseded) | Used for: (2) Christ alone as eternal High Priest (Heb.), (3) every believer as royal priest (1 Pet. 2:9). Never for a Christian minister. |
| Rome's claim | — | Ordained <i>sacerdos</i> acts <i>in persona Christi</i> — sole authority to consecrate and absolve (CCC 1548, 1563). Fills a vacancy that does not exist. |

Figure 4 — The biblical priesthood structure from Levites through Christ to all believers, compared with Rome's sacerdotal system (Heb. 7; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1 Pet. 2:9; CCC 1548).

PART FOUR

The Biological Impossibility

What Rome Built and Why It Falls — Four Levels of Failure

Before anything else is examined in this section, one question must be asked and answered.

It is not a philosophical question.

It is a scriptural question. And it is the question that settles everything that follows.

Where in the Word of God did Christ authorize Aristotelian metaphysics as the interpretive framework for His words at the Last Supper? The answer is nowhere. Not in the Gospels. Not in the Epistles. Not in Acts. Not in Revelation.

Not in a single verse, passage, or principle of Holy Scripture does God authorize the use of Greek philosophical categories to determine what Jesus meant when He said "This is my body." This is not a minor observation.

It is the foundational indictment of the entire doctrine of transubstantiation.

Jesus spoke to Jewish disciples whose entire conceptual world was shaped by Torah, the Prophets, the Psalms, and the covenant patterns of Israel's redemptive history.

Their framework for understanding spiritual reality was not Greek philosophy. It was the Word of God.

When Jesus said "This do in remembrance of me," every person at that table understood remembrance through the lens of Passover — the covenant memorial of a completed redemptive act.

Not through the lens of Aristotle's Categories.

The concept of substance in the Aristotelian sense — the underlying, imperceptible metaphysical reality that makes a thing what it is, distinct from its observable properties — did not exist in the vocabulary of Jesus, the apostles, or the early church.

It was developed by a pagan Greek philosopher three centuries before the birth of Christ, in Athens, for purposes entirely unrelated to divine revelation. It has no presence in Scripture.

It has no presence in the apostolic writings.

It entered Christian theology through a specific medieval historical process — and we will document that process precisely.

When Rome declares that the bread becomes the body of Christ through a change of substance while the accidents remain — Rome is not exegeting Scripture.

Rome is imposing a foreign philosophical framework onto Scripture and declaring the result to be essential doctrine, the denial of which warrants eternal condemnation.

This is the asymmetry at the heart of the entire debate — and it cannot be resolved in Rome's favor: The believer who rejects transubstantiation stands on the plain testimony of Scripture.

The words of institution are symbolic covenant language consistent with Jesus' consistent pattern of using physical images for spiritual realities.

John 6:63 is Jesus' own interpretive conclusion.

Matthew 26:29 calls the cup fruit of the vine after the alleged consecration. Acts 15 prohibits blood consumption with no Eucharistic exception.

The apostles called the elements bread and cup in every post-resurrection reference.

The Catholic who defends transubstantiation must first justify importing Aristotle.

That justification cannot come from Scripture — because Scripture knows nothing of it.

It must come from tradition — but as we will demonstrate, the tradition itself cannot be traced to the apostles. It is medieval. It is borrowed. It is unauthorized.

With that established as the fixed point — Scripture is the authority, and Rome has no scriptural warrant for its philosophical framework — we now examine what Rome built.

We examine it on four levels: biblical, philosophical, historical, and internal coherence.

The purpose of this examination is not to win a philosophical debate.

It is to show that Rome's unauthorized construction fails on every level — including its own — so that no reader can conclude the framework is at least internally coherent even if scripturally unauthorized. It is not.

It fails everywhere. And after each level, we return to Scripture.

Because Scripture is where we began, Scripture is where we will always return, and Scripture is where the matter is finally settled.

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” — Isaiah 8:20 A. Level One — The Biblical Declaration: Permanent, Categorical, Ontological Incorruption What Scripture Actually Says About Christ's Glorified Body We begin where we must always begin: with what is written.” The New Testament declarations about Christ's resurrected body are not describing a temporary improvement over mortal existence.”

They are making permanent, categorical, ontological statements — statements about the irreversible nature of His resurrection body that directly foreclose what transubstantiation requires. Read these texts with their full force. Do not soften them with familiarity. Acts 13:34–37:

“And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.” Paul constructs a precise contrast. Two men. Two bodies. Two outcomes. David — served his generation — died — was buried — saw corruption.” Christ — was raised — saw no corruption — no more to return to it.”

The phrase "no more to return to corruption" is the theological hinge.

Paul is not saying Christ temporarily escaped corruption during a threeday window before the resurrection.

He is saying the resurrection constituted a permanent, irreversible departure from the entire domain of corruption.

Christ came out of death's jurisdiction permanently. He will never return to it.

His body entered a state of absolute, categorical immunity to corruption in every form.

This is not a condition that admits of exceptions, degrees, or special circumstances. It is absolute.

"No more to return to corruption" forecloses every scenario in which Christ's body could be subject to any corrupting process whatsoever — including and specifically: digestion, decay, dissolution, and biological destruction. Romans 6:9: "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." "Dieth no more." Present tense with permanent future force. An ongoing, irreversible state. Death has been permanently stripped of its dominion over Christ's body — not reduced dominion, not suspended dominion — no more dominion. 1 Corinthians 15:42–44: "So also is the resurrection of the dead." It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Paul describes two categorically different modes of bodily existence."

The natural body belongs to the realm of corruption, dishonor, weakness, and mortality.

The resurrection body belongs to the realm of incorruption, glory, power, and spiritual existence.

These are not two points on a continuum.

They are two categorically different kinds of existence. Christ's resurrection body is the first instance and permanent prototype of the resurrection body Paul describes.

His body belongs entirely and permanently to the second category: incorruption, glory, power.

It has permanently and irreversibly left the first category — corruption, decay, mortality — behind. A body in that second category cannot be digested. Digestion is a process that belongs entirely to the first category — it is what happens to natural, corruptible, mortal organic matter. To place Christ's incorruptible, glorified resurrection body into a digestive process that belongs to the domain of corruptible natural matter is to deny the very transformation the resurrection accomplished.

The Question Rome Cannot Answer These texts produce a question that Rome's framework cannot resolve.

It must be stated plainly: When the consecrated host is consumed and digested — a process Rome acknowledges ends with Christ's presence departing when the species cease to subsist — what happens to the substance of Christ's body during that digestive process? Rome's answer from CCC 1377: the presence endures as long as the Eucharistic species subsist and ends when they do not.

But this answer creates the very problem it claims to solve.

Under Rome's own teaching, the substance of Christ replaced the substance of bread at consecration. Christ's substance is now present where bread-substance was.

The digestive process works on the accidents — breaking down starches, altering chemical structure, changing observable properties.

At some point the accidents change sufficiently that Rome says the presence ends.

But where does Christ's substance go?

Scripture answers this question before Rome can evade it: Christ's substance cannot be annihilated — it is eternal and incorruptible. Romans 6:9: death has no more dominion over Him. Annihilation is the ultimate form of death's dominion. Christ's substance cannot be corrupted — it has permanently left the domain of corruption. Acts 13:37: no more to return to it. Christ's substance cannot be destroyed — it is raised in incorruption, in glory, in power. 1 Corinthians 15:42–44: these are permanent, categorical properties. Christ's substance cannot be transformed into something else — His glorified body is the permanent, final, irreversible form of His resurrection existence.

Rome has no answer consistent with these declarations.

The departure of Christ's substance from the digested host is an event that Scripture categorically forecloses in every possible form — yet Rome's doctrine requires it to happen thousands of times daily around the world.

This is not a philosophical problem requiring a philosophical solution.

It is a scriptural problem requiring a scriptural reckoning. And Scripture's testimony is unambiguous: the glorified body of Christ is beyond the reach of every corrupting and destructive process — permanently, categorically, and by the explicit declaration of the Word of God.

B. Level Two — The Philosophical Collapse: What Rome Built Without

Authorization Having established from Scripture that Christ's body cannot be subject to corruption in any form, we now examine the philosophical framework Rome constructed to explain how His body is present in the elements.

We examine it not to validate the framework — it has already been shown to lack scriptural authorization — but to demonstrate that it fails even on its own terms. Rome's unauthorized construction does not even hold together by its own logic.

What Rome Borrowed and Why Rome's explanation of transubstantiation depends entirely on a distinction borrowed from Aristotle: the distinction between substance and accidents. Substance — what a thing fundamentally and essentially is.

The underlying reality that makes it the kind of thing it is. Imperceptible to any sense. Known only through its accidents. Accidents — the observable, measurable properties that inhere in the substance: color, taste, weight, shape, texture, chemical composition.

What the senses perceive and what instruments measure. Rome's claim: at the words of consecration, the substance of bread is replaced by the substance of Christ's body, while the accidents of bread remain.

The bread looks, tastes, and weighs the same because the accidents are unchanged.

But what the bread fundamentally is has changed entirely.

This is the framework. Now examine what it requires — and where it breaks. Contradiction One: Accidents Without Substance Aristotle himself was explicit and unambiguous on one point above all others: accidents cannot exist without a substance in which they inhere.

This is not a peripheral observation.

It is the foundational principle of the entire framework. Accidents are dependent beings by definition.

They require a subject. A color cannot exist without something that is colored. A shape cannot exist without something that has that shape. An accident without a substance is, in Aristotle's own terms, an impossibility. Transubstantiation requires exactly this impossibility.

When the bread-substance is annihilated and Christ's substance takes its place, the accidents of bread must persist without any breadsubstance to inhere in. Thomas Aquinas acknowledged this directly in *Summa Theologiae* III, Question 77, and his answer was: God miraculously sustains the accidents without a substance through divine omnipotence. Pause here and recognize what has happened.

Rome borrowed Aristotle's framework to explain the doctrine.

Rome then required the suspension of Aristotle's foundational principle to make the doctrine work.

The framework is invoked to provide the explanation and then violated at its most fundamental level for the explanation to function.

This is not a philosophical explanation of transubstantiation.

It is philosophical vocabulary wrapped around a miraculous claim.

The framework does not explain the doctrine — it merely provides technical language for a claim that ultimately reduces to:

*“God miraculously makes this happen in a way that transcends all normal categories.” That may be a sincere claim of faith.” It is not a coherent philosophical account. And it cannot be used to dismiss objections as philosophically naive when the supposed philosophical answer collapses into miracle at its own foundation. Contradiction Two: Substance Without Location In Aristotle's framework a substance is a *tode ti* — a “this.” A particular. An individual. A located thing. Substances occupy specific locations.”*

They have spatial extension and boundaries. They can be pointed to.

This is what distinguishes a substance from a universal or an abstract property.

Rome claims Christ's body is wholly and entirely present in every particle of every consecrated host worldwide simultaneously. CCC 1377: Christ is present “whole and entire in each of the species and whole and entire in each of their parts, in such a way that the breaking of the bread does not divide Christ.” A substance that has no definable location, is wholly present in arbitrarily many distinct locations simultaneously, and cannot be divided by physical division of its apparent container — has none of the defining properties of what Aristotle or anyone else means by a substance.

What Rome describes has the properties of omnipresence. Omnipresence is a divine attribute that transcends spatial limitation.

It is precisely what distinguishes the divine nature from creaturely embodied existence. A human body — even a glorified one — is not omnipresent. It is located.

Even Christ's glorified body after the resurrection was in specific places: in the upper room, on the road to Emmaus, at the Sea of Galilee.

It ascended to a specific location — the right hand of the Father. By claiming Christ's body is wholly present in every particle of every host simultaneously Rome has effectively described something with the property of omnipresence and called it a body.

But a body with the property of omnipresence is no longer a body in any meaningful sense.

The word “body” has been evacuated of content while being retained as a label. Contradiction Three: The Dependence Reversal The Aristotelian ontological hierarchy is fixed and clear: Substance is primary — independent, fundamental, the underlying reality. Accidents are secondary — dependent, derived, requiring substance for their existence.

Under transubstantiation this hierarchy is completely and explicitly reversed: The accidents of bread persist independently without any underlying substance — already a violation requiring miraculous intervention. Christ's substantial presence depends on the persistence of those accidents — when the accidents change sufficiently through decay or digestion, Christ's presence ends.

The secondary, dependent, variable category — accidents — now controls the presence and absence of the primary, independent, eternal category — the substance of Christ's own glorified body. Christ's

eternal, incorruptible, omnipotent substance is made contingent on whether a piece of bread has decayed or digested sufficiently.

This is not a subtle philosophical tension.

It is a complete structural inversion of the framework Rome claims to be using. And the consequence of this inversion cannot be escaped: if Christ's incorruptible substantial presence is hostage to the state of corruptible accidents, then the process of corruption exercises a form of functional dominion over Christ's body — determining when His presence arrives, how long it persists, and when it departs.

But Romans 6:9 declares that death — the ultimate corruption — has no more dominion over Him. Rome's framework requires exactly the dominion Scripture declares abolished.

The Word of God does not need Aristotle to be understood.

The complexity of what Rome built here is itself the testimony against it. None of this — not substance, not accidents, not the metaphysical inversion — appears anywhere in the words of Christ or the apostles.

When the framework collapses under its own weight, we return to where we should never have left: the plain testimony of Scripture.

C. Level Three — The Historical Indictment: A Timeline That Condemns

Itself We now document what Rome built, when it was built, and where the materials came from.

The timeline is not a peripheral historical curiosity.

It is a direct challenge to Rome's foundational claim that transubstantiation derives from apostolic tradition. ~330 BC: Aristotle develops hylomorphic metaphysics — substance, accidents, form, matter — in Athens. His project is Greek philosophy.

Scripture has no knowledge of this framework and no interest in it. ~30 AD: Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper in an upper room in Jerusalem. His disciples are Jewish.

Their world is Torah, covenant, Passover, and the Prophets. Aristotelian substance metaphysics is entirely foreign to them.

No first-century Jewish hearer could have understood "This is my body" through an Aristotelian lens — because Aristotle was not part of their world. ~55 AD: Paul writes 1 Corinthians 11 — the most detailed apostolic treatment of the Supper in the New Testament.

He calls the elements "bread" and "cup" after the institution. No metaphysical framework appears. No substance language.

No accident language. Nothing suggesting a philosophical mechanism of transformation. Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, describing the Lord's Supper — uses none of Rome's vocabulary. ~90–100 AD: John writes his Gospel.

The institution narrative, the Farewell Discourse, the High Priestly Prayer — none of it invokes Aristotelian categories.

The vocabulary is covenantal, relational, and spiritual throughout. ~200 AD: Tertullian writes using symbolic and memorial language.

His statement — "This is my body, that is, the symbol (figura) of my body" — represents an early patristic reading that is explicitly non-literal. This is not an isolated voice.

The early church broadly understood the Supper in memorial and spiritual terms. 831 AD: Paschasius Radbertus first proposes something approaching a physicalist interpretation of Eucharistic presence.

He is met with significant opposition from Ratramnus of Corbie and others who argue for a spiritual interpretation. No official doctrine exists.

The church has no binding teaching on this point eight centuries after Christ. ~1150 AD: The word transubstantiation is coined.

It does not exist before this point. Eleven hundred and fifty years after the Last Supper, the word that names the doctrine does not yet exist. 1215 AD: The Fourth Lateran Council formally defines transubstantiation as dogma for the first time.

This is the first moment in the history of the church when the doctrine is officially and universally binding. Eleven hundred and eightyfive years have passed since the Last Supper. 1225–1274 AD: Thomas Aquinas systematizes the doctrine using Aristotelian categories recovered for Western Christianity primarily through the Islamic philosophical tradition — through Averroes and Avicenna, Arabic translators and commentators on Aristotle whose work was transmitted to medieval Europe through the Islamic scholarly world.

The metaphysical framework that explains transubstantiation entered Christian theology through Islamic philosophy. 1551 AD: The Council of Trent reaffirms the doctrine, expands it, and pronounces anathema on all who deny it. Fifteen hundred and twenty-one years have passed since the Last Supper.

What This Timeline Establishes Rome's own doctrinal standard holds that defined dogmas derive from Sacred Scripture or Apostolic Tradition — the deposit of faith delivered once for all to the apostles and preserved faithfully in the church. Transubstantiation cannot meet this standard on either ground: It is not in Scripture — as demonstrated throughout this examination.

It cannot be traced to apostolic tradition in any coherent sense.

The word did not exist for eleven hundred years.

The philosophical framework used to explain it was developed by a pagan Greek philosopher.

That framework entered Christian theology through Islamic philosophical transmission.

The first official definition came twelve centuries after the apostles.

The anathemas came fifteen centuries after the apostles.

If this doctrine was contained in the apostolic deposit, it was hidden so completely that the entire church — including every church father, every early council, the entire first millennium of Christian theology — never officially defined it, never required it, and never anathematized its denial.

The Holy Spirit, who Christ promised would guide His church into all truth (John 16:13), apparently allowed the church to worship for twelve centuries without binding guidance on what Rome now declares the summit of Christian life and an essential salvific doctrine.

The Salvation Implication Trent Session 13, Canon 1:

“If anyone denies that in the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist are contained truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ... let him be anathema.” Anathema. Exclusion from God's covenant people.” The strongest possible condemnation Rome can pronounce.”

If this doctrine warrants anathema for its denial, then every Christian who lived from the resurrection of Christ to the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 AD — twelve centuries of believers, martyrs, saints, and faithful worshippers — lived without access to an essential salvific doctrine.

They could not affirm what had not been defined.

They could not be anathematized for denying what had not yet been declared. Either the church of the first twelve centuries was in a state of profound ignorance about an essential salvific doctrine — which contradicts Christ's promise to guide His church — or the doctrine is not what Rome claims it is, and the anathemas of Trent are an overreach without foundation. Fifteen centuries of development, borrowed from a pagan philosopher, transmitted through Islamic scholarship, defined in the medieval period — and the apostles who sat at the Last Supper, who received the institution directly from Christ, who were filled with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, who wrote the New Testament under divine inspiration — wrote none of it.

That silence is not a gap in the record. It is the record.

D. Level Four — Internal Incoherence: The Framework Fails on Its Own Terms

Even granting Rome every assumption it requires — Aristotelianhylomorphism as valid, the substance/accident distinction as applicable, the miraculous suspension of Aristotle's own foundational principle as coherent — the framework still produces irresolvable contradictions when pressed to its logical conclusions in the actual practice of the Mass.

The Departure Problem CCC 1377: Christ's Eucharistic presence "begins at the moment of the consecration and endures as long as the Eucharistic species subsist." When exactly do the species cease to subsist?

From the moment of consumption the host begins to change continuously. Saliva contacts it. Enzymatic action begins. Mechanical breakdown occurs through chewing. Stomach acid works on it. Progressive chemical transformation continues through the entire digestive process.

The accidents are in constant, continuous flux from the first moment of reception.

At what precise threshold have the species changed sufficiently that Christ's presence ends? Rome cannot answer this.

"When the species cease to subsist" is a theological formula that describes a condition without defining it." It provides no mechanism for determining when that condition is met during an active digestive process in which the accidents are changing moment by moment."

This is not a minor practical difficulty.

If the Eucharist is the summit of Catholic worship — the most sacred act of the sacramental life — then what is actually received during communion, and for how long it constitutes the reception of Christ's body, is not a peripheral question.

Yet the doctrine provides no coherent answer.

The presence has a defined beginning and an undefined ending — which means the central claim about what is being received cannot be stated with any precision.

The Partial Host Problem Rome teaches the whole Christ is present in every particle of the host — "whole and entire in each of their parts" (CCC 1377). Breaking the host does not divide Christ. A host is broken into one hundred pieces.

The whole Christ is present in each piece — not one percent of Christ in each, but the whole Christ one hundred times over. Ninety-nine pieces are distributed and consumed. The hundredth remains.

In that remaining piece — one percent of the original host's physical matter — the whole Christ is wholly present. As it decays on the altar or in the tabernacle, Christ's whole substantial presence is present in progressively corrupting matter.

At what point does the decay reach the threshold at which the species cease to subsist and the presence departs? Meanwhile each of the ninety-nine consumed pieces is being digested at a different rate in ninety-nine different digestive systems. Christ's whole substantial presence departs from each at a different moment, determined by the individual digestive chemistry of each communicant.

The whole Christ has arrived in one hundred locations simultaneously, persisted for varying and individually determined durations in each location, and departed from each at a different moment without coordination.

The concept of "the whole Christ" present in and departing from each particle has no coherent meaning when applied to the actual physical practice the doctrine is supposed to govern.

The Digestion Destination Problem At consecration the substance of bread is annihilated and replaced by Christ's substance.

When the species cease to subsist during digestion, Christ's presence ends.

But under Rome's own Aristotelian framework — what happens to Christ's substance? Substance does not simply cease to exist because its associated accidents have changed.

The persistence of substance through accidental change is precisely what the substance/accident distinction exists to explain.

If Christ's substance is genuinely present and the accidents change sufficiently — Christ's substance must go somewhere or do something.

The options are: Option A: Substantial change. Christ's substance is transformed into something else during digestion. Impossible — His glorified body is permanent, final, and incorruptible. Substantial change would mean His body becomes something other than His body. Option B: Annihilation.

God annihilates Christ's substance in the digestive tract. Impossible — annihilation is the ultimate form of death's dominion, and death has no more dominion over Him (Romans 6:9). Furthermore Rome has never taught this and could not sustain it.

Option C: Departure. Christ's substance withdraws from the host and returns to heaven.

But under Aristotelian categories a substance's location is determined by its accidents. A substance that departs independently of its accidents — withdrawing while changed accidents remain — is not behaving as an Aristotelian substance.

Option D: The framework simply does not apply at this level of analysis.

"The presence ends" is a theological description of an event the framework cannot actually explain." But if this is the answer, Rome's philosophical framework is not an explanation of transubstantiation — it is philosophical vocabulary decorating a claim the philosophy cannot account for."

Every available option either contradicts Scripture's declaration of incorruption, invokes a theologically unsupportable claim, violates the Aristotelian framework Rome claims to be using, or admits the framework is decorative rather than explanatory. Rome's unauthorized philosophical construction does not merely lack scriptural warrant.

It does not hold together on its own terms.

E. The Conclusion — Always Back to Scripture Four levels of examination

Four levels of failure. Biblical, philosophical, historical, and internal.

The doctrine of transubstantiation fails to meet Scripture's standard.

It fails to justify its philosophical importation from Scripture.

It fails to demonstrate apostolic origin by Rome's own standard.

It fails to cohere internally under the weight of its own logic.

But the conclusion does not rest on any of this analysis.

The conclusion rests where it always rests — on the Word of God. Christ's body is incorruptible.

Scripture declares it absolutely and permanently.

No doctrine that requires His body to arrive in bread, persist while bread decays, and depart when bread is digested can stand against that declaration.

Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father.

Scripture places Him there — not in bread and wine on ten thousand altars, but enthroned in glory, making intercession for His people, awaiting the day He returns. Christ instituted a memorial.

"This do in remembrance of me." A memorial proclaims a completed event." It does not re-present, re-offer, or contain the One it commemorates."

It points to Him — the risen, glorified, enthroned, returning Lord. Christ's presence with His people is real, genuine, and spiritually nourishing.

It is the presence of the living Lord through the Holy Spirit, received by faith, communicated through the proclamation of His death in the breaking of bread and the sharing of the cup.

It requires no philosophical machinery — because Scripture never describes it with any.

It operates in the register Scripture actually uses: Spirit, faith, Word, covenant, and the finished work of Christ proclaimed until He comes.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

— Isaiah 8:20 The bread remains bread.

The wine remains wine." Christ is present — truly, really, and spiritually — with His people. His body is in heaven. His Spirit is here.

His table is open to all who come by faith. That is what is written.

Figure 5: Four Levels of Failure for Transubstantiation

| Level | What Scripture / Reality Affirms | Where Rome's Doctrine Fails |
|-----------------|---|--|
| BIBLICAL | Glorified body of Christ is incorruptible — "raised in incorruption, dieth no more" (1 Cor. | Transubstantiation requires: (1) incorruptible body present in millions of hosts simultaneously; (2) broken, consumed, and digested; (3) |

| Level | What Scripture / Reality Affirms | Where Rome's Doctrine Fails |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| PHILOSOPHICAL | 15:42–44; Rom. 6:9). Enthroned at right hand of Father (Heb. 10:12; Acts 3:21). | destroyed if host burns. Directly contradicts every biblical description of the glorified body. |
| | Every genuine biblical miracle produces <i>perceptible</i> change. Water tastes like wine (John 2:9). Dead man walks (John 11:44). Blind man sees (John 9:7). God invites investigation — "that ye may know." | Transubstantiation claims substance changes while all accidents (taste, smell, appearance, molecular structure) remain bread. Requires Aristotelian metaphysic imported from pagan philosophy — not found anywhere in Scripture. The "miracle" is by definition imperceptible and unfalsifiable. |
| HISTORICAL | The Lord's Supper was instituted c. AD 33. The apostles did not teach transubstantiation. Early church documents (Didache, Justin Martyr) describe a memorial meal, not a metaphysical transformation. | Transubstantiation formally defined at Fourth Lateran Council, AD 1215 — twelve centuries after the institution. Philosophically elaborated by Aquinas (13th c.) using Aristotle transmitted via Islamic scholarship. Dogmatized at Trent 1551. A doctrine that <i>developed</i> is not a doctrine that was <i>delivered</i> . |
| INTERNAL (Rome's own framework) | Rome teaches the glorified body is present "whole and entire in each part" (CCC 1377). Rome also teaches Christ's glorified body is incorruptible. | If Christ is wholly present in a host, and the host is broken — is He wholly present in both halves? Multiplication required. If incorruptible, digestion (biological corruption) is impossible. If accidents inhere in substance (Aristotle), accidents cannot float without their substance. Rome's solution contradicts its own framework. |

Figure 5 — Biblical, philosophical, historical, and internal contradictions that transubstantiation cannot resolve.

PART FIVE

The Divine Prohibitions

What God Forbade and What Rome Requires

Before examining any specific text in this section, the same principle that governed Part Four governs here. We begin with Scripture. We reason from Scripture. We return to Scripture.

We do not build philosophical scaffolding.

We do not construct elaborate interpretive frameworks.

We read what is written and follow where it leads. And what is written in this section is among the most clear, consistent, and cumulative testimony in all of Scripture on a single subject.

From Genesis to Acts — across every covenant, every era, every audience — God prohibited the consumption of blood. He stated the prohibition plainly. He repeated it across centuries.

He grounded it in a theological principle.

He reaffirmed it through the Holy Spirit in the New Covenant church. He never revoked it.

He never created an exception for it.

He never suggested that any religious act, however sacred, would constitute grounds for setting it aside.

Rome teaches that in the Eucharist, communicants literally drink the blood of Christ.

These two realities cannot coexist.

One of them must yield. And the one that must yield cannot be Scripture — because Scripture is the final authority.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And the fear of the Lord begins with taking His Word at face value when He speaks plainly, repeatedly, and across every dispensation of redemptive history.

We will examine the prohibition across its full biblical span.

We will examine Rome's claim in its own words.

We will examine the attempted escape routes Rome's apologists offer. And we will show that every escape route fails — not because of philosophical cleverness, but because Scripture closes every door.

A. The Blood Prohibition — Across Every Covenant The Noahic Covenant — Binding on

All Humanity Genesis 9:4:

“But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.” This is the starting point and it must be understood in its full covenantal context.” God speaks this command to Noah after the flood. Noah is not a Jew. The Mosaic Law has not been given.”

The ceremonial system of Israel does not yet exist.

There is no temple, no priesthood, no sacrificial calendar. Noah stands at the re-founding of the human race after judgment.

The covenant God makes with him is explicitly universal — with Noah, with his descendants, and with every living creature (Genesis 9:9–10).

Every human being who has ever lived after the flood lives under this covenant.

It is the foundational human covenant, broader than Israel, broader than the church, broader than any particular religious community. And in this foundational universal covenant, God prohibits the consumption of blood.

The reason God gives is theologically significant:

“for the life thereof.” Blood is the carrier of life.” God designates it as belonging to Him — reserved, set apart, not to be consumed by man.”

This is not an arbitrary dietary restriction.

It is a statement about the sanctity of life, the ownership of life by God, and the boundary between what belongs to the creature and what belongs to the Creator. This prohibition predates Moses. It predates Israel. It predates the ceremonial law.

It is pre- Mosaic, pre-Sinai, and universal in scope. Anyone who argues it is merely a Jewish ceremonial regulation that passed away with the Old Covenant has already failed — the prohibition was given before the Old Covenant existed.

The Mosaic Covenant — Repeated With Severity Leviticus 17:10– 14:

“And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood.” Under the Mosaic covenant the prohibition is restated with severity that demands attention.” God does not merely forbid blood consumption here — He declares the personal, direct, covenantal consequence:”

“I will even set my face against that soul.” This is language of divine opposition.” God Himself standing in active hostility against the one who violates this command. And the consequence — “cut him off from among his people” — is the covenant death penalty. Exclusion from Israel. Separation from God's people.”

The most severe non-capital punishment available under the Mosaic economy. Notice also that the prohibition explicitly covers not only Israelites but “the strangers that sojourn among you.” It is not ethnically restricted. Anyone living within the covenant community falls under this prohibition.

The theological grounding is repeated from Genesis and deepened: the life of the flesh is in the blood.

God has designated blood for a specific sacred purpose — atonement.

Because blood carries life, and life belongs to God, blood is reserved for God's altar.

It is the appointed instrument of atonement. Therefore it cannot be consumed by man. To consume it is to transgress the boundary between what God has reserved for Himself and what He has given to man. Deuteronomy 12:23–25:

“Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh. Thou shalt not eat it; thou shalt pour it upon the earth as water. Thou shalt not eat it; that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, when thou shalt do that which is right in the sight of the LORD.” Moses repeats the prohibition in his final sermons to Israel.” The repetition is deliberate — this is not a minor regulation buried in a list of ceremonial rules.”

It is a principle Moses specifically emphasized as Israel prepared to enter the land. And the theological grounding is consistent: blood is the life, and the life belongs to God.

The Apostolic Decree — The Holy Spirit Reaffirms for the New Covenant Church Acts 15:28–29:

“For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.” This is the Apostolic Council.” This is the moment in the history of the early church when the Holy Spirit guided the apostles and elders to determine what binding obligations rested on Gentile believers.”

This was the theological watershed of the first century — the council that determined the relationship between the Mosaic law and the New Covenant church. And in this binding, Holy Spirit-guided decree for the Gentile church — the decree that was carefully, prayerfully, and apostolically crafted to lay no unnecessary burden on new believers — the prohibition on consuming blood was explicitly retained and reaffirmed. The language is precise:

“it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us.” The Holy Spirit is the primary author of this decree.” The apostles and elders are His instruments.”

This is not a human ecclesiastical decision that can be revised by a later council.

This is apostolic guidance explicitly attributed to the Holy Spirit Himself, binding on the universal church.

The prohibition appears alongside the prohibition on fornication — a moral absolute that belongs to no ceremonial system and passes away under no covenant. Its placement in this list is significant.

The apostolic council did not distinguish between "ceremonial" and "moral" elements in what they retained.

They retained the blood prohibition as a continuing obligation for the New Covenant church because the Holy Spirit directed them to.

There is no exception in this decree for the Lord's Supper. There is no footnote reading:

“except when the blood in question is the glorified blood of Christ in the Eucharist.” There is no qualification, no clarification, no special case.” The prohibition stands absolute and unqualified — issued by the Holy Spirit, through the apostles, for the church.”

B. Rome's Claim — Stated in Its Own Words The Council of Trent,

Session 13, Canon 1 (Denzinger 883):

“If anyone denies that in the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist are contained truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ... let him be anathema.” The Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1374:”
“In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist 'the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly,

really, and substantially contained." Rome's position is unambiguous." The wine becomes the literal blood of Christ. Communicants drink it."

This is not metaphorical language in Rome's theology — it is the precise, essential, anathemaproTECTED claim of the doctrine. Truly. Really. Substantially.

The blood of Christ is what is consumed. Holding these two realities together: The Holy Spirit through the apostolic decree of Acts 15 explicitly and comprehensively forbids the consumption of blood for the New Covenant church — with no Eucharistic exception.

Rome teaches that the central act of New Covenant worship involves the literal consumption of blood.

The conflict is not a matter of interpretation. It is direct. It is textual.

It is the Holy Spirit's own words set against Rome's doctrine.

C. Rome's Escape Routes — And Why They Fail

Rome's apologists have constructed several arguments to escape this conflict.

Each one must be examined and each one must be shown to fail — not by philosophical cleverness but by returning to what is written. Escape Route One:

"Christ's Glorified Blood Is Different" The argument: the prohibition in Acts 15 and Leviticus applies to ordinary animal blood. Christ's blood is divine, glorified, and categorically different." The prohibition does not apply to the consumption of divine blood — which is a wholly different category of reality."

This argument fails on three grounds, all scriptural.

First: Scripture creates no such distinction anywhere.

The prohibition in Genesis 9:4 is grounded in the principle that blood carries life and life belongs to God.

It is not grounded in the nature or quality of the blood in question.

God never says "you shall not consume the blood of animals but you may consume divine blood." The theological principle — blood carries life, life belongs to God — applies with at least equal force to divine blood.

If anything, the argument runs in the opposite direction: divine blood, carrying divine life, would be even more completely reserved for God's exclusive domain, not offered for human consumption.

Second: The Apostolic Council in Acts 15 was the perfect and providential occasion to clarify any such exception.

The Holy Spirit was guiding the apostles in laying binding obligations on the Gentile church.

If Gentile believers were going to be consuming Christ's blood in the Eucharist — and if the blood prohibition required a special exemption for this practice — there has never been a more fitting moment in all of Scripture for that exemption to be stated.

The Holy Spirit omitted it entirely.

This is not an argument from silence in the ordinary sense.

This is an argument from the most directly relevant possible context.

The Apostolic Council was addressing precisely what obligations rested on the Gentile church in its worship life. Blood consumption in the Eucharist, if real, would have been the most pressing issue requiring clarification. The Holy Spirit said nothing.

The exception does not exist because the occasion requiring it does not exist.

Third: The distinction between ordinary blood and glorified blood is not found anywhere in Scripture.

It is a theological construction invented specifically to rescue transubstantiation from the blood prohibition — post-hoc rationalization, not exegesis.

When an interpretive move can only be justified by the doctrinal conclusion it is designed to protect, it is not an interpretation of Scripture.

It is an imposition on Scripture. Escape Route Two:

“The Prohibition Is Ceremonial and Passed Away” The argument: the blood prohibition belongs to the ceremonial law of Israel, which was fulfilled in Christ and is no longer binding. Acts 15 retained it temporarily for practical reasons — to maintain Jewish-Gentile relations in the early church — but it has no permanent binding force.” This argument fails comprehensively.”

First: The prohibition predates the ceremonial law entirely. Genesis 9:4 was given to Noah before Moses, before Sinai, before the tabernacle, before the priesthood, before any ceremonial system existed.

It is part of the foundational universal covenant with all humanity. You cannot classify as ceremonial a law that was given before the ceremony existed.

Second: The theological grounding of the prohibition is not ceremonial but moral and ontological.

“The life of the flesh is in the blood” (Leviticus 17:11) is a statement about the nature of life and its relationship to God as Creator and Owner.” This principle does not belong to a ceremonial system. It belongs to the created order.”

It reflects God's permanent claim on life itself. Principles grounded in creation and the nature of life do not pass away when the ceremonial system is fulfilled.

Third: The Acts 15 decree explicitly reaffirms the prohibition for the Gentile church in the New Covenant era — after the cross, after the resurrection, after Pentecost, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

If the prohibition had passed away with the ceremonial law, the Holy Spirit would not have retained it in a decree specifically crafted for Gentile believers with no prior connection to the Mosaic system.

The Holy Spirit's reaffirmation is the conclusive answer to this escape route.

Fourth: The prohibition is placed alongside fornication in Acts 15 — a moral absolute that no one argues passed away with the ceremonial law.

The same decree, in the same list, retains both.

Those who argue the blood prohibition is merely ceremonial must also argue that the prohibition on fornication in the same decree is merely ceremonial.

The argument proves too much and thereby proves nothing. Escape Route Three:

"In Persona Christi — The Priest Acts as Christ" The argument: the priest acts in the person of Christ in consecrating the Eucharist." The blood consumed is therefore Christ's own blood offered by Christ Himself through His priestly representative."

This is not the consumption of blood in the sense the prohibition addresses — it is Christ offering Himself.

This argument fails because it assumes what must be proven.

The entire question is whether Christ instituted a practice of literal blood consumption in the first place.

The in persona Christi argument assumes the answer is yes and then constructs a justification for it.

But the assumption is precisely what is at issue. Furthermore: even if we granted the in persona Christi framework for the sake of argument — Christ offering Himself through the priest — the prohibition still stands against the communicant who receives and consumes.

The prohibition is not only against offering blood.

It is explicitly against consuming it:

"that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood" (Leviticus 17:10)." The communicant who receives the cup and drinks it is the one who consumes."

Whatever the priest does in consecration, the act of consumption by the communicant is directly addressed by the prohibition.

No in persona Christi argument covers the act of the communicant drinking. Escape Route Four:

"John 6 Commands It" The argument: Jesus explicitly commanded the eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood in John 6." This divine command supersedes the earlier prohibition."

When God commands something, it overrides a prior prohibition — as when God commanded Abraham to offer Isaac, overriding the prohibition on murder.

This argument has already been substantially addressed in Part Two and need only be summarized here.

John 6:63 is Jesus' own interpretive conclusion to the entire discourse:

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Jesus did not command literal blood consumption in John 6." He commanded the spiritual act of receiving Him by faith — which He repeatedly equated with coming to Him, seeing Him, and believing on Him throughout the discourse."

The "eating" and "drinking" of John 6 is the spiritual reception of Christ by faith, not physical oral consumption.

The Abraham parallel also fails: when God commanded Abraham to offer Isaac, He was temporarily suspending a prohibition He Himself had issued for a specific providential purpose, and He provided a substitute before the act was completed.

He was not establishing a permanent pattern of human sacrifice.

In contrast, Rome claims God permanently established literal blood consumption as the central ongoing act of New Covenant worship — which would require a permanent, explicit, clear revocation of a prohibition He had stated across three covenants and reaffirmed through the Holy Spirit in the Apostolic decree.

No such revocation exists anywhere in Scripture.

D. God's Consistent Pattern — Blood Consumption and the Enemies of God

Beyond the explicit prohibitions, Scripture establishes a consistent narrative pattern that must not be overlooked.

When physical blood or flesh consumption appears in the biblical record, it appears in one of three contexts.

Never a fourth. Context One: Divine judgment executed through animals. Ezekiel 39:17–20:

“And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood.” God summons birds and beasts to consume the flesh and blood of Israel's defeated enemies.” The consumption is performed by animals as instruments of divine wrath and judgment.”

This is not a model for God's people.

It is a picture of judgment's totality — the enemies of God consumed by the created order at God's command, representing utter destruction and humiliation. God's covenant people are not the consumers here.

They are the ones on whose behalf judgment is executed.

The animals are God's agents of wrath.

This passage establishes blood consumption as a characteristic of judgment — not of worship. 1 Kings 21:19:

“Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.” Dogs — unclean animals — lick the blood of the wicked as the instrument of divine retributive justice. Blood consumption by animals marks the judgment and curse of God upon the covenant-breaker.” It is the sign of divine condemnation, not divine fellowship. Context Two: Symbolic depiction of wickedness and persecution. Revelation 17:6.”

“And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” The great harlot — the symbol of corrupt and apostate religiouspolitical power — is drunk with the blood of the saints.” This is the image of ultimate evil: intoxicated by violence against God's people, reveling in martyrdom, saturated in the blood of the righteous.”

This is not endorsement of blood consumption.

It is its most devastating condemnation. Blood consumption in this context marks the persecutor of the church — the enemy of God — the instrument of Satan against the covenant people. Context Three: Condemnation of pagan and apostate practice. Psalm 16:4:

“Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.” David explicitly contrasts true worship of God with pagan blood offerings.” The “drink offerings of blood” are associated with the worship of false gods — and David refuses any participation in them. Blood offerings belong to idolatry.”

They are the mark of false religion, not true worship. Ezekiel 33:25:

“Wherefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Ye eat with the blood, and lift up your eyes toward your idols, and shed blood: and shall ye possess the land?” God rebukes Israel for violating the blood prohibition and links it directly to idolatry and covenant unfaithfulness. Eating with blood is listed alongside lifting eyes to idols and shedding blood — as a triple indictment of covenant apostasy.” The rhetorical question — “shall ye possess the land?” — expects the answer no. Blood consumption disqualifies from covenant blessing.”

The Pattern Stated Plainly Across the entirety of Scripture, physical blood consumption appears only in the context of: Divine judgment executed by animals against God's enemies. Symbolic wickedness and persecution of God's people. Condemnation of pagan and apostate practice.

It never appears as a positive model for God's covenant people.

It never appears as a commanded act of worship.

It never appears as a positive example to follow.

It never appears as the literal interpretation of a spiritual command.

This is not a pattern that can be argued around.

It is the consistent, unified testimony of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation on a single subject: blood consumption belongs to the domain of judgment, wickedness, and false religion — never to the domain of true worship.

If Rome's doctrine is correct — if Jesus literally commanded His people to drink His blood as the central ongoing act of New Covenant worship — then this would be the single most dramatic reversal of a consistent biblical pattern in all of Scripture.

God would have taken something He had universally prohibited, consistently associated with judgment and paganism, and reaffirmed through the Holy Spirit in the New Covenant — and quietly turned it into the summit of Christian worship without any explicit revocation of the prohibition, without any explanation of the reversal, and without any positive model in the apostolic practice of the early church. This is not how God works.

When God reverses a pattern, He announces the reversal clearly — as He announced the end of the food laws in Acts 10 with an explicit vision and a direct divine statement:

“What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.” (Acts 10:15).” There is no comparable announcement about blood. There is no divine vision. There is no direct statement.”

There is only the apostolic decree of Acts 15 — explicitly reaffirming the prohibition under the Holy Spirit's guidance.

The pattern of Scripture and the explicit decree of the Holy Spirit stand together. Rome's doctrine stands against both.

E. The Graven Image Violation — The Second Commandment and Rome's Liturgical

Practice The blood prohibition is not the only divine law Rome's sacramental system requires to be set aside.

The practice of the Mass also directly implicates the Second Commandment. Exodus 20:4–6:

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God.” The command is twofold: do not make images intended to represent God, and do not bow down to or serve such images. Moses reinforces the theological reason in Deuteronomy 4:15–16: “Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure.” God revealed no visible form at Sinai — deliberately. He spoke from fire.”

He gave no image.” He provided no visible representation of Himself precisely so that Israel would have no basis for creating one.

The absence of visible form was itself the instruction: do not make one.

What Rome Requires in the Mass The Crucifix: General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM), 308:

“There is also to be a cross, with the figure of Christ crucified upon it, either on the altar or near it.” The crucifix — an image of Christ in the moment of His death, bearing the marks of crucifixion — is required at every Mass.”

It is not optional decoration.” It is a mandatory element of Catholic liturgy. Several problems arise directly from Scripture.

First: this is an image of Christ — a visible, physical representation of the Son of God in human form.

The Second Commandment prohibits making any likeness of what is in heaven above.

Christ is in heaven above — seated at the right hand of the Father. An image of Christ is an image of what is in heaven.

Rome argues that the Incarnation changes this — since Christ took on human flesh and became visible, He can now legitimately be depicted in visible form.

But this argument requires the Second Commandment to have been silently and permanently modified by the Incarnation — a modification that Scripture never announces.

The commandment stands in the New Testament with no recorded modification.

The early church, for its first several centuries, was notable for its absence of images precisely because it understood the Second Commandment as binding.

Second: the crucifix specifically depicts Christ in the moment of curse — hanging on the cross, bearing the sin of the world, under the judgment of God. Galatians 3:13:

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.” Deuteronomy 21:23 commanded that the body of one hanged on a tree must not remain overnight — because the hanged

man is cursed of God.” God commanded that the state of curse not be prolonged or permanently displayed.”

The crucifix permanently displays Christ in the state of curse.

It freezes Him at the moment of judgment and requires His church to center its worship around that frozen image.

But Scripture directs our gaze elsewhere — to the risen, glorified, enthroned Christ.

Paul preached Christ crucified — but he preached equally that Christ is risen (1 Corinthians 15:17).

The symbol of Christianity is the empty cross — evidence that He is not there, He is risen.

The crucifix keeps Him on the cross.

Scripture places Him on the throne.

The Monstrance and Eucharistic Adoration: Council of Trent, Session 13, Canon 6:

“If anyone says that Christ, the onlybegotten Son of God, is not to be adored in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist with the worship of latria, including the external worship, and that the sacrament, therefore, is not to be honored with extraordinary festive celebrations... or is not to be publicly carried about in processions... or is not to be publicly exposed for the people's adoration... let him be anathema.” The monstrance is a visible, physical object — a vessel of gold or silver designed to display the consecrated host for public adoration.” Rome requires that this visible object receive latria — the Greek word for the worship due to God alone.”

This is not a weaker form of honor.

Trent explicitly requires the highest worship — the worship of adoration due only to God — to be directed toward a visible physical object. Deuteronomy 6:13:

“Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him.” Matthew 4:10:” “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” Worship — latria — belongs to God alone.” Rome directs it toward a consecrated wafer displayed in a gold vessel.”

This is not a subtle or technical violation of the Second Commandment.

It is its direct application: a visible object is made, it is displayed, and the people are required to bow before it and worship it with the highest worship. Rome's distinction between latria (worship due to God), hyperdulia (honor given to Mary), and dulia (honor given to saints) is intended to show that only God receives true worship — but the monstrance receives latria, meaning the host in the monstrance is being treated as God. And worshipping God through a visible physical object is precisely what the Second Commandment prohibits — regardless of how the theological categories are arranged.

The Commandment Rome Renumbered There is a further dimension to this issue that cannot be passed over in silence.

The Roman Catholic Church numbers the Ten Commandments differently from the Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, and Jewish traditions.

In the Catholic numbering, the Second Commandment — the explicit prohibition on graven images — is absorbed into the First Commandment. To compensate for the removal of a commandment, the single commandment against coveting (Exodus 20:17) is divided into two separate commandments — one against coveting a neighbor's wife and one against coveting his goods.

The result: in the Catholic listing, there is no standalone Second Commandment explicitly prohibiting graven images.

The timeline of this renumbering and the liturgical practices that depend on images are not an accident of history that happened to align. Rome's liturgical practice requires images, crucifixes, statues, and the adoration of the Eucharistic host. A standalone Second Commandment explicitly prohibiting graven images and their veneration would stand in direct judgment on these practices. The commandment was renumbered.

The practices continued. Augustine's numbering — which Rome follows — is a legitimate subject of historical debate.

But the effect of the renumbering, whatever its original intent, is that the explicit prohibition on graven images no longer confronts Catholic worshippers as a standalone commandment.

It is buried inside the First Commandment, where it can be managed rather than confronted.

The Protestant and Eastern Orthodox traditions retain the original numbering.

They do so because the Second Commandment stands as a specific, explicit, standalone prohibition that the people of God need to see, read, memorize, and obey — not absorbed, qualified, or numbered away.

F. No Pattern, Only Prohibition — The Unified Testimony We close Part

Five where we always close — with Scripture's unified testimony. On blood consumption, God's Word presents: Explicit prohibition in the Noahic Covenant — universal and pre-Mosaic (Genesis 9:4). Explicit prohibition in the Mosaic Covenant — with the most severe covenantal consequences (Leviticus 17:10–14). Explicit reaffirmation by the Holy Spirit for the New Covenant church — with no Eucharistic exception (Acts 15:28–29). A consistent narrative pattern associating blood consumption with divine judgment, wickedness, and false religion — never with the worship of the true God.

No positive model anywhere in Scripture of God's covenant people consuming blood as an act of worship.

No revocation of the prohibition anywhere in Scripture.

No exception for divine or glorified blood anywhere in Scripture. On graven images, God's Word presents: Explicit prohibition on making images of God and bowing to them (Exodus 20:4–6). Explicit theological grounding — God revealed no visible form at Sinai precisely to prevent imagemaking (Deuteronomy 4:15–16). Explicit command that worship belongs to God alone and must not be directed toward visible objects (Matthew 4:10). Consistent condemnation throughout the Old Testament of image worship as the characteristic sin of apostasy and idolatry.

No New Testament modification of the Second Commandment.

No apostolic authorization for the veneration of images or the adoration of a consecrated host. Rome's doctrine of transubstantiation requires the violation of both.

The Lord's Supper rightly understood violates neither.

The believer comes to a table, not an altar.

They receive bread and wine — which remain bread and wine — as covenant signs pointing to a finished work. They drink no blood. They bow to no image.

They worship the risen, glorified, enthroned Christ directly, through the Spirit, by faith, in the name of the Son, with access opened by the torn veil of His own flesh. This is what is written. This is what we hold.

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” — Isaiah 8:20 **Figure 6: The Blood Prohibition Across Every Covenant** *Covenant Recipients The Prohibition Significance Noahic All humanity "Flesh with the life thereof, Pre-Mosaic, universal — given to Noah (Gen. 9:4) which is the blood thereof, shall as representative of all humanity.”*

Figure 6: The Blood Prohibition Across Every Covenant

| Covenant | Recipients | The Prohibition | Significance |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Noahic (Gen. 9:4) | All humanity | "Flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat." | Pre-Mosaic, universal — given to Noah as representative of all humanity. Not ceremonial. |
| Mosaic (Lev. 17:10) | Israel + sojourners | "I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people." | Penalty: divine opposition + covenant excommunication. Proportional to theological weight: blood = life; life belongs to God. |
| Apostolic (Acts 15:28–29) | Gentile New Covenant believers | "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost... that ye abstain from blood." Gentiles exempt from Mosaic law — but NOT from the blood prohibition. | Explicitly maintained into the New Covenant by the Holy Spirit. Cross-covenant. Not ceremonial. |
| Rome's Position | All communicants | Drinking Christ's blood commanded. Laity withheld the cup for centuries (CCC 1390). "Drink ye all of it" (Matt. 26:27) taken literally as requirement. | All escape routes fail. The prohibition spans every covenant and was ratified by the Holy Spirit for New Testament believers. Rome requires what God universally forbade. |

Figure 6 — The universal prohibition on consuming blood — from Noah through Moses through the apostolic New Covenant decree, and Rome's position (Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:10; Acts 15:28–29).

PART SIX

Authority and Assurance

Scripture Sufficient, Gospel Free

This Section Addresses Part Six addresses two distinct but inseparable issues that together constitute the pastoral and epistemological heart of the entire debate.

The first is the question of authority: on what basis does Rome claim the right to teach transubstantiation, the sacerdotal priesthood, mandatory auricular confession, and the ongoing propitiatory Mass — when none of these doctrines can be demonstrated from Scripture alone?

The answer Rome gives is tradition — Sacred Tradition standing alongside Scripture as an equal and co-authoritative source of divine revelation.

This claim must be examined directly, because if it fails, the entire doctrinal superstructure built upon it fails with it.

The second is the question of assurance: what does the system Rome has built actually produce in the life of the believer?

What is the pastoral fruit of a sacramental economy in which grace is mediated through ordained priests, in which mortal sin requires priestly absolution before communion, in which the adequacy of one's contrition is perpetually uncertain, and in which the believer's standing before God depends on the thoroughness of their last confession?

Scripture answers both questions with clarity. On authority: the Word of God is sufficient. On assurance: the Gospel of grace produces certainty, liberty, and peace — not anxiety, performance, and fear.

We begin, as always, with what is written.

A. The Sufficiency of Scripture — What God Has Said About His Own Word The Bible's

Own Testimony About Itself Before engaging Rome's claim about tradition, we must establish what Scripture declares about its own sufficiency.

This is not circular reasoning — it is the appropriate starting point for any theological inquiry, because if Scripture claims to be sufficient for the believer's complete equipping in all matters of faith and practice, then any claim to supplement it with an equal authority must answer that claim directly. 2 Timothy 3:16–17:

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” Paul's declaration is comprehensive and deliberate.” All Scripture — the entire body of divinely inspired writing — is profitable for four specific purposes: doctrine (what to believe), reproof (correcting false belief), correction (restoring right practice), and instruction in righteousness (forming godly character). And the result of this fourfold profit from Scripture is that the man of God is perfect — the Greek artios meaning complete, equipped, adequate — thoroughly furnished — exartismenos, a word meaning fully outfitted, lacking nothing — unto all good works.

Notice the scope: the man of God is fully equipped for all good works through Scripture. Not most good works.”

Not the good works that Scripture addresses while tradition handles the rest. All. The claim is comprehensive.

If Scripture equips the man of God completely for all good works, there is no category of spiritual life or theological truth that requires a supplementary source of revelation to complete the equipping. 2 Peter 1:3:

“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.” God has given — past tense, completed action — all things pertaining to life and godliness.”

Not most things.” Not the foundational things with tradition supplying the superstructure. All things. The gift is complete.

The supply is sufficient. Nothing pertaining to the Christian life remains to be supplied by a source outside of what God has already given through the knowledge of Christ. Jude 3:

“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” The faith was delivered once — hapax, the same word used in Hebrews for Christ’s once-for-all sacrifice. The deposit of faith is complete.”

It has been delivered.” It does not grow through conciliar definition or papal declaration.

It was entrusted to the saints at a specific historical moment — the apostolic era — and is to be contended for, preserved, and passed on, not supplemented. The Berean Standard Acts 17:11:

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” The Bereans were testing apostolic teaching against Scripture.”

Not against tradition.” Not against an authoritative teaching office.

Against Scripture — daily. And they were commended for it. Called noble.

Their willingness to test even what they heard from Paul against the written Word was praised as a mark of spiritual nobility.

This commendation has enormous implications.

If tradition held equal authority with Scripture, then testing apostolic teaching against Scripture alone would be insufficient — tradition would also need to be consulted.

But the Bereans tested against Scripture alone and were praised for it.

Scripture is the sufficient and final standard by which all teaching — including apostolic teaching — is to be evaluated.

This is the Protestant principle of Sola Scriptura not as a Reformation invention but as an apostolic commendation. The Bereans practiced it. Paul approved it.

Luke recorded the approval as an example for the church. Christ’s Own Standard Mark 7:7–9, 13:

“Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition... Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.” Jesus' condemnation of the Pharisees is not a condemnation of tradition as such.” It is a condemnation of tradition that contradicts, supplements, or displaces the Word of God.”

The Pharisees had elevated their traditions to the status of divine commandment — not merely as helpful applications of the law but as binding obligations equal to or superseding the written word. Jesus' language is severe: teaching the commandments of men as doctrines is vain worship. Holding tradition while laying aside God's commandment is to reject the commandment of God. Elevating tradition to equal authority with the Word of God makes the Word of God of none effect. These are not mild correctives.

They are categorical condemnations of the precise structure Rome claims for Sacred Tradition.

B. Rome's Claim About Tradition — Stated Precisely Catechism of the

Catholic Church, 82:

“As a result the Church, to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is entrusted, does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone.” Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence.” Council of Trent, Session 4 (Denzinger 783):”

“[The Council] receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety and reverence, all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament... as also the said traditions, as well those appertaining to faith as to morals.” Rome's position is unambiguous: Sacred Tradition stands alongside Scripture as a co-equal source of divine revelation, to be received and venerated with equal devotion and reverence.” The Church — specifically the Magisterium — is the authoritative interpreter of both.”

This claim has three components that must each be examined: First: tradition is co-equal with Scripture in authority.

Second: the Church is the authoritative interpreter of both.

Third: doctrines not found in Scripture can be established through tradition as binding on the universal church.

Each component fails under scriptural examination.

C. Why Rome's Appeal to Tradition Fails Failure One: Tradition Cannot Establish

What Scripture Does Not Contain The Berean principle establishes Scripture as the standard by which all teaching is tested. Christ's condemnation of the Pharisees establishes that traditions which contradict or supplement divine commandment are void.

Paul in Galatians 1:8 establishes the absolute finality of the apostolic Gospel against any supplementary source:

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” An angel from heaven — a source of supernatural revelation — is not authorized to supplement the apostolic Gospel.” The apostolic deposit is complete and final.”

Any addition to it — regardless of its claimed supernatural origin or institutional authority — falls under the anathema Paul pronounces.

Rome claims Sacred Tradition as an additional channel of divine revelation through which doctrines not in Scripture are nonetheless binding.

But Paul's principle forecloses this. The Gospel was delivered once. It cannot be supplemented.

Any addition falls under Galatians 1:8 regardless of the institutional authority claiming to transmit it. Failure Two: The Church Cannot Be the Authoritative Interpreter of Its Own Authority Rome claims the Magisterium — the Church's teaching authority — is the authoritative interpreter of both Scripture and Tradition.

But this creates a logical structure that is self-referentially circular and therefore incapable of providing the certainty Rome claims it provides.

The argument runs as follows: Scripture and Tradition together constitute divine revelation.

The Church authoritatively interprets both Scripture and Tradition.

The Church's authority to interpret is itself established by Scripture and Tradition.

The Church's interpretation of Scripture and Tradition is therefore authoritative.

The circularity is direct: the Church's authority is established by the sources it claims to authoritatively interpret.

The sources derive their binding interpretation from the authority that derives its legitimacy from the sources.

This is not a reliable epistemological foundation. A standard that authenticates itself cannot adjudicate disputes about what the standard requires.

If the question is "does Rome's tradition accurately transmit apostolic teaching?" — Rome cannot answer that question by appealing to Rome's authority to determine what apostolic teaching is. Scripture, by contrast, does not authenticate itself through an institutional interpreter.

It authenticates itself through the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit working through the Word itself — the testimonium Spiritus Sancti internum — as the Spirit who inspired it illuminates the hearts of God's people to recognize it as His Word.

This is not a circular argument because the Spirit who authenticates is not the same as the institution whose authority is in question. Failure Three: Rome's Tradition Cannot Demonstrate Apostolic Origin for Its Central Doctrines Rome claims Sacred Tradition transmits apostolic teaching — things the apostles taught orally that were not committed to writing in Scripture but preserved in the living tradition of the Church.

If this claim is true, Rome's central doctrines should be traceable to the apostolic era. They are not.

The timeline already established in Part Four demonstrates this for transubstantiation specifically.

But the problem extends across Rome's distinctive doctrines: Transubstantiation: The word did not exist for eleven hundred years.

The doctrine was formally defined in 1215 AD.

It cannot be demonstrated from the apostolic era. Papal Infallibility: Formally defined at the First Vatican Council in 1870 AD — eighteen and a half centuries after the apostles.

No New Testament text unambiguously teaches it.

The Immaculate Conception: Formally defined by Pope Pius IX in 1854 AD. Disputed by major Catholic theologians including Thomas Aquinas for centuries before its definition. Purgatory: No clear scriptural basis. Formally defined at the Council of Florence in 1439 AD.

The Assumption of Mary: Formally defined by Pope Pius XII in 1950 AD — nineteen centuries after the apostles.

If these doctrines derive from apostolic tradition, why did the Holy Spirit allow the church to exist for centuries — in some cases nearly two millennia — without officially defining them?

Why were they subjects of intense theological debate among Catholics themselves before their eventual definition?

Why do the earliest church fathers provide only ambiguous or absent support for most of them?

The answer Scripture provides through the Berean principle is simpler and more honest: these doctrines are not in Scripture because they are not apostolic.

They are developments of medieval and post-medieval theology, defined by institutional authority, and defended by appealing to the same institutional authority that defined them. Jude 3 says the faith was delivered once to the saints.

These doctrines were not part of that once-delivered faith.

Their late appearance in church history is not evidence of gradual doctrinal clarification — it is evidence of doctrinal innovation without scriptural warrant.

D. The Anxiety of the Sacramental System — What Rome's Doctrine Actually Produces

Having addressed the question of authority, we now turn to the question of pastoral consequence. Doctrines do not exist in isolation.

They produce fruit — in the lives of believers who live under them, in the relationship between the soul and God that they mediate, in the assurance or anxiety they generate. Jesus said:

“By their fruits ye shall know them.” (Matthew 7:20) The fruit of Rome's sacramental system must be examined honestly.” The Cycle That Produces No Rest The Roman Catholic sacramental economy operates as a cycle that, by its own internal logic, cannot produce settled assurance of standing before God.”

The cycle works as follows: The believer commits mortal sin — a sin of sufficient gravity to destroy sanctifying grace and place the soul in danger of eternal damnation.

Rome distinguishes mortal sin from venial sin, and the distinction is significant: mortal sin ruptures the believer's relationship with God entirely, not merely damages it.

The believer must confess this mortal sin to a priest in auricular confession.

Without priestly absolution, the sin is not forgiven and the soul remains in a state of mortal sin.

The confession must be complete — all mortal sins must be confessed. A forgotten mortal sin that is not confessed through culpable negligence is not absolved. The contrition must be adequate.

Rome distinguishes between perfect contrition (sorrow for sin motivated by love of God) and imperfect contrition or attrition (sorrow motivated by fear of punishment). Perfect contrition can restore the soul to grace outside of confession in cases of necessity. Imperfect contrition is sufficient for valid confession — but the believer must honestly assess which they have, because the adequacy of their sorrow affects the validity of the absolution.

The penance assigned by the priest must be completed.

Only then — absolved, contrite, penance assigned — may the believer receive the Eucharist without committing the additional mortal sin of receiving the body of Christ unworthily.

The believer then receives the Eucharist. And then — being still a sinner in a fallen world — commits mortal sin again. And the cycle begins.

The Questions the System Produces This cycle generates a specific set of agonizing questions for the conscientious Catholic believer: Did I confess every mortal sin? A mortal sin culpably omitted from confession is not absolved — and the reception of communion in that state is itself a mortal sin.

The conscientious Catholic must search their memory for every grave sin committed since their last valid confession. What if they forgot one?

What if they failed to recognize a sin as mortal that in fact was? Was my contrition sufficient? Was I truly sorrowful for sin — or was I going through the motions of confession while not genuinely repentant? Was my contrition perfect or merely imperfect? Does it matter? Was it enough? Have I completed my penance?

If penance is assigned and not completed, has the absolution taken full effect? Am I now in a state of grace?

After confession and penance and the reception of the Eucharist — am I actually in a state of grace? Have I done everything correctly? Is there something I missed? And then — inevitably — mortal sin again. And the whole cycle begins once more.

This is not a caricature of the Catholic system.

It is the system's own logic followed honestly.

The conscientious Catholic who takes Rome's teaching seriously lives under perpetual moral uncertainty — not because of weakness of faith but because the system itself provides no mechanism for settled assurance.

The Second Council of Orange in 529 AD condemned the Pelagian claim that humans can merit grace by their own efforts.

But Rome's sacramental system functionally produces a performance-based spirituality in which the believer's standing before God depends on: The thoroughness of their examination of conscience.

The completeness of their confession. The adequacy of their contrition. The completion of their penance.

The validity of the priest's absolution.

The state of grace at the moment of reception.

In every case the determining factor is the believer's own performance, examination, and moral state — not the finished, objective, irrevocable work of Christ on their behalf.

This is the system Jesus addressed in Matthew 11:28:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” The laboring and heavy-laden are not described as spiritually lazy.” They are those who have been working — striving, confessing, performing, examining, trying to be adequate. And Jesus' invitation is not to try harder or to work more systematically.”

It is to come to Him. And His promise is rest — not conditional rest, not rest that depends on the quality of the coming, but rest given freely to all who come.

E. The Assurance of the Biblical Gospel — What God Actually Promises

Against the anxiety the sacramental system produces, Scripture speaks with a clarity and a certainty that is itself the testimony of the Gospel's sufficiency. Justification by Faith — The Objective Foundation Romans 5:1:

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Justification is a legal declaration — God's authoritative verdict that the sinner is righteous in His sight, on the basis of Christ's righteousness imputed to them, received through faith.”

It is not a process.” It is not conditional on ongoing sacramental participation.

It is a completed verdict — "being justified" — past tense, done, final. And the result of that justification is peace with God. Not provisional peace.

Not peace that must be maintained through ongoing sacramental performance. Peace — the settled, objective, relational reality that the enmity between God and the sinner has been removed by Christ's atoning work and God's justifying verdict.

This peace is not generated by the believer's feelings or performance.

It rests on the objective work of Christ and the objective verdict of God.

It is therefore stable — not fluctuating with the believer's moral performance or the quality of their last confession. Romans 8:1:

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” No condemnation. Not reduced condemnation.”

Not conditional non-condemnation.” No condemnation — for those who are in Christ Jesus. The basis is union with Christ.

The state is permanent for those who are His.

There is no scenario, no mortal sin, no period of lapsed grace, no missed confession, no inadequate contrition in the believer's experience that adds condemnation to one who is in Christ — because Christ bore all condemnation fully and finally on the cross.

“It is finished.” (John 19:30) Assurance”

— The Direct Testimony of Scripture 1 John 5:13:

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” John states the purpose of his letter with extraordinary directness: so that believers may know they have eternal life. Not hope.”

Not suspect.” Not tentatively conclude pending adequate performance. Know. This is not presumption. This is not arrogance.

This is the direct pastoral intention of an inspired apostle — writing under the authority of the Holy Spirit — for the explicit purpose of giving believers settled, certain, personal knowledge of their eternal standing before God.

The Roman Catholic system cannot produce this knowledge because it cannot produce the objective foundation on which the knowledge rests.

If the believer's standing depends on the quality of their confession and the adequacy of their contrition — both of which are internal states that the believer cannot assess with certainty — then certainty of standing is impossible by the system's own logic.

But if the believer's standing rests on the finished, objective, imputed righteousness of Christ — received by faith, declared by God, sealed by the Spirit — then certainty is not only possible but expected. John writes to produce it. Paul declares it.

The Spirit confirms it. Romans 8:15–16:

“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” The Spirit of adoption — not the spirit of bondage to fear.”

This is the direct contrast Paul draws between the old covenant of works and the new covenant of grace. Fear — the anxious uncertainty of one whose standing depends on their own performance — has been replaced by adoption — the settled, familial, unbreakable relationship of a child with their Father. Abba, Father.

The most intimate Aramaic address — the word a child uses with a parent in unguarded, trusting familiarity.

This is the cry the Spirit enables in the believer's heart.

Not "I hope I am forgiven." Not "If my contrition was adequate, I am forgiven." Abba. Father.

The cry of one who knows their relationship. Hebrews 10:19–22:

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.” Full assurance of faith. Boldness to enter the holiest.” These are not the words of a system that requires believers to approach God through layers of priestly mediation, sacramental qualification, and moral performance.”

These are the words of a Gospel that has opened the way directly — through the torn veil of Christ's flesh — and invited every believer to enter with boldness and full assurance.

The contrast with Rome's system could not be more complete: Rome's system: approach through the priest, after confession, after penance, after the Eucharist, if your contrition was sufficient, if you have forgotten no mortal sin, if you are in a state of grace — then approach, with appropriate anxiety about whether all conditions have been met. Scripture's Gospel: having boldness — enter. With full assurance — draw near. The way is open. The high priest is in heaven.

The blood has been sprinkled. Come. Liberty — The Freedom of the Finished Work Galatians 5:1:

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” Paul writes to Galatians who were being drawn back into a system of works — in their case, circumcision and the Mosaic law — as necessary supplements to faith for their standing before God.” His response is categorical: Christ has made you free. Stand in that freedom. Do not be entangled again in a yoke of bondage.”

The principle applies directly to any system that requires human performance as a necessary condition of standing before God.

The Roman sacramental system is precisely such a yoke — a structured set of requirements, performances, and qualifications that must be met for the believer to be in right standing. Paul's apostolic command is to stand fast in the liberty of the finished work and refuse the entanglement. John 8:36:

“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” Free indeed.”

Not provisionally free.” Not free pending adequate confession.

Not free within the limits of what the sacramental system permits. Free indeed — the freedom of those whose liberation was accomplished by the Son Himself, whose finished work is the ground and guarantee of their freedom.

F. The Lord's Supper in the Light of the Gospel All of Part Six converges on the

Lord's Supper — because the Supper is the place where Rome's theology of authority, tradition, and sacramental mediation most visibly and concretely displaces the biblical Gospel.

Under Rome's system the Lord's Supper — the Mass — is: A propitiatory sacrifice offered by an ordained priest. Available only to those who have been absolved through auricular confession.

The vehicle through which grace is obtained and the soul is sustained in spiritual life.

The literal body and blood of Christ produced through the priestly act of consecration.

The summit of the sacramental economy through which the Church mediates Christ to the world.

Every element of this description requires a tradition that cannot be demonstrated from Scripture, a philosophical framework borrowed from a pagan philosopher without apostolic warrant, and a priestly mediatorial class that Scripture declares abolished.

Under the biblical Gospel the Lord's Supper is: A memorial of a finished work — proclaimed, not repeated. A covenant sign pointing away from the elements toward the risen, enthroned Lord. Open to all who come by faith — examined by themselves before God, not certified by a priest.

The community's proclamation of Christ's death until He comes. A means of genuine spiritual nourishment — Christ truly present with His people through the Spirit, received by faith, communicated through the Word and the covenant signs.

The difference is not liturgical style.

It is the difference between a system that obscures the finished work of Christ and a Gospel that proclaims it.

It is the difference between a religion of performance and a religion of grace.

It is the difference between a table that requires priestly certification and a table that Christ Himself has set open with the words:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28) “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” (John 6:37) No priest stands at that door.” No sacramental qualification bars the entry.”

No tradition supplements the invitation.

The Son of God speaks it directly, personally, and without condition — to every soul that hears it. This is the Gospel.

This is what the Lord's Supper proclaims. This is what the Mass obscures. Scripture is sufficient. The Gospel is free. Christ is enough.

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” — Isaiah 8:20 **Figure 7: Biblical Authority vs. Rome's Magisterial Structure** *Biblical Authority — Open Scripture* *Rome's Authority — Magisterial Control* *Scripture alone — God-breathed, sufficient* *Scripture + Sacred Tradition + Magisterium (CCC 80–82, 100)* *“Thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16–17)* *Scripture is self-interpreting — open to all* *Magisterium alone interprets Scripture authentically* *Bereans praised for testing apostolic teaching* *“Entrusted solely to the Magisterium” (CCC 100)* *against Scripture (Acts 17:11)* *Apostolic deposit delivered once for all* *“Once Tradition is co-equal with Scripture as source of revelation delivered to the saints” — Jude 3* *“Both flowing from the same divine wellspring” (CCC 82)* *Outcome: settled assurance — God has spoken; Outcome: the circle is closed.* *Magisterium's authority His Word is sufficient for every good work established by sources whose interpretation Magisterium alone controls. Self-referential. Unfalsifiable.* **Figure 7 — The biblical model of open, sufficient, self-interpreting Scripture versus Rome's self-referential authority circle (2 Tim. 3:16–17; Acts 17:11; CCC 80, 100).** **Figure 8: Biblical Assurance vs. Sacramental Anxiety** *Category Biblical Gospel — Settled Peace* *Rome's System — Perpetual Anxiety* *Basis of Christ's finished, accepted, imputed Sacramental state maintained through standing righteousness — permanent (Rom. 5:1) confession and communion — fluctuating Peace with God* *“We have peace with God through our Lord Peace conditional on adequacy of last Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1) — present tense, confession and contrition — never certain declarative, settled* *Category Biblical Gospel — Settled Peace* *Rome's System — Perpetual Anxiety* *Condemnation* *“No condemnation to them which are in Mortal sin ruptures grace; requires priestly Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1) — absolute verdict absolution before communion can be received* *Certainty* *“These things have I written... that ye may Certainty of salvation condemned as know that ye have eternal life” (1 John 5:13)* *presumption — Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 16 Examination* *Self-examination before the Supper — Mandatory auricular confession to ordained personal, direct, before God (1 Cor. 11:28) priest required before communion (CCC 1457)* *Fruit Liberty:”*

Figure 7: Biblical Authority vs. Rome's Magisterial Structure

| Biblical Authority — Open Scripture | Rome's Authority — Magisterial Control |
|--|---|
| Scripture alone — God-breathed, sufficient "Thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16–17) | Scripture + Sacred Tradition + Magisterium (CCC 80–82, 100) |
| Scripture is self-interpreting — open to all Bereans praised for testing apostolic teaching against Scripture (Acts 17:11) | Magisterium alone interprets Scripture authentically "Entrusted solely to the Magisterium" (CCC 100) |

| Biblical Authority — Open Scripture | Rome's Authority — Magisterial Control |
|--|---|
| Apostolic deposit delivered <i>once for all</i> "Once delivered to the saints" — Jude 3 | Tradition is co-equal with Scripture as source of revelation "Both flowing from the same divine wellspring" (CCC 82) |
| Outcome: <i>settled assurance</i> — God has spoken; His Word is sufficient for every good work | Outcome: the circle is closed. Magisterium's authority established by sources whose interpretation Magisterium alone controls. Self-referential. Unfalsifiable. |

Figure 7 — The biblical model of open, sufficient, self-interpreting Scripture versus Rome's self-referential authority circle (2 Tim. 3:16–17; Acts 17:11; CCC 80, 100).

Figure 8: Biblical Assurance vs. Sacramental Anxiety

| Category | Biblical Gospel — Settled Peace | Rome's System — Perpetual Anxiety |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| Basis of standing | Christ's finished, accepted, imputed righteousness — permanent (Rom. 5:1) | Sacramental state maintained through confession and communion — fluctuating |
| Peace with God | "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1) — present tense, declarative, settled | Peace conditional on adequacy of last confession and contrition — never certain |
| Condemnation | "No condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1) — absolute verdict | Mortal sin ruptures grace; requires priestly absolution before communion can be received |
| Certainty | "These things have I written... that ye may know that ye have eternal life" (1 John 5:13) | Certainty of salvation condemned as presumption — Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 16 |
| Examination | Self-examination before the Supper — personal, direct, before God (1 Cor. 11:28) | Mandatory auricular confession to ordained priest required before communion (CCC 1457) |
| Fruit | Liberty: "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" (Gal. 5:1) | Anxiety: perpetual uncertainty about contrition, validity of confessor's ordination, completeness of penance |

Figure 8 — Six categories comparing the settled peace of the biblical Gospel with the perpetual uncertainty of Rome's sacramental system (Rom. 5:1; 8:1; 1 John 5:13; Trent, Sess. 6, Can. 16).

PART SEVEN

Lexical Piracy

How Rome Built Its Parallel Dictionary

The more dangerous form is the patient, systematic replacement of meaning while the original words remain in place. The flag still flies. The vocabulary is unchanged.

The passengers are assured that all is well.

But the charts have been replaced, the compass altered, and the destination quietly changed.

This is what Rome did to the vocabulary of the Gospel. Not in a single dramatic act.

Not by openly rejecting the words of Scripture and substituting new ones. By something far more patient and far more thorough — a centuries-long process of taking the words the Holy Spirit breathed into the apostolic writings, passing them through successive filters of Latin translation, Greek philosophical reinterpretation, and magisterial self-assertion, and emerging with definitions that bear the same labels as the originals while meaning something the originals never meant.

The words remain: grace, sacrifice, priest, sacrament, repentance, justification.

The definitions have been replaced.

This is Lexical Piracy — the systematic seizure of the vocabulary of Scripture, the replacement of its Spirit-intended meanings with institutionally constructed ones, and the declaration that the pirated version is more authoritative than the original. Parts One through Six of this examination have documented what Rome teaches and why Scripture condemns it. Part Seven explains how Rome arrived at teaching it — through a specific, traceable, documented linguistic and philosophical process that begins with the words of God and ends somewhere God never spoke. Understanding this process closes permanently the escape route that every Catholic apologist eventually reaches for:

“You are using Protestant definitions of these terms.” Our Magisterium's definitions are authoritative.” They are not. And Part Seven demonstrates precisely why — using Rome's own official definitions, Rome's own sources, and the original Greek text the Holy Spirit gave to the apostles. Section A: The Direction of the Movement — Always the Same Before examining specific terms, the overall direction of Rome's lexical movement must be identified — because it is consistent, systematic, and applies to every term examined in this section.”

The movement runs in one direction only: Away from Scripture. Toward institutional control.

It operates through three successive filters.

FILTER ONE: THE LATIN TRANSLATION Jerome's Latin Vulgate — produced in the late fourth century — introduced the first layer of redefinition.

At several critical points Jerome's translation choices carried pre-existing Latin connotations that the Greek original did not carry.

These connotations consistently moved the vocabulary of the Gospel toward institutional, ritualistic, and performative meanings. *Metanoēō* — change of mind and heart — became *paenitentiam agite* — perform penance. *Mustērion* — revealed mystery of the Gospel — became *sacramentum* — sacred institutional rite. *Presbyteros* — elder — began its drift toward *sacerdos* — sacrificing priest. *Ekklēsia*

— called-out assembly of believers — acquired hierarchical institutional connotations foreign to the Greek.

Each translation choice introduced a subtle but consequential shift — from the inward and relational to the outward and institutional, from the personal and spiritual to the ritual and mechanical.

FILTER TWO: THE SCHOLASTIC PHILOSOPHY Thomas Aquinas and the medieval scholastics then constructed a comprehensive philosophical architecture on the Latin vocabulary Jerome had produced. Aristotelian categories — substance, accidents, form, matter, infusion, efficient cause — were imported from pagan Greek philosophy and applied to the Latin biblical text.

The result was a theological system of extraordinary internal coherence — because Aristotelian philosophy is internally coherent — but built on a foundation the Greek New Testament does not provide and the apostles never laid.

FILTER THREE: THE MAGISTERIAL SELF-DECLARATION The Council of Trent then locked these definitions in place — declaring them infallible, attaching anathemas to their denial, and crucially — declaring the Magisterium the sole authoritative interpreter of both Scripture and Tradition. CCC 100 states it plainly:

“The task of interpreting the Word of God authentically has been entrusted solely to the Magisterium of the Church.” Not established by Scripture.” Not demonstrated from apostolic succession. Asserted by the institution about itself. The circuit is closed. The piracy is complete.”

The original charts have been replaced and the new captain has declared himself the only one qualified to read them. Section B: The Master Illustration — Sacramentum and the Theft of Mystery Of all the examples of Rome's Lexical Piracy, one stands above the rest as the master illustration — because it shows the entire three-filter process operating on a single word from the apostle's pen to the papal encyclical.

That word is sacramentum. And to understand what Rome did with it, we must begin with the word it replaced. **THE ORIGINAL — MUSTĒRION: THE REVEALED MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL** Paul uses the Greek word mustĒrion throughout his letters for one of the most glorious realities in all of Scripture: the previously hidden counsel of God, now disclosed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:9–10:

“Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ.” Colossians 1:26–27:” “Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.” 1 Timothy 3:16:” “And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” In every one of these uses mustĒrion points outward and upward — to what God has done in Christ, disclosed in the Gospel, received by faith.” The mystery is not a hidden ritual. It is a revealed reality.”

Not something locked inside an institution and dispensed through a mechanism — but something proclaimed to the world, available to all, received by any who will believe.

THE FIRST FILTER — JEROME'S SACRAMENTUM When Jerome translated the Greek New Testament into Latin, he rendered mustĒrion as sacramentum in several key passages — including Ephesians 5:32, where Paul calls marriage a "great mystery" as a figure of Christ and the church.

Sacramentum was a Latin word with specific pre-existing connotations: a soldier's oath of allegiance, a sacred deposit, a religious obligation. None of these connotations are present in Paul's *mustērion*.

But by substituting sacramentum for *mustērion*, Jerome introduced into the Latin biblical text the suggestion that the Gospel's mysteries are institutional rites requiring authorized administration.

The seed was planted in the translation. The philosophy would grow it. The Magisterium would harvest it.

THE SECOND FILTER — AQUINAS'S MECHANISM Thomas Aquinas built on Jerome's sacramentum a comprehensive definition that transformed the word from a translation choice into a theological system. *Summa Theologiae* III, Question 60: A sacrament is an efficacious sign — one that not only signifies grace but causes it.

The cause operates through the valid performance of the rite, by a properly ordained minister, on the appropriate matter, with the correct form — *ex opere operato*.

What Paul meant by *mustērion* — the revealed reality of Christ disclosed in the Gospel, received by faith — has become a mechanical cause producing a defined effect through a validated institutional process.

The mystery has been replaced by the mechanism. The proclamation by the procedure.

The faith that receives by the rite that produces.

THE THIRD FILTER — PAPAL DECLARATION: MYSTERIUM FIDEI Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Mysterium Fidei* (1965) completes the piracy with a detail of extraordinary precision.

The phrase *mysterium fidei* — Mystery of Faith — is inserted into the words of institution at the elevation of the chalice in the Mass:

"Hoc est enim calix sanguinis mei... mysterium fidei" — "For this is the chalice of my blood... the mystery of faith." Rome has reached back to the Greek mustērion — Paul's word for the disclosed Gospel reality received by faith — and placed it at the center of the Mass, where it designates the imperceptible Aristotelian transformation of wine into blood." The word that meant the Gospel's openness has been made to mean the institution's secret."

The word that pointed to what God disclosed has been redirected to what the priest produces. The flag of Scripture still flies. The word mystery is still spoken. But the charts have been changed. The compass points elsewhere.

This is Lexical Piracy in its most complete and most consequential form. Section C: The Forensic Glossary — Eight Terms Examined Every Roman Catholic definition cited in this section is drawn from Rome's own official sources — the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Council of Trent, and the works of Thomas Aquinas as incorporated into official Catholic teaching.

Rome cannot argue against these definitions without arguing against itself. Term One: Grace — Charis vs. Gratia Infusa The Biblical Original: The Greek *charis* — grace — in Paul's letters describes the unmerited, freely given, legally imputed favor of God toward the sinner on the basis of Christ's finished work.

It is a settled status, not a fluctuating substance. Romans 3:24:

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Romans 11:6: "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace." The defining property of biblical grace is its freedom from works, merit, and mechanism." The Roman Redefinition: CCC 1999–2000:"

“The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it... Sanctifying grace is an habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that perfects the soul itself to enable it to live with God.” Rome defines grace as a supernatural substance infused into the soul.”

It can be lost through mortal sin.” It must be restored through sacramental confession.

It fluctuates according to the believer's sacramental participation and moral performance.

The Scriptural Verdict: Biblical grace is imputed — credited to the believer's account on the basis of Christ's righteousness, received by faith, permanent for those in Christ. Rome's grace is infused — a commodity dispensed through a mechanism, conditional on ongoing sacramental performance, capable of being lost. One is the Gospel.

One is a system of merit dressed in Gospel vocabulary.

If grace is infused through the sacramental mechanism, the peace Paul declares in Romans 5:1 is impossible — because the infusion level fluctuates with every mortal sin, every missed confession, every inadequate act of penance. Term Two: Sacrifice — Thusia vs. Sacrificium Propitiatorium The Biblical Original: The Greek thusia — sacrifice — in Hebrews describes the one, unrepeatable, permanently effective offering of Christ on the cross. Hebrews 10:12:

“But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.” Hebrews 9:26:” “But now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” The defining property: finality. It was offered once.”

It accomplished everything.” The proof of its finality is Christ's posture: He sat down. The work is done.

The Roman Redefinition: Council of Trent, Session 22, Chapter 2 (Denzinger 940):

“In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, that same Christ is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner, who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the Cross.” CCC 1367:” “The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice.” Trent Session 22, Canon 3:” “If anyone says that the sacrifice of the Mass is only one of praise and thanksgiving... but not propitiatory... let him be anathema.” The Scriptural Verdict: The double jeopardy argument is decisive. Propitiation means the satisfaction of divine wrath against sin.” If Christ's sacrifice at Calvary was propitiatory — if it fully satisfied God's wrath — then no subsequent offering can be propitiatory for the same sins.”

There is no wrath remaining to satisfy.

The two claims cannot coexist. Either Calvary was sufficient or it was not. Hebrews 10:14 answers:

“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” Term Three: Priest — Presbyteros/Hiereus vs. Sacerdos The Biblical Original: The New Testament uses two distinct Greek words. Presbyteros — elder — describes church leadership with no sacrificial function. Hiereus — priest in the sacrificial sense — is used in the New Testament in only three contexts: the Levitical priests of the Old Covenant (now superseded), Christ as the sole and eternal high priest (Hebrews), and every believer as a member of the royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9).” The New Testament never uses hiereus for a Christian minister — not once. The absence is deliberate.”

The sacrificial priestly function has been permanently occupied by Christ alone and permanently distributed to every believer through Him.

The Roman Redefinition: Jerome's Vulgate gradually applied sacerdos — sacrificing priest — to Christian ministers.

Aquinas constructed the ontological change at ordination: the priest is transformed in his very being, configured to Christ as the eternal high priest. CCC 1548:

“In the ecclesial service of the ordained minister, it is Christ himself who is present to his Church as Head of his Body, Shepherd of his flock, high priest of the redemptive sacrifice.” CCC 1563: acting in the person of Christ in the supreme degree at the Eucharist.” The Scriptural Verdict: 1 Timothy 2:5:”

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” One mediator.” Not one supreme mediator with ordained subordinates. One.”

The mediatorial function is permanently and exclusively occupied by Christ.

Hebrews 7:23–25: the reason there were many Levitical priests was death — they needed successors.

Christ needs no successor because He lives forever. His priesthood has no vacancy.

No human ordination fills a vacancy that does not exist. Term Four: Justification — Dikaioō vs. Iustificatio The Biblical Original: The Greek dikaioō — to justify — is a forensic term from the law court.

It describes the judge's verdict of acquittal — the declaration that the accused is righteous in the eyes of the law.

It is a one-time, complete, legally binding declaration — not a process of becoming righteous. Romans 5:1:

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 8:1:” “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” The defining properties: forensic, instantaneous, complete, and permanent.” The Roman Redefinition: Council of Trent, Session 6, Chapter 7 (Denzinger 799): Justification is defined as not merely the remission of sins but the sanctification and renewal of the inward man through the voluntary reception of grace and gifts.”

It is a process — not a verdict — by which the believer is made inherently righteous through the infusion of grace. CCC 2020:

“Justification has been merited for us by the Passion of Christ.”

It is granted us through Baptism.” It conforms us to the righteousness of God, who makes us inwardly just by the power of his mercy.” The Scriptural Verdict: Rome's justification is a process of becoming righteous. Scripture's justification is a verdict of being declared righteous.

These are not two aspects of the same reality — they are categorically different claims.

If justification is a process, Romans 5:1's peace with God is impossible. Peace requires a settled verdict. A process produces only the anxious question: am I righteous enough yet?

The Gospel answer is: you are justified. The verdict is pronounced. The peace is settled.

Not because you have become sufficiently righteous, but because Christ's righteousness has been imputed to your account. Term Five: Repentance — Metanoēō vs. Paenitentiam Agite The Biblical

Original: The Greek *metanoēō* is a compound word: *meta* (change) and *noeō* (mind — from *nous*, the faculty of understanding). Its literal meaning: a change of mind — a radical inward reorientation of the entire person toward God. Acts 20:21:

“Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” Mark 1:15: “Repent ye, and believe the gospel.” The defining property: inward, radical, personal — a change of the mind and heart that precedes and accompanies faith.” It directs the sinner toward God — not toward a priest.”

The Roman Redefinition: Jerome's Vulgate translated *metanoēō* — change your mind — as *paenitentiam agite* — perform penance. This is not a translation.

It is a substitution. *Paenitentiam agite* means to carry out an act of penance — to perform an external work of satisfaction for sin. On this translation Rome constructed the entire sacrament of Penance: examination of conscience, confession to a priest, absolution, assignment of penance, performance of the assigned works.

The inward change of mind that Jesus commanded became an external institutional procedure that the priest administers and certifies.

The Scriptural Verdict: Erasmus stated it in 1516: the Vulgate's *paenitentiam agite* does not translate the Greek *metanoēō*.

It substitutes for it. And the substitution moves the command from the inward to the outward, from the personal to the institutional, from the heart's response to God to the performance of prescribed works before a priest. Luther's break with Rome began with the recovery of *metanoēō* from *paenitentiam agite* — not an abstract theological dispute but a linguistic observation about what the Greek text actually says. 1 John 1:9:

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.” Subject: the believer. Object: God. Forgiver: God.”

No priest.” No mechanism. Term Six: Substance — *Ousia* vs. *Substantia Aristotelica* The Biblical Original: Scripture's miracles change what is perceptible.

When Jesus turned water to wine at Cana the result tasted like wine — superior wine assessed by the master of the feast. John 2:9–10:

“The governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine... but thou hast kept the good wine until now.” The miracle was perceptible.” The taste was wine. Nothing about the water remained to the senses.”

The substance changed and the accidents — the perceptible properties — changed to correspond.

This is the consistent biblical pattern of miracle: perceptible reality corresponds to the change that has occurred. The Roman Redefinition: CCC 1376:

“By the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood.” This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation.” Under this definition the substance of bread is replaced by the substance of Christ's body — while all the accidents of bread remain entirely unchanged.”

The bread still looks, smells, tastes, and has the molecular structure of bread.

The Scriptural Verdict: This is the precise inversion of the biblical pattern of miracle. Scripture's miracles change what is perceptible. Rome's miracle changes only what is imperceptible — by definition and by design, because if anything perceptible changed the claim would be immediately falsifiable.

The Aristotelian framework was imported from pagan philosophy specifically to explain how a miracle can be claimed where no perceptible evidence of a miracle exists.

The master verdict: when the God of Scripture performs a miracle, it is perceptible. The water tasted like wine. The tomb was empty. The blind man could see.

If Christ is truly present in the host — why does it still taste like bread? Term Seven: The Word — Logos/Rhēma vs. Forma Sacramenti The Biblical Original: In Scripture the Word of God is living, active, powerful, and creative — working through proclamation to convict, convert, and sustain the people of God. Hebrews 4:12:

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit.” Ephesians 6:17: “The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” Romans 10:17: “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” The Word works through proclamation to the mind and heart of the hearer, producing faith through the Spirit's internal work.” The Roman Redefinition: In Rome's sacramental theology the words of institution — “Hoc est enim corpus meum” — function not as proclamation to be believed but as formula to be performed.”

They are the forma sacramenti — the verbal form of the sacrament — which when spoken correctly by an ordained priest over the appropriate matter produce the sacramental effect ex opere operato.

The words are not primarily addressed to the minds and hearts of the hearers.

They are addressed to the elements.

Their function is not to communicate a truth to be received by faith — but to produce a physical change in bread and wine by the performative power of the priestly speech act.

The Scriptural Verdict: This is the complete inversion of the biblical function of the Word.

In Scripture the Word addresses persons — minds, hearts, wills — through proclamation.

In Rome's Mass the words of institution address elements — bread and wine.

Their function is physical transformation, not personal communication.

The Word of God — the living, powerful, Spirit-wielded sword of Scripture — has been reduced to a priestly incantation that forces a physical change.

The incantation operates ex opere operato — independently of the faith of anyone present — historically spoken in Latin in a low voice, with the congregation unable to hear the words being spoken over the elements. Term Eight: Eat/Drink — Esthiō/Pinō vs. Manducare/Bibere Corpus et Sanguinem The Biblical Original: John 6:35:

“He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” Eating equals coming. Drinking equals believing.” The physical actions describe the spiritual act of faith. John 6:35:”

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” This is Jesus' own interpretive conclusion to the entire discourse. The Spirit gives life. The flesh profits nothing.”

The words are spirit and life.” The eating and drinking of John 6 is spiritual — received by faith, mediated by the Spirit. The Roman Redefinition: CCC 1374:

“In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist 'the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained.'” The eating of the host is the literal consumption of Christ's body.” The drinking of the chalice is the literal consumption of Christ's blood.”

The spiritual act of faith receiving Christ — which Jesus defined as eating and drinking in John 6:35 — has been replaced by the physical act of consuming the consecrated elements.

The Scriptural Verdict: John 6:63 is Jesus' own verdict: the flesh profits nothing.

If the eating and drinking of John 6 is literal physical consumption of Christ's body, then Jesus' statement that the flesh profits nothing is a direct contradiction of the doctrine Rome builds on the passage.

Rome has taken the metaphor Jesus used for faith and made it literal.

It has taken the spiritual act He described — coming, believing, receiving — and replaced it with a physical act dependent on priestly consecration and institutional access.

The invitation “Come unto me” — direct, personal, unconditional — has been institutionalized. Section D: The Metanoia/Paenitentiam Case Study — The Most Consequential Translation Error in Church History The metanoēō to paenitentiam agite substitution deserves extended treatment — not only because of its specific theological consequences but because it illustrates with perfect clarity the entire mechanism of Lexical Piracy operating in miniature. One Greek word. One Latin substitution.

One institutional system built on the substitution.

The entire sacrament of Penance — auricular confession, priestly absolution, assigned works, gatekeeping before the table — constructed on the foundation of a translation that the Greek text does not support.

Erasmus stated it in 1516 with a precision that has never been surpassed: the Vulgate's paenitentiam agite does not translate the Greek metanoēō.

It substitutes for it. And the substitution moves the command from the inward to the outward, from the personal to the institutional, from the heart's response to God to the performance of prescribed works before a priest.

Luther recognized the same error and stated its implications in his 95 Theses (1517). Thesis 1:

“When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said 'Repent,' he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.” Not one of prescribed institutional penance — but a life of genuine, ongoing, inward metanoēō before God. Luther's entire break with Rome began with the recovery of a Greek word.” The restoration of the original meaning — inward, personal, directed toward God rather than toward institutional procedure — was the beginning of the recovery of the Gospel itself. Anne Askew had metanoēō. She repented toward God. She believed on Christ. She came to Him directly.”

She needed no priest to certify her repentance, no confessor to absolve her sins, no sacramental mechanism to restore her standing. She had 1 John 1:9:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." She was put on the rack for having metanoeō without the institutional paenitentiam agite that Rome required." The translation error cost her everything in this life and gave her everything in the next. Section E: The Water-to-Wine Principle — The Biblical Standard Rome's Miracle Cannot Meet The principle established by John 2 provides the single most elegant and most decisive refutation of transubstantiation's philosophical framework. THE WATER-TO-WINE PRINCIPLE: In every genuine biblical miracle, the perceptible reality corresponds to the change that has occurred."

John 2:9–10: The water tasted like wine. Superior wine.

The master of the feast tasted it and said so.

John 11:43–44: Lazarus walked out of the tomb. The people saw him. They removed his grave clothes.

John 9:7: The blind man went and washed and came back seeing.

Matthew 8:3: The leper was immediately cleansed. His skin was visibly restored.

Mark 2:12: The paralyzed man rose, took up his bed, and walked — in front of everyone.

In every case: the change that occurred corresponded to what could be perceived.

The miracle invited investigation rather than requiring a philosophical framework to protect it from investigation. Now apply this principle to transubstantiation.

Rome claims that at the words of consecration the entire substance of bread is replaced by the substance of Christ's body — while all the accidents of bread remain entirely unchanged. The host looks like bread. It smells like bread.

It tastes like bread. Its molecular structure is bread. Nothing perceptible has changed.

This claim fails the Water-to-Wine Principle immediately.

When Jesus turned water to wine the taste changed — perceptibly, immediately, to the point where an expert could assess its quality.

When Rome claims the bread becomes Christ's body no taste changes. No smell changes. No appearance changes.

No molecular structure changes. Nothing the communicant perceives changes in any way.

The Aristotelian answer — the substance changed but the accidents did not — is not a biblical answer.

It is a philosophical protection of a claim from the standard of investigation that Scripture's miracles openly welcomed.

The God of Scripture did not hide His miracles behind philosophical frameworks.

He performed them in public, invited observation, and let the evidence speak.

"Come and see." — John 1:46 "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins — arise, take up thy bed and walk." — Matthew 9:6 If a theology requires Aristotle's metaphysics to explain a miracle that the senses, the instruments, and the very taste buds of the communicant cannot detect — it is not describing a biblical miracle." It is describing a philosophical construction dressed as one. Section F: The Self-Referential Circle"

— The Authority That Authorizes Itself Every element of Lexical Piracy documented in this section ultimately rests on a single foundational claim that must be examined precisely because it is the claim that holds the entire system together. CCC 100:

*“The task of interpreting the Word of God authentically has been entrusted solely to the Magisterium of the Church, that is, to the Pope and to the bishops in communion with him.” This is the claim that makes the pirated definitions binding — because without this claim a Catholic reader could simply return to the Greek text, read *metanoēō*, recognize it does not mean *paenitentiam agite*, and conclude that the sacrament of Penance is built on a mistranslation.” Without this claim, every argument in Parts One through Six stands unchallenged.”*

Because the arguments are from Scripture — the plain, Greek-text, apostolic-meaning, Spiritilluminated testimony of Scripture.

With this claim — Rome can declare all of those arguments illegitimate, because the Magisterium alone can interpret Scripture, and the Magisterium has interpreted it differently.

THE CIRCLE: The Magisterium claims its interpretive authority is established by Scripture and Tradition.

The Magisterium claims to be the sole authoritative interpreter of Scripture and Tradition. Therefore: the Magisterium's authority is established by sources whose interpretation the Magisterium controls. The authority is self-asserted.

The source it claims validates it is a source it claims to control. The circle is completely closed.

There is no independent verification.

This is not the authority structure of the New Testament. Acts 17:11 does not say: these were more noble because they submitted to the Magisterium's interpretation.

It says they were more noble because they searched the Scriptures daily to see whether what they heard was true.

The only escape from the closed circuit is the one Anne Askew took: go directly to the text, read it for yourself, trust the Spirit who inspired it to illuminate it, and believe what is written — regardless of what the institution declares the text must mean. She went directly to *metanoēō*.

She found repentance toward God — not penance toward a priest. She went directly to John 6:63.

She found that the flesh profits nothing.

She went directly to Hebrews 10:12.

She found that Christ sat down — not that He must be repeatedly offered on ten thousand altars. She believed what was written.

The Word of God proved stronger than the rack and the flame. Closing: The Dictionary That Needed Burning — and the Text That Survived The Council of Trent met between 1545 and 1563.

Among its specific targets were the Protestant Reformers who had recovered the Greek text, exposed the Vulgate's mistranslations, and declared that Scripture — read in its original languages by Spiritilluminated believers — was the final authority over every doctrinal claim including the claims of popes and councils. Trent's response was to lock the Vulgate in place as the authoritative text, to attach anathemas to the Protestant definitions of grace, justification, repentance, and the sacraments, and to declare the Magisterium's interpretations binding on the universal church.

When the piracy was exposed, Trent's response was to declare the pirated version the only legitimate one — and to anathematize anyone who returned to the original.

Those who returned to the original anyway — who insisted on reading *metanoēō* as change of mind rather than do penance, who insisted on reading *ephapax* as once for all rather than re-presentable, who insisted on reading *mustērion* as disclosed Gospel reality rather than institutional mechanism — faced the consequences.

Anne Askew faced them at Smithfield.

John Lassells faced them at Smithfield. Thousands across Europe faced them in the century of burning that followed Trent. They died for the original text.

They died for the Greek words the Holy Spirit gave to the apostles.

They died for the right to read *metanoēō* and understand what it means — and to come to God directly, on that basis, without the institutional mechanism that a mistranslation had constructed between them and Him.

Their deaths were the testimony of the text against the piracy. The text survived. It always does.

Because the Word of God cannot be chained.

"For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." — Psalm 119:89 "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." — Isaiah 40:8 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." — Matthew 24:35 If a theology requires a dictionary from 13th-century Paris to explain a meal from 1st-century Jerusalem — it is not the Gospel." It is a philosophical piracy of the Word of God dressed in the vocabulary of the Gospel.

The meal from 1st-century Jerusalem requires no Aristotle, no Aquinas, no Trent, no Magisterium, and no Latin filter to understand.

It requires only what Anne Askew had: the Word, the Spirit, and a heart willing to believe what is written.

In Part Eight we hear what Christ was actually saying at that table — and what it means to receive what He freely offers. Figure 9: The Three-Filter Lexical Piracy Chart
 Greek NT Meaning Filter: Latin + Filter: Magisterial Net Movement Original Scholastic Lock *metanoēō* "Change of mind" — *paenitentiam agite* Entire sacrament of Direct access → (Acts 20:21) inward reorientation "Perform penance" Penance: confession → institutional toward God absolution → penance gatekeeper *mystērion* Gospel reality sacramentum Seven sacraments Proclamation → (Eph. 1:9) disclosed in Christ "Sacred institutional operating *ex opere* procedure — received by faith rite" *operato* — mechanically *charis* Imputed favour — *gratia infusa* Infused Mortal sin destroys Settled peace → (Rom. 5:1) credited by faith, substance, fluctuates grace; restored only perpetual anxiety permanent through priest in confession *dikaioō* Forensic acquittal — Process of becoming Ongoing justification Declared (Rom. 8:1) declared righteous, inwardly righteous requiring sacramental righteous → once, complete through infused grace maintenance (Trent, aspiring to Sess. 6) become *ephapax* "Once for all" — Re-presented as "one Propitiatory Mass Finished cross → (Heb. 10:10) unrepeatably, sacrifice made required; Trent Canon 3 perpetual altar permanent finality present" at each Mass anathematizes denial Figure 9 — Five Greek New Testament terms passed through the three-filter process: Latin Vulgate → scholastic philosophy → magisterial decree.

Figure 9: The Three-Filter Lexical Piracy Chart

| Greek Original | NT Meaning | Filter: Latin + Scholastic | Filter: Magisterial Lock | Net Movement |
|---------------------------------|---|---|--|--|
| metanoēō (Acts 20:21) | "Change of mind" — inward reorientation toward God | <i>paenitentiam agite</i> "Perform penance" | Entire sacrament of Penance: confession → absolution → penance | Direct access → institutional gatekeeper |
| mystērion (Eph. 1:9) | Gospel reality disclosed in Christ — received by faith | <i>sacramentum</i> "Sacred institutional rite" | Seven sacraments operating <i>ex opere operato</i> — mechanically | Proclamation → procedure |
| charis (Rom. 5:1) | Imputed favour — credited by faith, permanent | <i>gratia infusa</i> Infused substance, fluctuates | Mortal sin destroys grace; restored only through priest in confession | Settled peace → perpetual anxiety |
| dikaioō (Rom. 8:1) | Forensic acquittal — declared righteous, once, complete | Process of <i>becoming</i> inwardly righteous through infused grace | Ongoing justification requiring sacramental maintenance (Trent, Sess. 6) | Declared righteous → aspiring to become |
| ephapax (Heb. 10:10) | "Once for all" — unrepeatable, permanent finality | Re-presented as "one sacrifice made present" at each Mass | Propitiatory Mass required; Trent Canon 3 anathematizes denial | Finished cross → perpetual altar |

Figure 9 — Five Greek New Testament terms passed through the three-filter process: Latin Vulgate → scholastic philosophy → magisterial decree. Each step moves from Christ's finished work toward institutional mediation.

Figure 10: The Water-to-Wine Principle

| Event | Change Claimed | Perceptible Evidence | Standard Applied |
|--|--|--|--|
| Water → wine (John 2:9–10) | Substance of water becomes wine | Master of feast tastes — declares it superior wine ✓ | Perceptible, immediately verifiable |
| Lazarus raised (John 11:44) | Dead man becomes living | Walks out, grave clothes removed, eats ✓ | Community witnesses — externally confirmed |
| Blind man healed (John 9:7) | Blind eyes become seeing | Identifies faces; neighbours recognise him ✓ | Before/after comparison — externally verifiable |
| Leper cleansed (Matt. 8:3) | Diseased skin becomes whole | Priest examines — certifies clean skin ✓ | Official confirmation of perceptible change |
| Paralytic healed (Mark 2:12) | Lame legs become functional | Rises, carries mat, walks before crowd ✓ | "That ye may know" — Jesus invites investigation |
| TRANSUBSTANTIATION (Trent, CCC 1376) | Substance of bread → body of Christ | Looks, smells, tastes, tests as bread — nothing changes ✗ | Requires Aristotelian philosophy to shield from the very standard that every biblical miracle openly met. |

Figure 10 — Every genuine biblical miracle produces perceptible evidence. Transubstantiation fails this standard. The "miracle" is by definition imperceptible and requires a philosophical framework to protect it from investigation.

PART EIGHT

The Gospel of Freedom

What the Lord's Supper Actually Is

The Turn From Critique to Proclamation The first seven parts of this examination have been largely diagnostic.

They have identified, examined, and refuted the specific errors of Rome's doctrine of transubstantiation — from its assault on the finished work of Christ, to its misrepresentation of His glorified body, to its unauthorized philosophical framework, to its violation of divine prohibitions, to its displacement of Scripture with tradition, to the anxiety its system produces in the souls it claims to nourish.

That diagnostic work was necessary. Error must be named. Deviation must be documented.

The people of God must be shown precisely where the path departed from the Word.

But diagnosis is not the destination.

The destination is the truth — stated positively, proclaimed clearly, and offered freely to every soul that has been burdened by a system that promised grace and delivered anxiety, promised Christ and delivered a mechanism, promised the Gospel and delivered a performance. Part Eight is that proclamation.

We will state what the Lord's Supper actually is according to Scripture.

We will state what Christ actually offers and how He actually offers it.

We will state what the believer actually receives and how they actually receive it. And we will close with the direct, unmediated, unconditional invitation of Christ Himself — the invitation that needs no priestly mediation, no sacramental qualification, no philosophical explanation, and no tradition to validate it.

It needs only to be heard, believed, and received.

A. The Finished Work — The Foundation of Everything

Every positive statement about the Lord's Supper rests on one prior reality: the work of Christ is finished. This is not a Protestant slogan.

It is the declaration of the Son of God from the cross, recorded by an eyewitness, preserved by the Holy Spirit in the Word of God, and confirmed by the entire testimony of Hebrews, Romans, Galatians, and every other New Testament letter that addresses the atonement. John 19:30:

"It is finished." Tetelestai. Paid in full. Completed. Accomplished." The account is closed. Nothing remains to be done, offered, represented, or applied through any subsequent priestly act. The sacrifice was made once. The debt was paid once."

The atonement was accomplished once. The veil was torn once. The way was opened once. Hebrews 10:12–14:

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by

one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Perfected for ever. By one offering." Not perfected progressively through thousands of daily Masses across the centuries."

Not perfected contingently upon regular sacramental participation. Perfected — completely, finally, irrevocably — for ever — by the one offering already made, never to be repeated, never to be supplemented, never to be re-presented.

This is the ground on which the Lord's Supper stands. It is not a sacrifice.

It is the proclamation of a sacrifice already made. It is not an offering.

It is the memorial of an offering already accepted.

It is not a mechanism by which grace is obtained.

It is a covenant sign through which the grace already obtained is announced, proclaimed, and received by faith.

The Lord's Supper is what it is because the work of Christ is what it is: finished, sufficient, glorious, and free.

B. What the Lord's Supper Actually Is — Five Positive Declarations First

Declaration: The Lord's Supper Is a Memorial of a Completed Redemptive Act Luke 22:19:

"This do in remembrance of me." 1 Corinthians 11:24–25:" "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." The command is anamnesis — remembrance. As established in Part Two, this is not passive nostalgia." It is active, covenantal, participatory engagement with the meaning and benefits of a completed redemptive event. Israel's Passover was anamnesis — a present covenant community engaging with the defining act of their redemption, confessing it as their own, living under the identity it established."

The Lord's Supper is the New Covenant anamnesis. The covenant community gathers. They take bread and wine.

They remember — actively, corporately, confessionally — the defining act of their redemption: the body broken, the blood shed, the sin atoned, the veil torn, the way opened, the work finished. And the remembrance is directed not toward the elements but through the elements toward the Lord Himself — the risen, glorified, enthroned Christ who accomplished the work being remembered.

The bread and wine do not contain Him. They point to Him.

The community does not consume Him.

They confess Him — His death, His resurrection, His present intercession, His coming return. This is the memorial. It is not bare or empty.

It is rich with covenant meaning, charged with redemptive significance, and animated by the genuine presence of the living Lord with His gathered people through the Holy Spirit.

But it is a memorial — pointing backward to the cross and forward to the return, in the interval of proclamation between the two.

Second Declaration: The Lord's Supper Is a Proclamation of the Lord's Death 1 Corinthians 11:26:

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." The act of the Supper is proclamation — katangellein — to announce, declare,

proclaim publicly." Every time the Lord's Supper is observed, the covenant community is preaching."

Not with words alone but with the visible, tangible, enacted language of bread broken and cup poured — a visible sermon declaring that Christ died, that His death was atoning, that the benefits of that death are received by faith, and that the community gathered at the table is the community of those who have received them.

The Supper is therefore not primarily something done to the elements.

It is something declared to the world and to one another.

It is the church's ongoing public testimony that a specific historical event — the death of Jesus Christ at Calvary — is the defining reality of their existence, the ground of their hope, and the source of their life. And this proclamation has a temporal boundary:

"till he come." The Supper is for the interval between the first coming and the second." It is the covenant community's proclamation during the time of waiting — the time between the finished work and the final consummation."

When He comes, the sign ceases because the reality has arrived. Signs belong to pilgrims.

The Lord's Supper is the sign of a pilgrim people on their way to a country not yet reached — proclaiming as they travel the name of the One who is bringing them home.

Third Declaration: The Lord's Supper Is a Covenant Meal of Fellowship and Union 1 Corinthians 10:16–17:

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?" The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." The Greek word is koinonia — communion, fellowship, participation, sharing."

It is one of the richest words in the New Testament vocabulary.

It describes the intimate, mutual, participatory relationship between persons who share a common life — the relationship between the persons of the Trinity (1 John 1:3), between believers and God (1 Corinthians 1:9), between believers and one another (Acts 2:42), and between believers and the sufferings and resurrection of Christ (Philippians 3:10). Koinonia is not physical consumption.

It is spiritual participation — genuine, real, substantial fellowship with Christ and with one another in the breaking of bread.

When the covenant community gathers at the Lord's Table, they enter into koinonia with the body and blood of Christ — with the atoning work He accomplished, with the risen Lord who accomplished it, and with one another as members of the one body whose life is in Him.

This is genuine spiritual communion. It is not bare symbolism.

It is not a merely intellectual exercise of remembering a past event.

It is real participation in the living Christ — received by faith, mediated by the Holy Spirit, communicated through the covenant signs of bread and wine.

The Reformers were careful on this point and so must we be: to reject transubstantiation is not to empty the Supper of Christ's genuine presence.

It is to locate that presence correctly — in the Spirit, received by faith — rather than incorrectly in a physical substance trapped in bread. Paul's next statement deepens this:

“For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.” The horizontal dimension of the Supper is not secondary.” The covenant community that shares the bread declares its unity as one body.”

This was precisely the point the Corinthians were violating — treating the Supper as a private meal while ignoring the body of Christ gathered around them. To discern the Lord's body rightly (1 Corinthians 11:29) is to recognize both Christ in whose name they gather and the community of His people with whom they gather.

Fourth Declaration: The Lord's Supper Is an Eschatological Anticipation Matthew 26:29:

“But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.” Revelation 19:9:” “And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.” The Lord's Supper points forward as well as backward.” Every time the covenant community gathers at the table, they are not only remembering the cross — they are anticipating the consummation. The marriage supper of the Lamb.”

The final, perfect, unmediated fellowship of the redeemed with their Redeemer in the kingdom of God.

The bread and wine of the Lord's Supper are the foretaste and pledge of that great final supper.

They are the covenant community saying: we are not yet home.

We eat and drink here as pilgrims and strangers.

But the One whose death we proclaim has promised to drink it new with us in His Father's kingdom. And that promise is as certain as His resurrection — as certain as the empty tomb, as certain as the ascension, as certain as His present intercession at the right hand of the Father.

This eschatological dimension transforms the Lord's Supper from a backward-looking memorial into a forwardlooking hope.

The table is the place where the church stands between the ages — the age of the finished work and the age of the final consummation — and proclaims with both backward confession and forward anticipation: He died. He rose. He reigns. He is coming.

“Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” (Revelation 22:20) Fifth Declaration: The Lord's Supper Is an Ordinance of Self-Examination and Covenant Renewal 1 Corinthians 11:28:” “But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” The Lord's Supper is an ordinance — a commanded practice of the church — that calls each believer to personal, inward, honest examination before God.”

Not examination by a priest.” Not certification by an institution. Personal examination — each believer searching their own heart, examining their own faith, assessing their own relationship to what the Supper proclaims.

This examination is not designed to produce anxiety.

It is designed to produce genuineness.

The question the believer asks is not "have I met all the sacramental requirements?" but "do I truly believe what this table declares? Do I genuinely trust in the finished work of Christ? Do I come with a repentant and believing heart — not as one who has earned the right to be here, but as one who has

been given the right by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone?" And the answer, for the genuine believer, is yes.

Not a perfect yes — not the yes of one who has achieved adequate moral performance — but the yes of one who knows they are a sinner, knows Christ died for sinners, knows the table is for those who need a Savior, and comes on that ground alone. This is covenant renewal.

The believer comes to the table and confesses again: I am not my own. I was bought with a price. I belong to Christ. His death is my death to sin.

His resurrection is my resurrection to life. His body broken is my healing.

His blood shed is my forgiveness. I proclaim this. I believe this. I am this — not by my own achievement but by His grace received through faith. That is the Lord's Supper.

That is what happens at a biblical table.

C. The Reformed Understanding — Stated Positively and Precisely The Reformed and

Baptist understanding of the Lord's Supper has often been caricatured — by Rome and by some Protestants — as "bare memorialism": a purely intellectual exercise of remembering a past event with no genuine spiritual reality in the act itself. This caricature must be rejected.

The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 29, Section 7 states the positive Reformed position with precision that has rarely been surpassed:

"Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements, in this sacrament, do then also, inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally but spiritually, receive, and feed upon, Christ crucified, and all benefits of His death: the body and blood of Christ being then, not corporally or carnally, in, with, or under the bread and wine; yet, as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses." Every word of this carefully crafted statement is significant. "Really and indeed" — not merely symbolically or intellectually. *The reception is real.*"

The feeding is genuine." Christ crucified is truly received.

"Yet not carnally and corporally but spiritually" — the reality of the reception does not depend on a physical transformation of the elements." *It is mediated by the Holy Spirit to faith.*"

"The body and blood of Christ being then, not corporally or carnally, in, with, or under the bread and wine" — rejecting both transubstantiation (Rome) and consubstantiation (Luther), maintaining that Christ's glorified body is in heaven, not in the elements." *"Yet as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses" — the spiritual presence is as genuinely real as the physical elements are to the senses.*" *The analogy is precise: just as bread and wine are genuinely, substantially, undeniably present to the physical senses of those at the table — so Christ is genuinely, substantially, undeniably present to the faith of believers in the same ordinance. This is not bare memorialism.*"

This is genuine spiritual communion with the living Christ — real, substantial, nourishing, and lifegiving — received through faith, mediated by the Spirit, communicated through the covenant signs of bread and wine. What it is not is physical.

What it does not require is a priest, a philosophical framework, a metaphysical transformation, or any mechanism Scripture does not describe.

D. The Elements as Visible Words — Signs and Seals of the Covenant

The bread and wine of the Lord's Supper function as what the Reformers called visible words — the Gospel made tangible, the covenant promise made concrete, the spiritual reality communicated through physical signs that engage the whole person: sight, touch, taste, smell.

Calvin described the sacraments as seals — not the kind that create new reality but the kind that confirm and ratify an existing reality. As a wax seal on a letter does not create the letter's content but confirms and guarantees it, so the elements of the Supper confirm and guarantee to the believer the covenant promises of the Gospel: Christ's body was broken for you.

The bread broken in your hands declares it. Christ's blood was shed for you.

The cup poured out before you declares it. You are united to Him.

The eating and drinking enact that union symbolically and confirm it spiritually. You belong to His body.

The shared table with the covenant community declares it. Romans 4:11 describes circumcision as "a seal of the righteousness of the faith." The sign sealed to Abraham what faith had already received. Similarly the Lord's Supper seals to believers what faith has already received — the righteousness of Christ, the forgiveness of sins, the union with His body, the hope of resurrection.

The elements do not create the reality.

They confirm, declare, and communicate it to faith. And through that confirmation and communication, through the Spirit's work in the act of covenant remembrance, the believer is genuinely nourished — not physically, through the consumption of Christ's literal flesh, but spiritually, through the Spirit's application of Christ's benefits to the believing heart. This is sufficient. This is glorious.

This is what Christ instituted. And it requires nothing Rome has added — no transubstantiation, no priestly consecration, no auricular confession, no sacramental mechanism, no Aristotelian metaphysics. Bread and wine. A covenant community. The Word proclaimed.

The Spirit present. Faith receiving. Christ honored. The death declared. The return anticipated. That is enough. That has always been enough. Because Christ is enough.

E. The Direct Invitation — No Mediation Required

We close the body of this examination where Christ Himself always closes His invitations — with the direct, unconditional, unmediated call to every burdened soul to come. Not to a system. Not to a priest. Not to a sacrament. Not to an institution. Not to a tradition. Not to a philosophical framework.

Not to a set of requirements that must be met before access is granted. To Him. Matthew 11:28–30:

*"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." The invitation is to all.
Not to all who have adequately confessed."*

Not to all who are in a state of grace.

Not to all who have received valid absolution.

All — without qualification, without condition, without prerequisite. All who labour. All who are heavy laden.

All who are weary of performing and striving and examining and confessing and never being certain it is enough. Come unto me. Not come unto the Church. Not come through the priest.

Not come via the sacraments. Unto me.

The Lord Himself. Directly. Personally.

Without any human institution standing between the sinner and the Savior. And I will give you rest.

Not I will assess your qualifications and grant conditional access.

Not I will provide rest if your contrition was sufficient. I will give you rest. Actively, freely, unconditionally given — by the One who alone has the authority and the power and the finished work to give it. John 6:37:

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” In no wise cast out.” The Greek is emphatic — ou me ekbalō exō — a double negative that cannot be softened.”

Under no circumstances. For no reason. By no deficiency of performance or qualification. Those who come are not cast out.

The promise is unconditional and absolute — grounded not in the quality of the coming but in the character and commitment of the One who receives. John 7:37:

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.” He stood and cried — the language of urgent, public, passionate proclamation. On the greatest day of the feast, before the largest crowd, Jesus cried out the simplest and most radical invitation in the history of religion: if any man thirst — come to me — drink. No prior conditions.”

No institutional certification.” No priestly mediation. Thirst and come.

That is the only requirement. Revelation 22:17:

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” The last invitation of Scripture.”

The Spirit says come.” The bride — the church — says come. Let the hearer say come. Let the thirsty come. Whosoever will — let him take the water of life freely. Freely. Without cost. Without merit. Without mechanism. Without institution. Without philosophical framework.

Without priestly mediation. Freely — the Greek dorean meaning as a gift, gratis, without payment, without qualification. This is the Gospel.

This is what the Lord's Supper declares every time the covenant community gathers, breaks bread, and shares the cup.

This is what Rome has obscured with its system — the direct, unconditional, freely offered invitation of the risen Christ to every thirsty soul.

F. The Lord's Supper Rightly Understood — A Final Summary The Lord's

Supper, rightly understood according to Scripture, is: A memorial of a finished work — not a repetition of it. A proclamation of the Lord's death — not a re-presentation of His sacrifice. A covenant meal of genuine spiritual communion — not a physical consumption of literal flesh and blood. An eschatological anticipation of the marriage supper of the Lamb — not an ongoing propitiatory offering. An ordinance of self-examination and covenant renewal — not a sacramental mechanism requiring priestly certification. A visible Word confirming and sealing the covenant promises of the Gospel — not a transformation of elements requiring Aristotelian metaphysics to explain. An act of the whole covenant community in their royal priesthood — not the exclusive act of an ordained sacrificial priesthood. And at its center — always, only, finally — is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Not present in the bread. Not produced by the priest.

Not contained in the cup. Present with His people through the Holy Spirit. Present as the living, risen, glorified, interceding, returning Lord who sits at the right hand of the Father and who gathers His people at His table to remember His death, receive His grace, confess His name, and wait for His coming. This is enough. It has always been enough. Because He is enough.

Figure 11: Five Declarations — What the Lord's Supper Is

| Declaration | What Scripture Says It Is | What It Rules Out |
|--|--|---|
| Memorial (Luke 22:19) | <i>Anamnesis</i> — active, covenantal remembrance of a completed redemptive act. The community gathers and confesses the defining event of its existence as its own. | NOT a re-presentation of the sacrifice. The memorial presupposes the act is past and finished — that is why it can be remembered. |
| Proclamation (1 Cor. 11:26) | <i>Katangellein</i> — to announce publicly. Every observance is a visible sermon: Christ died, His death was atoning, we live under its benefit by faith. Temporal boundary: "till he come." | NOT an ongoing sacrifice. Proclamation announces what is done — not what is being done again. |
| Covenant Meal (1 Cor. 10:16) | <i>Koinōnia</i> — genuine spiritual communion and fellowship with Christ and with one another. Real, substantial participation — mediated by the Spirit, received by faith. | NOT physical consumption of a transformed substance. The spiritual presence is as genuinely real as the physical elements are to the senses. |
| Eschatological Anticipation (Matt. 26:29) | Points forward to the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9). The community stands between the ages — between the first coming and the second. Pilgrim food for pilgrims on the way. | "Till he come" — signs belong to the interval between advents. When the reality arrives in full, the sign ceases. |
| Covenant Renewal (1 Cor. 11:28) | Self-examination — personal, direct, before God alone. Not "have I met sacramental requirements?" but "do I truly believe what this table declares? Am I coming by faith alone in Christ alone?" | No priest certifies readiness. No institution grants access. The believer comes on the ground of faith in Christ's finished work — directly, freely, without mediation. |

Figure 11 — Five biblical declarations about the Lord's Supper stated positively, with their implications for Rome's doctrine (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:26; Matt. 26:29).

CONCLUSION

The Verdict of Scripture — and the Invitation That Remains

This examination has been thorough by necessity.

The doctrine of transubstantiation is not a minor theological curiosity.

It is a comprehensive system — architecturally constructed, institutionally enforced, and pastorally consequential — that touches every dimension of how a believer understands salvation, worship, access to God, and the nature of the Gospel itself.

We have not argued against it casually.

We have examined it from every angle Scripture provides — and several that Rome's own framework provides.

We have been fair to Rome's strongest arguments.

We have stated Rome's position in Rome's own words before responding to it. We have not attacked individuals.

We have not questioned the sincerity of those who hold these doctrines. Sincerity is real and deserves respect.

But sincerity does not validate doctrine.

The Bereans were commended not for their sincerity but for their willingness to test what they heard against Scripture — daily.

We have tested transubstantiation against Scripture. The verdict is not ambiguous.

The Seven Counts of the Indictment Count One: Transubstantiation Assaults the Finished Work of Christ The sacrifice of Christ on Calvary was complete, final, unrepeatable, and permanently effective.

Hebrews establishes this with the word *ephapax* — once for all — repeated across its argument with deliberate theological force.

Christ sat down because the work is finished.

The Mass requires Him to stand again — to be offered, immolated, re-presented — in a propitiatory act that Trent explicitly declares obtains grace.

Any propitiatory offering implies that the original sacrifice was insufficient to fully and finally accomplish what it claimed to accomplish.

The two positions are irreconcilable. Either the work is finished or it is not.

Scripture says it is. Rome's Mass says it is not.

"It is finished." — John 19:30 Count Two: Transubstantiation Misrepresents the Nature of Christ's Presence Christ is not present in the bread and wine."

He never said He was." He said "This is my body" — covenant language, memorial language, the same pattern of physical images for spiritual realities He used consistently throughout His ministry.

He clarified His meaning in John 6:63: the flesh profits nothing, the words are spirit and life.

Matthew 26:29 records Him calling the cup fruit of the vine after the alleged consecration.

Paul calls the elements bread and cup in every post-resurrection reference.

The Spirit is silent about transubstantiation in every apostolic letter.

The early church practiced a memorial meal called the breaking of bread — with no priestly consecration, no transubstantiation, no literal consumption of flesh and blood.

Christ is genuinely present with His people — through the Holy Spirit, received by faith, at every gathering in His name.

His body is in heaven, seated at the right hand of the Father, making intercession.

His table is on earth — bread and wine, covenant signs, pointing to Him.

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.” — John 6:63 Count Three: Transubstantiation Rests on an Unauthorized Philosophical Framework Rome imported Aristotelian metaphysics — substance, accidents, hylomorphic ontology — from a pagan Greek philosopher who died three centuries before Christ, through a medieval scholastic process that drew on Islamic philosophical transmission, and imposed this framework on the words of Christ as the necessary interpretive lens for understanding the Supper. Scripture authorized none of this.”

The apostles knew nothing of it.” The early church operated without it for centuries.

The doctrine was formally defined twelve centuries after the Last Supper. Furthermore, the framework contradicts itself: it requires accidents without substance (violating Aristotle's own foundational principle), substance without location (destroying the concept of body), and the ontological inversion of the entire hierarchy it claims to use.

Rome built without authorization and what it built does not stand.

“Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition.” — Mark 7:13 Count Four: Transubstantiation Violates the Permanent Incorruption of Christ's Glorified Body Scripture declares with categorical, permanent, ontological force that Christ's glorified body cannot see corruption, cannot die again, and has permanently left the domain of decay and death. Acts 13:37. Romans 6:9. 1 Corinthians 15:42–44.” These are not qualified statements.”

They are absolute declarations about the irreversible nature of Christ's resurrection body. Transubstantiation requires Christ's body to arrive in bread, persist while bread decays, and depart when bread is digested — a process Scripture categorically forecloses. The host molds. The wine ferments.

The elements are digested by stomach acid. Rome's doctrine places the body of the incorruptible, enthroned, glorified Son of God in organic matter subject to these processes. Scripture's declaration stands against this absolutely.

“He, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.” — Acts 13:37 Count Five: Transubstantiation Violates God's Universal Prohibition Against Consuming Blood From the Noahic Covenant to the Mosaic Law to the Apostolic Decree of Acts 15 — across every era of redemptive history, under every covenant, for every people — God prohibited the consumption of blood.” He grounded the prohibition in a permanent theological principle: blood carries life, and life belongs to God.”

He reaffirmed the prohibition through the Holy Spirit for the New Covenant Gentile church with no Eucharistic exception.

Rome teaches that communicants literally drink the blood of Christ.

This is not a matter of interpretation.

It is Rome's explicit, anathema-protected, irreformable doctrine. And it stands in direct, textual, irreconcilable conflict with the Holy Spirit's own words in Acts 15:29.

Every escape route Rome offers fails from Scripture.

The glorified blood distinction has no scriptural basis.

The ceremonial law argument fails because the prohibition is pre-Mosaic and was reaffirmed by the Holy Spirit in the New Covenant era.

The John 6 argument fails because Jesus' own interpretive conclusion in verse 63 establishes the spiritual nature of the command. God's Word on blood is consistent from Genesis to Acts: it is not to be consumed.

Rome requires it to be consumed at every Mass.

"That ye abstain... from blood." — Acts 15:29 Count Six: Transubstantiation Requires the Violation of the Second Commandment The Second Commandment prohibits making images of God and bowing to them." God revealed no visible form at Sinai deliberately — so that no image would be made."

Rome requires a crucifix at every Mass, directs latria — the highest worship due to God alone — toward the consecrated host displayed in a monstrance, and has absorbed the Second Commandment into the First in its catechetical numbering, effectively removing a standalone explicit prohibition from the consciousness of Catholic worshippers.

The crucifix freezes Christ in the moment of curse — the state God commanded must not be prolonged (Deuteronomy 21:23).

The monstrance directs worship toward a visible object — which Matthew 4:10 forbids.

The renumbering of the commandments removes the explicit standalone prohibition that would otherwise confront these practices directly.

"Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." — Exodus 20:5 Count Seven: Transubstantiation Displaces Scripture With Unauthorized Tradition and Produces Bondage Instead of Liberty Rome's defense of transubstantiation ultimately rests not on Scripture but on the claim that Sacred Tradition stands alongside Scripture as an equal and co-authoritative source of divine revelation." This claim contradicts Scripture's own declaration of its sufficiency (2 Timothy 3:16–17), Christ's condemnation of traditions that make the Word of God of none effect (Mark 7:13), and the Berean principle of testing all teaching against Scripture (Acts 17:11)."

The pastoral fruit of the system is bondage — the perpetual cycle of mortal sin, confession, penance, uncertain absolution, anxious reception, and inevitable return to the beginning.

The Gospel produces assurance, liberty, peace, and the direct access of adopted children to their Father. Rome's system produces the spirit of bondage to fear.

Scripture offers the Spirit of adoption crying Abba, Father.

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” — Galatians 5:1 The Inescapable Question Rome Cannot Answer Seven counts. Seven areas where Scripture's testimony is clear and Rome's doctrine contradicts it.” Any one of them is sufficient. Together they are overwhelming.”

But there is one question — simple, direct, unanswerable — that brings the entire matter to its sharpest point.

It is the question we return to from Part Four, now placed at the conclusion where it belongs.

If the bread and wine truly become the physical body and blood of Christ at every Mass celebrated worldwide — where is this body and blood coming from? Not a philosophical question.

Not a metaphysical puzzle. A plain question about what Scripture plainly states.

Scripture answers it without ambiguity: Hebrews 10:12:

“But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.” Colossians 3:1:” “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” Acts 7:55–56:” “But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.” Hebrews 1:3:” “When he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” 1 Peter 3:22:” “Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.” Christ is in heaven.” His body — one body, glorified, incorruptible, permanently beyond the domain of corruption and death — is at the right hand of the Father. He is not on ten thousand altars.”

He is not being divided across millions of hosts.

He is not being produced, consumed, digested, and destroyed thousands of times daily. He is seated. His work is finished. He is making intercession.

He is waiting until His enemies are made His footstool.

He is coming again. Transubstantiation requires His body to be simultaneously in heaven — seated, glorified, interceding — and on thousands of altars worldwide — produced, offered, consumed, digested.

These are not two theological perspectives to be held in tension.

They are irreconcilable locations for one body. A body cannot be both enthroned in heaven and digested in a communicant's stomach.

Not because God lacks power — but because Scripture does not say He does this, Christ never taught He would do this, and the glorified body Scripture describes cannot coherently be in both places simultaneously in any sense the word "body" retains meaning. Rome's answer — divine omnipotence — is not an answer.

It is an appeal to power to cover an irreconcilable contradiction. God's omnipotence is real.

But God does not use His omnipotence to contradict His own Word — and His Word places His Son's body in heaven, not in bread. The question stands unanswered. It will remain unanswered.

Because the answer Scripture gives is not the answer transubstantiation requires.

The Resolution That Scripture Provides The question dissolves — entirely, cleanly, without remainder — when we understand Christ's presence as Scripture actually describes it.

His physical body is in heaven. Seated. Glorified. Incorruptible. Interceding. Returning.

His spiritual presence is with His church. Everywhere His people gather in His name.

Through the Holy Spirit whom He sent. Received by faith. Communicated through the Word and the covenant ordinances. Real, genuine, nourishing, and life-giving — not because the bread has become His flesh, but because the Spirit makes Him present to faith. Matthew 18:20:

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” John 14:23: “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” Ephesians 3:17: “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.” He is present. Genuinely, really, powerfully present — through the Spirit, by faith, in the gathering of His people around His Word and His table.” The Lord’s Supper is a means through which that presence is communicated, that fellowship is deepened, that covenant is renewed, and that finished work is proclaimed. No priest is needed to produce it.”

No philosophical mechanism is required to explain it. No tradition supplements it. No sacramental system mediates it.

The Spirit of the living God brings the risen Christ to His people at His table — and they feed on Him by faith, receive His benefits by trust, and go forth to proclaim His death until He comes. This is real. This is enough. This is what was always meant.

The Memory of Anne Askew We began this examination with the memory of Anne Askew — racked in the Tower of London, carried in a chair to Smithfield, burned alive for refusing to submit her conscience to the doctrine of transubstantiation. She was twenty-five years old. She had no theological library. No academic credentials. No institutional platform.

She had the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and the courage that the Word and the Spirit produce in a soul that has truly tasted the liberty of the Gospel.

When her examiners pressed her about the Mass and the nature of the Supper, she answered from Scripture.

When they demanded she recant, she refused — not from stubbornness but from conviction. She knew what Christ had done.

She knew that His sacrifice was finished.

She knew that His presence was spiritual.

She knew that no priest could produce Him in a piece of bread.

She knew because she had read it for herself — five lines in the Bible, as she said, were worth more to her than five masses in the temple. They broke her body on the rack.

They could not break her testimony.

When the flames rose at Smithfield she was beyond the power of her torturers — held not by her own strength but by the God whose Word she had refused to surrender.

Her testimony was the testimony of this entire examination: Christ’s sacrifice is finished. His presence is spiritual.

His table is open to all who come by faith. His Word is sufficient. His Gospel is free. She died for that.

We write it. May those who read it receive it — not as an academic argument but as the living truth that sets souls free from every system that obscures the finished work of the crucified, risen, glorified, and returning Lord Jesus Christ.

The Final Word — The Invitation That Needs Nothing Added We close where Scripture closes its great invitations — with the voice of the Lord Himself, speaking directly to every soul that has read this far. Not to a system. Not to an institution. Not to a sacrament. Not to a tradition. Not to a priest. To you. Matthew 11:28–30:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” John 6:35: “And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” John 6:37: “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” Revelation 22:17: “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Come to Christ. Trust in His finished work. Feed on Him by faith. Rest in His promises. Walk in the liberty of the Gospel. Approach the throne of grace with boldness and full assurance — because the way is open, the veil is torn, the High Priest is enthroned, and the invitation stands without condition, without limitation, and without expiration.” The Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation obscures this truth beneath layers of unauthorized philosophy, unverifiable tradition, institutional mediation, and sacramental anxiety.”

The Word of God restores it — simply, plainly, finally, and freely.

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” — Isaiah 8:20 The sacrifice is finished. The presence is spiritual. The priesthood is Christ's alone. The body is in heaven.”

The table is open. The invitation stands. Come.

Each stands independently; together they form a decisive cumulative case.

Figure 12: The Eight Counts Against Transubstantiation

| # | Count | Rome's Position | Scripture's Verdict |
|---|--------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 | Finished Work Assaulted | Mass claims propitiatory re-presentation contradicting <i>ephapax</i> (Heb. 10:10) | <i>Tetelestai</i> (John 19:30) — paid in full; Christ sat down (Heb. 10:12) |
| 2 | Presence Misrepresented | Physical, corporeal presence in bread and wine | John 6:63 — "the flesh profiteth nothing"; eating = coming, drinking = believing (John 6:35) |
| 3 | Unauthorized Philosophy | Aristotelian substance/accidents imported from pagan philosophy | No biblical text requires these categories; the framework shields the claim from investigation |
| 4 | Glorified Body Violated | Incorruptible body broken, consumed, digested in millions of hosts | 1 Cor. 15:42–44 — raised incorruptible; Rom. 6:9 — dieth no more; Heb. 10:12 — seated in heaven |

| # | Count | Rome's Position | Scripture's Verdict |
|---|------------------------------------|--|--|
| 5 | Blood Prohibition Violated | Requires drinking Christ's blood | Gen. 9:4; Lev. 17:10; Acts 15:28–29 — universal, cross-covenant, Holy Spirit ratified for NT |
| 6 | Second Commandment Violated | Eucharistic adoration and crucifix veneration require bowing before physical objects | Exod. 20:4–5 — commandment renumbered by Rome to remove it from catechetical count |
| 7 | Scripture Displaced | Magisterium alone interprets Scripture — self-referential closed circle | Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 3:16–17 — Scripture sufficient, open to all, self-interpreting |
| 8 | Vocabulary Pirated | Grace, sacrifice, priest, repentance, justification, mystery redefined through three filters | Every Greek NT term restored to its original meaning refutes transubstantiation |

Figure 12 — Eight cumulative scriptural arguments against transubstantiation. Each stands independently; together they form a decisive cumulative case.

APPENDIX A

Quick Reference Summary

Biblical Teaching vs. Roman Catholic Doctrine – Twelve-Point Comparison

| Topic | Biblical Teaching | Roman Catholic Doctrine |
|--|--|---|
| Christ's sacrifice | One unrepeatable atonement — <i>ephapax</i> (Heb. 10:10); <i>tetelestai</i> (John 19:30). Christ sat down — work complete. | "Immolated in an unbloody manner" at every Mass — propitiatory (Trent, Sess. 22, Ch. 2; Canon 3) |
| Christ's presence in the Supper | Spiritual — received by faith through the Holy Spirit (John 6:63; 1 Cor. 10:16) | Corporeal — "truly, really, and substantially" present (CCC 1374, 1376) |
| Nature of the Lord's Supper | Memorial, proclamation, covenant meal, eschatological anticipation (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24–26) | Sacrifice of the Mass — propitiatory; requires valid consecration by ordained priest (Trent, Sess. 22) |
| The glorified body | Incarnate, enthroned in heaven (Acts 3:21; 1 Cor. 15:42–44; Rom. 6:9) | "Contained whole and entire under each of the species and each part thereof" (CCC 1377) |
| The priesthood | Christ alone the eternal High Priest (Heb. 7:24); every believer a royal priest (1 Pet. 2:9) | Ordained <i>sacerdos in persona Christi</i> — sole authority to consecrate (CCC 1548, 1563) |
| Confession and access | Confess directly to God (1 John 1:9); self-examination before the Supper (1 Cor. 11:28) | Mandatory auricular confession to priest required before communion (CCC 1457) |
| Blood prohibition | Universal — Noahic (Gen. 9:4), Mosaic (Lev. 17:10), maintained in NT (Acts 15:28–29) | Drinking Christ's blood commanded; Rome claims the prohibition does not apply to the Eucharist |
| Second Commandment | "Thou shalt not make... any graven image... nor bow down thyself to them" (Exod. 20:4–5) | Eucharistic adoration (<i>latria</i>) offered to consecrated host. Commandment renumbered to remove it as a standalone prohibition. |
| Authority of Scripture | Sufficient — "thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16–17); Berean standard (Acts 17:11) | Magisterium alone interprets Scripture; Sacred Tradition co-equal authority (CCC 80, 82, 100) |
| Justification | Forensic verdict — declared righteous by faith alone, once, permanently (Rom. 3:28; 5:1; 8:1) | Ongoing process — becoming inwardly righteous through infused grace + sacraments (Trent, Sess. 6) |
| Repentance | <i>Metanoēō</i> — inward change of mind toward God, received by faith (Acts 20:21; Mark 1:15) | <i>Paenitentiam agite</i> — "perform penance"; institutional procedure administered by priest (CCC 1490) |
| Assurance of salvation | Certain — Spirit testifies; "no condemnation" (Rom. 8:1); "that ye may know" (1 John 5:13) | Certainty of salvation condemned as presumption — Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 16 |

Appendix A — Twelve-point reference chart. All Roman Catholic citations from CCC and Council of Trent.

Purpose and Proper Use of This Appendix This appendix exists for a specific and limited purpose: to provide the reader with a concise, side-by-side reference that consolidates the biblical testimony examined throughout this work against the corresponding Roman Catholic doctrinal position.

It is not a substitute for the main examination.

Every claim made in this summary is documented, argued, and established from Scripture in the body of the work.

The reader who encounters a point here and wishes to examine its full scriptural basis should return to the relevant Part of the main text.

This appendix is designed for three uses: First: as a review tool for the reader who has completed the full examination and wishes to hold the threads together in one place.

Second: as a reference for the Christian engaged in conversation with a Catholic friend, family member, or neighbor — not as a debate weapon but as an orientation tool, so that the lines of difference are clearly understood before any conversation begins.

Third: as a prayer guide — each point of difference is ultimately not an intellectual dispute but a spiritual one, and each line of this summary represents a soul at stake on one side or the other of the question. Read it in that spirit.

The Summary Topic: The Nature of Christ's Sacrifice Biblical Position: Christ offered one sacrifice for sins, forever, and sat down — because the work is complete, final, and unrepeatable.

The Greek *ephapax* — once for all — appears repeatedly in Hebrews precisely to establish the absolute, irreversible finality of Calvary. Nothing remains to be offered. Nothing can be added. Nothing needs to be applied through subsequent priestly act. Key Scriptures: Hebrews 10:10–14; Hebrews 9:25–28; John 19:30; Hebrews 7:27. Roman Catholic Position: The Mass is a propitiatory sacrifice in which Christ is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner — representing the one sacrifice of Calvary.

It obtains grace for the living and the dead. Its denial warrants anathema. Source: Council of Trent, Session 22, Canons 1 and 3 (Denzinger 938, 950); CCC 1366–1367.

The Conflict: A sacrifice that must be re-presented implies the original was insufficient to fully accomplish its purpose.

Hebrews 10:14 declares believers are "perfected for ever" by one offering.

These are irreconcilable. **Topic: The Nature of Christ's Presence in the Supper** Biblical Position: Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper is spiritual — genuine, real, and nourishing — received by faith, mediated by the Holy Spirit, communicated through the covenant signs of bread and wine which remain bread and wine. The elements are not transformed. Christ is not contained in them.

He is present with His gathered people through the Spirit. Key Scriptures: John 6:63; Matthew 26:29; 1 Corinthians 11:26; Matthew 18:20; 1 Corinthians 10:16. Roman Catholic Position: At the words of consecration, the entire substance of bread and wine is replaced by the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ — truly, really, and substantially.

The accidents of bread and wine remain but the substance has entirely changed. Source: CCC 1374; Council of Trent, Session 13, Canon 1 (Denzinger 883).

The Conflict: Jesus calls the cup "fruit of the vine" after the alleged consecration (Matthew 26:29).

Paul calls the elements "bread" and "cup" in every post-resurrection reference. Jesus' own interpretive conclusion in John 6:63 establishes the spiritual nature of eating and drinking.

The philosophical framework required to explain the transformation has no scriptural warrant and contradicts itself at its foundational level. Topic: The Nature and Purpose of the Lord's Supper
Biblical Position: The Lord's Supper is a memorial of a finished redemptive act — a covenant ordinance of remembrance, proclamation, fellowship, and eschatological anticipation.

"This do in remembrance of me." "Ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." It is not a sacrifice." It is the proclamation of a sacrifice already made and permanently accepted. Key Scriptures: Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24–26; 1 Corinthians 10:16–17; Matthew 26:29. Roman Catholic Position: The Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life."

It is a propitiatory sacrifice, not merely a commemoration.

Any teaching that reduces it to a bare memorial warrants anathema. Source: CCC 1324; Council of Trent, Session 22, Canon 3 (Denzinger 950).

The Conflict: A memorial proclaims a completed event. A propitiatory sacrifice accomplishes an ongoing one.

These are not two descriptions of the same act.

They are categorically different theological claims with irreconcilable implications for the sufficiency of Calvary. Topic: The Glorified Body of Christ
Biblical Position: Christ's resurrection body is permanently, categorically, and ontologically incorruptible — "no more to return to corruption," "dieth no more," "raised in incorruption." It is in heaven, seated at the right hand of the Father, one body, one location, making intercession.

It cannot decay, cannot be divided, cannot be simultaneously present in thousands of earthly locations. Key Scriptures: Acts 13:37; Romans 6:9; 1 Corinthians 15:42–44; Hebrews 10:12; Colossians 3:1; Acts 7:55–56. Roman Catholic Position: The whole Christ — body, blood, soul, and divinity — is truly, really, and substantially present in every consecrated host, whole and entire in each particle, simultaneously in every Mass worldwide. Source: CCC 1374, 1377.

The Conflict: One glorified, incorruptible body cannot be simultaneously present in thousands of earthly locations, subject to decay and digestion, while also seated in heaven making intercession.

Scripture places Christ's body in heaven.

Rome places it in bread. Scripture's declaration is categorical and permanent. Topic: The Priesthood
Biblical Position: Christ holds the high priesthood eternally, exclusively, and without succession — He ever lives to make intercession, needs no successor because He does not die, and has opened direct access to God for every believer.

Every believer is a royal priest with direct, bold access to the throne of grace.

One mediator: the man Christ Jesus. Key Scriptures: Hebrews 7:23–25; Hebrews 4:14–16; 1 Peter 2:5, 9; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 10:19–22. Roman Catholic Position: Only validly ordained priests can consecrate the Eucharist.

The ordained priesthood is essential to the sacramental economy.

Without the priest there is no Eucharist.

Without the Eucharist there is no spiritual life. Source: CCC 1411; Council of Trent, Session 23, Canon 1 (Denzinger 961).

The Conflict: Scripture declares the mediatorial Levitical priesthood superseded by Christ's eternal high priesthood and replaced by the universal priesthood of all believers.

Rome restores precisely the pattern of priestly mediation that Hebrews declares abolished. Topic: Confession and Access to the Table Biblical Position: Confession is made directly to God who forgives (1 John 1:9). Mutual confession among believers is relational and intercessory, not sacramental (James 5:16).

The requirement before the Lord's Table is self-examination before God — not priestly certification (1 Corinthians 11:28).

No human intermediary stands between the believer and God. Key Scriptures: 1 John 1:9; James 5:16; 1 Corinthians 11:28; Hebrews 4:16. Roman Catholic Position: Anyone conscious of mortal sin must receive priestly absolution through sacramental confession before receiving communion. Reception of the Eucharist in a state of mortal sin is itself a mortal sin. Sacramental confession is necessary for salvation. Source: Canon 916; Council of Trent, Session 14, Canon 6 (Denzinger 916).

The Conflict: Scripture places the believer in direct, personal, unmediated accountability to God.

Rome places a priest between the believer and the table. Paul's instruction in 1 Corinthians 11:28 is self-examination — not priestly examination.

The two systems are structurally opposed. Topic: The Blood Prohibition Biblical Position: God universally and consistently prohibited the consumption of blood across every covenant — Noahic (Genesis 9:4), Mosaic (Leviticus 17:10–14), and New Covenant (Acts 15:28–29).

The prohibition is grounded in the permanent theological principle that blood carries life and life belongs to God.

The Holy Spirit reaffirmed it for Gentile believers with no Eucharistic exception. Key Scriptures: Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 17:10–14; Deuteronomy 12:23; Acts 15:28–29. Roman Catholic Position: Communicants literally drink the blood of Christ in the Eucharist.

This is essential doctrine. Its denial warrants anathema. Source: Council of Trent, Session 13, Canon 1 (Denzinger 883); CCC 1374.

The Conflict: The Holy Spirit in Acts 15 prohibited blood consumption for the New Covenant church with no exception for the Eucharist.

This is the most directly relevant possible context for such an exception to be stated — and it was not stated. Rome's doctrine requires what the Holy Spirit's own decree explicitly forbids. Topic: Images in Worship Biblical Position: The Second Commandment explicitly prohibits making images of God and bowing to or serving them.

God revealed no visible form at Sinai deliberately — so no image would be made. Worship belongs to God alone and must not be directed toward any visible object.

The crucifix permanently displays Christ in the state of curse that God commanded not be prolonged. Key Scriptures: Exodus 20:4–6; Deuteronomy 4:15–16; Matthew 4:10; Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13. Roman Catholic Position: A crucifix is required at every Mass.

The consecrated host displayed in a monstrance is to be worshipped with latria — the highest worship due to God alone. Images of Christ and saints are to be retained and venerated. Source: GIRM 308; Council of Trent, Session 13, Canon 6 (Denzinger 888); Session 25.

The Conflict: The Second Commandment prohibits exactly what Rome requires.

Rome absorbed the Second Commandment into the First in its catechetical numbering — removing the standalone prohibition from the direct confrontation with Catholic worship practice it would otherwise produce. Topic: The Authority of Scripture Biblical Position: Scripture is fully sufficient to equip the man of God for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

God has given all things pertaining to life and godliness through the knowledge of Christ (2 Peter 1:3).

The faith was delivered once to the saints (Jude 3).

All teaching — including apostolic teaching — is to be tested against Scripture (Acts 17:11). Traditions that make the Word of God of none effect are condemned by Christ Himself (Mark 7:13). Key Scriptures: 2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:3; Jude 3; Acts 17:11; Mark 7:7–9, 13. Roman Catholic Position: Sacred Tradition stands alongside Scripture as a co-equal source of divine revelation, to be received and venerated with equal devotion and reverence.

The Church — the Magisterium — is the authoritative interpreter of both. Source: CCC 82; Council of Trent, Session 4 (Denzinger 783).

The Conflict: Scripture claims sufficiency. Rome claims supplement.

These are irreconcilable. Furthermore, Rome's central distinctive doctrines — transubstantiation, papal infallibility, the Immaculate Conception, purgatory, the Assumption of Mary — cannot be demonstrated from the apostolic era and in several cases were formally defined nearly two millennia after the apostles.

The tradition that Rome elevates to equal authority with Scripture cannot demonstrate apostolic origin for the doctrines it is invoked to support. Topic: Assurance of Salvation Biblical Position: Believers can and should know they have eternal life (1 John 5:13). Justification by faith produces peace with God (Romans 5:1).

There is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).

The Spirit of adoption replaces the spirit of bondage to fear (Romans 8:15). Believers approach the throne of grace with boldness and full assurance (Hebrews 10:22; 4:16). Key Scriptures: 1 John 5:13; Romans 5:1; Romans 8:1, 15; Hebrews 10:22; Galatians 5:1. Roman Catholic Position: Assurance of final salvation cannot be claimed with certainty absent a special revelation.

The believer's standing depends on being in a state of sanctifying grace — which can be lost through mortal sin and must be restored through sacramental confession and penance. Source: Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 16 (Denzinger 826); CCC 1861.

The Conflict: John wrote his first epistle for the explicit purpose of producing settled knowledge of eternal life in believers (1 John 5:13). Rome's system cannot produce this knowledge because it grounds assurance in the believer's own performance rather than in the objective, finished, imputed work of Christ.

Scripture offers assurance. Rome's system produces perpetual uncertainty. A Final Word on This Summary Every line of this table points ultimately to one question: is Christ's work enough?

Scripture answers yes — completely, finally, irrevocably yes. His sacrifice is finished. His righteousness is imputed. His intercession is permanent. His invitation is unconditional. His table is open. His Spirit is present. His return is certain. Rome answers: not quite. Not without the Mass. Not without the priest. Not without confession.

Not without the sacramental system that Rome alone can administer.

These are not two versions of Christianity that differ on peripheral matters.

They are two different answers to the most fundamental question of the Gospel. Is Christ enough?

The Word of God says He is. Come to Him. Trust His finished work. Feed on Him by faith. Walk in the liberty of the Gospel. He is enough. He has always been enough. He will always be enough.

| *“Christ is all, and in all.”*

— *Colossians 3:11*

APPENDIX B

What God Allowed in the Temple vs. What Rome Requires

Purpose of This Appendix The primary examination in Part Five addressed the Second Commandment and Rome's liturgical practices from the standpoint of explicit scriptural prohibition.

This appendix approaches the same territory from a different and complementary angle — not primarily what God prohibited, but what God specifically commanded and allowed in His own prescribed worship in the Temple.

The contrast is instructive and devastating.

God was not silent about how He was to be worshipped. He was extraordinarily specific.

He prescribed materials, dimensions, furnishings, garments, procedures, and prohibitions with a precision that left nothing to human imagination or institutional creativity.

The standard He established was exact — and He enforced it with severity. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire and died immediately (Leviticus 10:1–2). Uzzah touched the ark to steady it and died on the spot (2 Samuel 6:6–7). Uzziah entered the Temple to burn incense — a priestly function — and was struck with leprosy (2 Chronicles 26:16–21).

God takes His own prescribed worship seriously. He always has.

The question this appendix asks is simple: when we compare what God explicitly prescribed and permitted in His own Temple worship with what Rome prescribes and requires in the Mass — what do we find?

We find a direct and comprehensive inversion.

Every safeguard God established against idolatry in the Temple is removed in the Mass.

Every object God forbade in His prescribed worship is required in Rome's.

Every practice God condemned when Israel brought it into the Temple is defended as essential in Roman Catholic liturgy. This is not coincidence.

It is the consequence of building a system without scriptural authorization — the inevitable result of substituting human tradition and pagan philosophy for the plain Word of God.

The Comparison — Point by Point Point One: The Visibility of God What God Established in the Temple: At Sinai — the foundational moment of Israel's covenant with God — He deliberately revealed no visible form. Deuteronomy 4:12:

“The LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice.” Moses then draws the explicit implication in verse 15–16: “Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: Lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image.” God's invisibility at Sinai was not an accident of the medium.” It was a deliberate theological act — a permanent prohibition encoded in the foundational moment of Israel's covenant worship.”

God revealed Himself in voice, in Word, in fire — never in visible form. And He stated the reason directly: so that no image would be made. The Temple worship reflected this.

The Holy of Holies — the place of God's most immediate presence — contained no image of God. The ark contained the law.

The mercy seat was overshadowed by the wings of the cherubim.

But there was no statue, no painting, no visible representation of the God of Israel.

The Most Holy Place was, in a profound sense, empty of everything except the Word and the presence it signified.

What Rome Requires in the Mass: The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) 308 requires a crucifix — a visible, physical, detailed representation of Christ — on or near the altar at every Mass. Statues of Christ, Mary, and the saints fill Catholic churches.

The consecrated host is displayed in a monstrance — a visible, ornate vessel — for public adoration.

Rome has filled with visible representations of God what God deliberately left without visible form.

The Conflict: God's reason for revealing no visible form was explicit: so that no graven image would be made.

Rome makes graven images and places them at the center of its worship.

The safeguard God built into the foundational moment of covenant worship has been removed.

Point Two: The Prohibition on Images What God Established in the Temple: Exodus 20:4–5:

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.” This commandment was not peripheral.” It was the Second Commandment — given at Sinai, inscribed on stone by the finger of God, placed in the ark that resided in the Temple's Holy of Holies.”

The very heart of Israel's covenant worship contained, as its foundational charter, the explicit prohibition on images of God and their veneration.

When images entered the Temple under apostate kings, God's response was unambiguous judgment. 2 Kings 21:7: Manasseh placed a carved image in the Temple. 2 Kings 21:12–13: God's response was devastating judgment — He would wipe Jerusalem as a man wipes a dish. Ezekiel 8:10–18: God showed Ezekiel the abominations in the Temple — images on the walls, women weeping for Tammuz, men bowing toward the east — and declared:

“Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity.” The pattern is consistent: images in the Temple brought judgment. Always.” What Rome Requires in the Mass: Images of Christ, Mary, and the saints are not merely permitted — they are required and venerated.”

Trent Session 25 mandates that images be retained and given due honor.

The crucifix is mandatory at every Mass (GIRM 308).

The consecrated host receives latria — the highest worship — when displayed in the monstrance. Bowing, kneeling, kissing, processing with, and burning incense before images are normative Catholic devotional practices.

The Conflict: Every time images entered God's Temple they brought judgment.

Rome has placed images at the center of its worship and declared their veneration essential.

What brought God's judgment on Israel is defended as acceptable worship in Rome.

Point Three: The Object of Worship What God Established in the Temple: Deuteronomy 6:13:

“Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him.” Matthew 4:10: “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.” The object of worship in Temple worship was God Himself— invisible, unrepresented, known through His Word and His acts.” No object, however sacred, received the worship due to God. The ark was not worshipped. The mercy seat was not worshipped.”

The Temple itself was not worshipped.

God alone received worship — and He received it without the mediation of any visible object standing between the worshipper and Him.

What Rome Requires in the Mass: Trent Session 13, Canon 6 requires that the consecrated host receive latria — the worship due to God alone — when displayed in the monstrance. This is not a lower form of honor.

Trent uses the precise term for the highest worship — the worship of adoration — and directs it toward a visible physical object.

The Conflict: God commands that worship be directed to Him alone — not to any visible object.

Rome directs the highest worship to a visible object.

This is not a matter of degree or liturgical style.

It is the direct application of the prohibition: thou shalt not bow down to them nor serve them.

Point Four: The Cherubim — What Was Permitted and What Was Not What God Established in the Temple: God did permit one class of images in the Temple: the cherubim. Exodus 25:18–22 commanded two golden cherubim on the mercy seat. 1 Kings 6:23–28 describes the great carved cherubim in the Holy of Holies.

But three critical observations govern this permission: First: the cherubim were not representations of God.

They were representations of the heavenly beings who attend God's throne — servants, not the One they served. Second: they were hidden.

The great cherubim stood in the Holy of Holies behind the veil — accessible to one man, once per year.

They were not objects of public display or public veneration. Third: they were never worshipped.

No Israelite bowed to the cherubim or directed prayer or devotion toward them.

They were furnishings of the divine dwelling — not objects of worship.

What Rome Requires in the Mass: Statues of Christ, Mary, and the saints are publicly displayed throughout churches and are objects of active veneration — bowing, kneeling, kissing, lighting candles before, processing with. They are not hidden behind veils.

They are central to Catholic devotional practice.

They are not merely architectural furnishings. They receive directed devotion.

The Conflict: God permitted one class of non-divine images in His Temple — hidden, not venerated, not representations of God.

Rome has taken that narrow permission and stretched it beyond all recognition — making visible representations of God and the saints central objects of public veneration.

The narrow permission God granted has been used to justify what the permission was never intended to cover.

Point Five: Access to God's Presence What God Established in the Temple: The structure of the Temple itself encoded a theology of access.

The outer court — accessible to all Israelites.

The inner court — accessible to priests.

The Holy Place — accessible to priests performing specific functions.

The Holy of Holies — accessible to one man, one day per year, with specific blood, under specific conditions.

The graduated restriction was not arbitrary.

Hebrews 9:8 interprets it theologically:

“The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing.” The Temple's architecture declared: the way is not yet fully open. Full, direct, unmediated access to God awaits something the Temple cannot provide.” That something was the death of Christ.”

Matthew 27:51: at the moment of His death, the veil of the Temple was torn from top to bottom — God opening what the Temple had kept closed.

The way into the holiest is now open. For everyone. Always. Directly.

Hebrews 10:19–22 draws the explicit conclusion:

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus... Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.” What Rome Requires in the Mass: Rome has reconstructed the graduated access the cross abolished.” The priest alone can consecrate — accessing a sacred function unavailable to ordinary believers.”

The believer cannot approach the table without priestly absolution.

The Mass is offered by the priest on behalf of the people — restoring the mediated access the torn veil permanently ended.

The Conflict: The torn veil is the architectural theology of the atonement — God declaring the way open, the old system superseded, direct access established for all believers. Rome has re-hung the veil.

The priest stands where Christ's death declared no priest need stand.

The mediated access the cross abolished has been institutionally restored.

Point Six: The Sacrifice What God Established in the Temple: The Temple sacrifices were real, bloody, repeated — and by their very repetition declared their own insufficiency.

Hebrews 10:1–4: if the sacrifices had perfected the worshippers, they would have ceased to be offered.

Their repetition was their testimony: they could not finally do what needed to be done.

They were shadows — pointing forward to the substance. Types — anticipating the antitype.

The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin (Hebrews 10:4).

They were holding actions, maintaining the covenant relationship in anticipation of the one sacrifice that would finally and permanently accomplish what they could only approximate.

When that one sacrifice was made — once, for all, on Calvary — the Temple sacrifices were rendered permanently obsolete.

Not superseded by a new and better sacrifice that would be repeated. Ended. Finished.

The Temple itself was destroyed in 70 AD — God's architectural judgment on a sacrificial system that had served its purpose and was now not merely obsolete but, if continued, a denial of the sufficiency of Christ's completed work.

What Rome Requires in the Mass: The Mass is a propitiatory sacrifice — Christ immolated in an unbloody manner, re-presenting the one sacrifice of Calvary, obtaining grace for the living and the dead.

It is offered by an ordained priest at an altar.

It is repeated — daily, worldwide, continuously.

The Conflict: Rome has restored what God destroyed.

The Temple sacrificial system — superseded, rendered obsolete, architecturally judged by God Himself in 70 AD — has been reconstituted in the Mass.

The priest stands at the altar doing what Hebrews declares Christ's one sacrifice ended the need for.

The repetition that was the Temple's testimony to its own insufficiency has been made the central ongoing act of Rome's worship.

Point Seven: When Images Entered the Temple — God's Response What God Established in the Temple: The historical record of Israel's worship is explicit about what happened when images and unauthorized practices entered the Temple: 2 Kings 21:4–7: Manasseh placed altars to Baal and a carved image in the Temple. God's response:

"I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it, and turning it upside down." (2 Kings 21:13) 2 Kings 23:4–7: Josiah's reforms required removing from the Temple vessels made for Baal, Asherah poles, houses of male cult prostitutes, and all the apparatus of unauthorized worship that had accumulated. Ezekiel 8: God showed Ezekiel visions of the abominations in the Temple — images on the walls, women weeping for Tammuz, men bowing to the sun in the east. God's verdict: "Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity." (Ezekiel 8:18) The pattern is unbroken: unauthorized images and practices in the Temple brought divine judgment. Every time."

Without exception." What Rome Requires in the Mass: Rome has taken what brought judgment on Israel's Temple and installed it as essential, mandatory elements of Christian worship — requiring images, requiring their veneration, requiring the adoration of a visible object with the highest worship, requiring a sacrificial priesthood the New Covenant abolished.

The Conflict: What God judged in the Temple He does not suddenly approve in the Mass. His character does not change. His standards do not shift.

What was an abomination in His prescribed Old Covenant worship does not become acceptable in the New simply because it is dressed in Christian vocabulary and defended by institutional authority.

The Summary Statement The comparison between God's prescribed Temple worship and Rome's Mass produces one conclusion that cannot be softened: Every object God forbade in His Temple is required in the Mass.

Every practice God condemned when it entered the Temple is defended in Roman Catholic doctrine.

Every safeguard God established to protect His people from idolatry has been removed.

Every boundary God drew between true worship and false has been crossed.

This is not the conclusion of Protestant prejudice.

It is the conclusion of reading what God prescribed in Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and the historical books alongside what Rome prescribes in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, the Catechism, and the canons of Trent — and comparing them honestly, without flinching, by the standard of Isaiah 8:20:

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” The Lord's Supper rightly observed violates none of God's prescribed worship standards. No images. No priestly sacrifice. No mediated access. No veneration of visible objects.”

No blood consumed.” No unauthorized tradition elevated above the Word. Bread and wine. A covenant community. The Word proclaimed.

The Spirit present. Faith receiving. The death declared. The return anticipated.

The living Christ worshipped directly, through the Spirit, in the name of the Son, with the access opened by the torn veil of His own flesh.

This is worship in spirit and in truth. This is what God prescribed. This is what the Gospel provides.

“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”

— John 4:24

APPENDIX C

The Ten Commandments

Roman Catholic vs. Biblical Numbering

This Appendix This appendix addresses a specific historical and doctrinal question that arose in Part Five of the main examination: why does the Roman Catholic Church number the Ten Commandments differently from the Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, and Jewish traditions — and what are the consequences of that difference for Rome's liturgical practice?

This is not a peripheral matter of ecclesiastical housekeeping.

The numbering of the commandments determines which commandment every Catholic child memorizes as the Second Commandment.

It determines what prohibition stands explicitly before every Catholic worshipper as a standalone binding obligation. And it determines whether the explicit prohibition on graven images confronts Rome's liturgical practice directly — or is absorbed into a broader commandment where it can be managed rather than obeyed. The stakes are not academic.

They are pastoral and theological. And the facts of the case, examined honestly, raise questions that Rome has never adequately answered.

The Two Numbering Systems — Side by Side The commandments as given in Exodus 20:1–17 and Deuteronomy 5:6–21 consist of a series of divine declarations.

The text itself does not number them.

The numbering is a matter of how the text is divided — which statements are grouped together as one commandment and which are treated as separate commandments. Two primary numbering traditions exist in Christian and Jewish history: The Original Biblical / Eastern Orthodox / Protestant Numbering: Commandment 1 — "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:3) Commandment 2 — "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." (Exodus 20:4–6) Commandment 3 — "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain." (Exodus 20:7) Commandment 4 — "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." (Exodus 20:8–11) Commandment 5 — "Honour thy father and thy mother." (Exodus 20:12) Commandment 6 — "Thou shalt not kill." (Exodus 20:13) Commandment 7 — "Thou shalt not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14) Commandment 8 — "Thou shalt not steal." (Exodus 20:15) Commandment 9 — "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." (Exodus 20:16) Commandment 10 — "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's." (Exodus 20:17) This numbering treats Exodus 20:4–6 — the prohibition on graven images — as a standalone Second Commandment, completely separate from the First Commandment's prohibition on other gods.

It treats the entire coveting prohibition of Exodus 20:17 as one commandment.

The Roman Catholic / Lutheran Numbering: Commandment 1 — "I am the LORD thy God... Thou shalt have no other gods before me" — with the image prohibition absorbed into this commandment as a subordinate clause rather than a standalone prohibition. (Exodus 20:2–6 treated as one commandment) Commandment 2 — "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain." (Exodus 20:7) Commandment 3 — "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy." (Exodus 20:8–11)

Commandment 4 — "Honour thy father and thy mother." (Exodus 20:12) Commandment 5 — "Thou shalt not kill." (Exodus 20:13) Commandment 6 — "Thou shalt not commit adultery." (Exodus 20:14) Commandment 7 — "Thou shalt not steal." (Exodus 20:15) Commandment 8 — "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." (Exodus 20:16) Commandment 9 — "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife." (Exodus 20:17a — split) Commandment 10 — "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house... nor any thing that is thy neighbour's." (Exodus 20:17b — split) This numbering absorbs Exodus 20:4–6 into the First Commandment and compensates for the loss of a commandment by splitting the single coveting prohibition of Exodus 20:17 into two separate commandments.

The Historical Question — Where Did Each Numbering Come From?

The Protestant and Eastern Orthodox numbering follows the Jewish tradition — specifically the tradition of Philo of Alexandria and Josephus, the two major first-century Jewish writers who address the question.

Both treat the image prohibition as a separate, standalone commandment distinct from the prohibition on other gods.

This numbering also follows Origen and the majority of the early Greek church fathers.

The Catholic and Lutheran numbering follows Augustine of Hippo (354–430 AD), who in his *Quaestiones in Exodum* grouped Exodus 20:3–6 as a single commandment and split the coveting prohibition into two to maintain the number ten. Augustine's reasoning was that the prohibition on images was a subset of the broader prohibition on false gods — not a separate commandment in its own right. Several observations about Augustine's choice are relevant: First: Augustine's numbering was a minority position in the ancient church.

The majority of the Greek fathers — the fathers who read the text in its original language — treated the image prohibition as a separate commandment.

Second: Augustine was not infallible.

His theological contributions to Christianity were enormous and his influence on Western theology incalculable.

But his numbering of the commandments was a specific exegetical decision that can be examined and evaluated — and on this point the textual and historical evidence favors the Protestant and Eastern Orthodox numbering.

Third: the structure of the Hebrew text itself argues for a separate Second Commandment.

The prohibition in Exodus 20:4–6 introduces a completely new subject — the making and veneration of images — with its own distinct theological grounding, its own motivating clause ("for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God"), and its own consequences ("visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children").

It is not merely a further specification of the first prohibition on other gods.

It addresses a distinct and different act — the making of images — that could occur even without worshipping other gods.

Fourth: the Jewish tradition — the tradition of those in whose language and covenant context the commandments were given — consistently treats the image prohibition as a separate commandment.

The Talmudic tradition, the Masoretic tradition, Philo, and Josephus all agree on this point.

The Consequence of the Numbering The practical consequence of the two numbering systems is direct and undeniable: Under the Protestant and Eastern Orthodox numbering, every believer who reads, memorizes, or recites the Ten Commandments encounters — as the explicit, standalone Second Commandment — the prohibition:

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above... Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.” This commandment stands before the believer as a direct, specific, freestanding prohibition that cannot be missed, softened, or absorbed into a more general statement.” Under the Roman Catholic numbering, a Catholic who reads, memorizes, or recites the Ten Commandments encounters no standalone Second Commandment explicitly prohibiting graven images.”

The image prohibition is present — it is not deleted from the text — but it is absorbed as a subordinate element of the First Commandment, where it sits alongside the prohibition on other gods and can be interpreted through Rome's distinction between true worship (*latria*, for God alone) and legitimate veneration (*dulia*, for saints and their images).

The effect is that the specific, explicit, standalone scriptural prohibition on making images and bowing to them — the prohibition most directly relevant to Rome's liturgical practice of crucifixes, statues, and Eucharistic adoration — is removed from the direct confrontation with that practice that the original biblical structure would produce. A Catholic catechumen memorizing the Ten Commandments under Rome's numbering will memorize: Commandment 1: No other gods. Commandment 2: Do not take God's name in vain. A Protestant or Eastern Orthodox catechumen memorizing the Ten Commandments under the original biblical numbering will memorize: Commandment 1: No other gods. Commandment 2: No graven images. Do not bow down to them or serve them.

The difference in what stands before the worshipper as the explicit Second Commandment is not trivial.

It is the difference between a standalone divine prohibition on the making and veneration of images confronting Catholic worship practice directly — and that prohibition being managed within a broader category where Rome's *dulia/latria* distinction can be deployed to soften its force. Rome's Defense and Its Insufficiency Rome defends its numbering on two grounds: First: Augustine's authority.

Rome follows Augustine's numbering as the received Western tradition, transmitted through the medieval church and confirmed by the Council of Trent's catechetical teaching.

This defense is insufficient for a reason that cuts directly to the heart of this entire examination: Augustine is not Scripture. A church father's exegetical decision about how to number the commandments does not override the structure of the text itself.

The Berean principle applies: we test all teaching — including patristic teaching — against Scripture. And the structure of the Hebrew text, the witness of the Jewish tradition, the testimony of the Greek fathers, and the plain reading of Exodus 20 all support treating the image prohibition as a standalone commandment.

Second: The *dulia/latria* distinction makes the numbering irrelevant.

Rome argues that even if the image prohibition were a standalone commandment, Rome's practice does not violate it — because the distinction between *latria* (true worship, for God alone) and *dulia* (honor and veneration, for saints and their images) means that Catholics are not worshipping images, merely honoring them.

This defense fails on three grounds from Scripture.

First: Exodus 20:5 does not use the language of latria and dulia. It says:

“Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them.” The prohibited acts are bowing and serving — physical acts of directed devotion that Rome’s liturgical practice requires before images.” The commandment does not distinguish between the quality of the interior devotion.”

It prohibits the physical act of bowing to images.

Second: the host in the monstrance receives latria — Rome’s own term for the highest worship due to God alone.

This is not dulia. By Rome’s own categories, the worship of the Eucharistic host is the worship due to God alone, directed toward a visible physical object.

This falls directly and explicitly under the commandment’s prohibition — by Rome’s own theological vocabulary.

Third: the dulia/latria distinction is a theological construction of the medieval church — not a biblical category.

Scripture does not distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable forms of directed devotion toward images.

It prohibits directed devotion toward images.

The distinction Rome draws to justify the practice is itself a tradition without scriptural warrant — employed specifically to protect practices that the plain text of the Second Commandment would otherwise condemn.

The Timeline of the Numbering’s Adoption The historical development of the Catholic numbering is relevant to evaluating its authority: ~400 AD: Augustine proposes grouping Exodus 20:2–6 as one commandment and splitting the coveting prohibition.

This is a minority position in the ancient church. ~600–800 AD: Augustine’s numbering becomes increasingly dominant in the Western Latin church as his theological influence grows. ~1000–1200 AD: The Catholic numbering is the standard catechetical tradition of the Western church.

The Eastern church retains the original numbering. 1545–1563 AD: The Council of Trent confirms and codifies Rome’s catechetical practice — including the numbering — in response to the Protestant Reformation. 1529 AD: Luther’s Small Catechism adopts the Augustinian numbering — the one departure of the Lutheran tradition from the broader Protestant numbering.

Luther retained the Catholic numbering for practical continuity in his catechetical materials, not from conviction that it was exegetically superior. 1647 AD: The Westminster Larger and Shorter Catechisms confirm the original biblical numbering — treating the image prohibition as a standalone Second Commandment — as the standard for Reformed and Presbyterian churches.

The adoption of the Catholic numbering is therefore a medieval Western development, following Augustine, confirmed by Trent, and departing from both the Jewish tradition and the majority of the early church fathers.

It is not the original, universal, or patristically dominant numbering.

It is a specific Western catechetical tradition with a traceable historical origin and a demonstrable practical consequence.

What the Original Second Commandment Confronts When the image prohibition stands as the explicit, standalone Second Commandment — as Scripture's own structure and the weight of the historical and linguistic evidence require — it confronts Rome's liturgical practice with a directness that cannot be deflected:

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above." Christ is in heaven above (Colossians 3:1; Acts 7:55–56). A crucifix is a likeness of Christ." This commandment addresses it directly."

"Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." Catholic liturgical practice requires bowing before images, kneeling before them, kissing them, processing with them, burning incense before them, and directing latria toward the Eucharistic host displayed in the monstrance." This commandment addresses all of it directly."

"For I the LORD thy God am a jealous God." The motivation God gives for the commandment is His jealousy — His exclusive claim on the worship and devotion of His people." He will not share the devotion His people direct toward Him with visible objects. He has always refused this. He refuses it still."

When the commandment stands as God gave it — explicit, standalone, and direct — there is no managing it with theological distinctions.

There is only obedience or disobedience.

There is only worship in spirit and in truth (John 4:24) — directed to the invisible God, through the one Mediator, by the power of the Spirit — or worship directed toward visible objects, however sincerely and devoutly. God has spoken on this subject. He spoke it from fire on Sinai.

He inscribed it on stone with His own finger.

He placed it in the ark at the heart of the Temple.

He judged Israel when they violated it. He has not changed His mind.

"For I am the LORD, I change not." — Malachi 3:6 The Lord's Supper and the Second Commandment The Lord's Supper rightly observed requires no images, no visible representations of God, no objects of veneration, no bowing or kneeling toward any earthly thing." The believer at a biblical table directs their worship entirely and without mediation toward the invisible God — through the one Mediator Christ Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit, in grateful proclamation of the finished work of the cross."

The bread and wine are not objects of devotion.

They are covenant signs pointing away from themselves toward the Lord who instituted them.

The believer does not bow to them, venerate them, carry them in procession, or expose them for adoration.

They receive them, in faith, as visible words of the covenant Gospel — and then they go.

The simplicity of the Lord's Supper is not poverty. It is obedience.

It is the worship God prescribed — uncluttered by images, unmediated by priests, unencumbered by philosophical machinery, and undistorted by traditions that have no warrant in the Word.

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." — John 4:24 "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

— *Isaiah 8:20*

APPENDIX D

Essential Verses for Reference

Eight Topical Sections — Full Verse Texts

This Appendix This appendix provides a topically organized collection of the key scriptural passages cited and examined throughout this work.

It is designed for three uses: First: as a study tool for the believer who wishes to examine the scriptural testimony on each topic independently — reading each passage in its full context in Scripture rather than as a quotation embedded in theological argument.

Second: as a reference for the Christian engaged in conversation or correspondence with a Catholic friend, family member, or neighbor — providing the specific scriptural texts relevant to each area of the debate in one accessible location.

Third: as a devotional resource — these are not merely proof texts.

They are the living Word of God speaking on subjects of eternal consequence.

They deserve to be read slowly, prayerfully, and repeatedly — until the truth they declare becomes the settled conviction of the believing heart.

All quotations are from the King James Version, which is in the public domain. A note on method: these verses are organized by topic, not by the order in which they appear in the examination. Crossreferences between topics are indicated where the same passage is relevant to multiple subjects. Section One: The Finished Sacrifice of Christ These passages establish the absolute, unrepeatable, permanently effective nature of Christ's atoning work — the foundation on which every other argument in this examination rests. Hebrews 10:10–14:

“By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.” This is the central text of the entire examination.” The contrast between the standing priests and the seated Christ — between repeated offerings and one offering — between “can never take away sins” and “perfected for ever” — is the contrast between the entire Old Covenant sacrificial system and the finished work of Christ. Read it until the force of “sat down” is felt. Hebrews 9:25–28:”

“Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” The logic is airtight: multiple offerings require multiple sufferings.” One suffering. Therefore one offering. Therefore no repetition. Therefore no Mass as propitiatory sacrifice. Hebrews 7:26–27:”

“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests,

to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself." The high priest Rome requires — who daily offers Christ in sacrifice — is precisely the pattern Hebrews declares Christ abolished."

John 19:30:" "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." Tetelestai. Paid in full." The work is done. Nothing remains to be offered, applied, or obtained through subsequent priestly mediation. Hebrews 6:4–6:

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." To return to any form of ongoing sacrifice is to act as though the one sacrifice was insufficient — which Hebrews describes as crucifying the Son of God afresh. Romans 6:9–10:" "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." Once. Not repeatedly."

Not represented." Once — with permanent, unrepeatable, final effect. Hebrews 1:3:

"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." By himself."

Not through priestly mediation." Not through ongoing sacramental application. By himself — and then sat down. Section Two: The Nature of Christ's Presence — Spiritual, Not Physical These passages establish that Christ's presence in the Lord's Supper is spiritual, received by faith, and that the language of eating and drinking His flesh and blood is to be understood spiritually — not as a command for literal physical consumption. John 6:63:

"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Jesus' own interpretive conclusion to the entire John 6 discourse. Three declarations: the Spirit gives life, the flesh profits nothing, the words are spirit and life." This verse is the author's own hermeneutical key to the passage that precedes it. John 6:35:"

"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Eating and drinking explicitly defined as coming and believing — faith, not physical consumption."

John 6:40:" "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day." The identical promise attached to eating and drinking in verse 54 — eternal life and resurrection — is here given to seeing and believing. Believing is sufficient." No sacramental supplement is added. John 6:47:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." Eternal life given to believing — with no sacramental qualification." If Rome's reading of verse 54 is correct, verse 47 would be simultaneously true and insufficient. It cannot be both. Matthew 26:29:"

"But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." After the words of institution." Jesus calls the cup fruit of the vine — not blood. The substance has not changed."

The sign remains a sign. 1 Corinthians 11:26:

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.” Paul calls the elements bread and cup — after the institution, after the resurrection, after the ascension, in the most detailed apostolic treatment of the Supper in the New Testament.” If transubstantiation were true, Paul's consistent use of pre-transformation names for the elements would be a sustained error in inspired Scripture. 1 Corinthians 10:3–4:”

“And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.” Israel ate and drank spiritually — Christ was their spiritual food and drink in the wilderness. Not literally.”

Not physically. Spiritually.” The pattern established here is exactly the pattern Jesus invokes in John 6. 1 Corinthians 10:16:

“The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?” The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?” Koinonia — fellowship, participation, communion. Spiritual participation in Christ and His benefits.”

Not physical consumption of literal flesh and blood. Matthew 18:20:

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” Christ is genuinely present with His gathered people — through the Spirit, by His promise, in His name.” No priestly consecration required to produce His presence.”

No physical transformation of elements required to locate it. Section Three: The Lord's Supper — Its Nature and Proper Observance These passages establish what the Lord's Supper is — a memorial, a proclamation, a covenant meal of fellowship, an act of self-examination — and how it is properly observed. Luke 22:19:

“And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.” The institution.” The command: do this in remembrance of me. Anamnesis — active, covenantal remembrance of a completed redemptive act. Not re-presentation.”

Not resacrifice. Remembrance. 1 Corinthians 11:23–26:

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.” After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.” The apostolic transmission of the institution. Memorial. Proclamation. Temporal orientation: between the death and the return. 1 Corinthians 11:27–29:”

“Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.” The gravity of the Supper is real.”

The remedy is self-examination before God — not priestly certification. A man. Himself. Examining himself. Acts 2:42:

“And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” The early church's practice. Breaking of bread — domestic, fellowship language. No priestly consecration. No transubstantiation.”

No ongoing sacrifice. Acts 20:7:” “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them.” Breaking bread.” The Lord's Supper described in the simplest terms — a community gathering, proclamation of the Word, breaking of bread. Nothing in the description suggests the elaborate sacrificial liturgy of the Mass. Section Four: The Priesthood — Universal Access and the Sole Mediator These passages establish the universal priesthood of all believers, the exclusive and eternal high priesthood of Christ, and the direct access every believer has to God through Christ alone. 1 Timothy 2:5:

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” One mediator.” Not one supreme mediator with institutional subordinates. One. Exclusively. Permanently.”

The mediatorial function belongs to Christ alone. Hebrews 7:23–25:

“And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: But this man, because he continueth ever, liveth to make intercession for them. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” The reason for many Levitical priests: they died.” The reason Christ needs no successor: He lives forever. His priesthood has no vacancy.”

No human representative can continue what He has permanently and exclusively occupied. Hebrews 4:14–16:

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Boldly. Directly.”

Without human intermediary.” Every believer. To the throne of grace.

This is the access the New Covenant provides and Rome's system contradicts. 1 Peter 2:5, 9:

“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ... But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.” Every believer is a priest.” The royal priesthood is the whole people of God — not an ordained subset with exclusive sacramental powers. Hebrews 10:19–22:”

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.” Full assurance. The new and living way is open. The veil is torn.”

The access is direct.” No human priest stands between the believer and the throne. 1 John 1:9:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Confession to God. Forgiveness from God."

No human intermediary." No priestly absolution required. Revelation 1:5–6:

"Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father." Every redeemed person — made a king and priest." Not by ordination. By redemption. Section Five: The Glorified Body of Christ — Incorruptible and Enthroned These passages establish the permanent, categorical, ontological incorruption of Christ's glorified body and its location — in heaven, at the right hand of the Father — which directly forecloses the claim that His body can be present in, and subject to the corruption of, a piece of bread. Acts 13:34–37:"

"And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David... But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption." No more to return to corruption." The permanent, irreversible departure from the domain of decay. Christ's body will never again be subject to any corrupting process. Romans 6:9:"

"Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." Death has no more dominion. Permanently. Categorically." This forecloses every scenario in which Christ's body could be subject to digestion, decay, or dissolution. 1 Corinthians 15:42–44:"

"It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Two categorically different modes of bodily existence. Christ's resurrection body permanently occupies the second column: incorruption, glory, power." It has permanently and irreversibly left the first column — corruption, decay, mortality — behind. Hebrews 10:12:"

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." Seated. In heaven. At the right hand of God."

Not on ten thousand altars." Not in ten million hosts. Seated — the posture of completed, accepted, finished work. Colossians 3:1:

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Where Christ sits — above, at the right hand of God." Not in bread and wine on earthly altars. Acts 7:55–56:"

"But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Stephen's vision at the moment of martyrdom — Christ in heaven, at the right hand of God."

This is where Christ is." Scripture places Him there with consistent, unambiguous, repeated testimony. Hebrews 7:25:

"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Ever liveth. Making intercession."

In heaven." Not being consumed on earth. Section Six: The Blood Prohibition — Universal and Unrepealed These passages establish God's consistent, cross-covenantal prohibition on consuming

blood — reaffirmed by the Holy Spirit for the New Covenant church with no Eucharistic exception. Genesis 9:4:

“But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.” The Noahic Covenant. Universal. Pre-Mosaic. Binding on all humanity.”

No ceremonial qualification.” No covenantal expiration. Leviticus 17:10–14:

“And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.” Divine opposition. Covenant death penalty.” The most severe language applied to this prohibition. And the theological grounding — blood carries life, life belongs to God — is permanent and does not expire with the ceremonial law. Deuteronomy 12:23–25.”

“Only be sure that thou eat not the blood: for the blood is the life; and thou mayest not eat the life with the flesh. Thou shalt not eat it; thou shalt pour it upon the earth as water.” Moses' final sermons.” The prohibition repeated with emphasis — deliberately foregrounded as Israel prepared to enter the land. Acts 15:28–29.”

“For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.” The Holy Spirit's own decree for the New Covenant Gentile church. No exception. No qualification.”

No Eucharistic footnote.” The prohibition stands in the New Covenant era by the Holy Spirit's explicit reaffirmation. Psalm 16:4:

“Their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god: their drink offerings of blood will I not offer, nor take up their names into my lips.” David associates blood offerings with false god worship and explicitly refuses participation. Blood offerings belong to the domain of false religion in Scripture's consistent testimony. Ezekiel 33:25:”
“Wherefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Ye eat with the blood, and lift up your eyes toward your idols, and shed blood: and shall ye possess the land?” Eating with blood listed alongside idolatry and bloodshed as marks of covenant apostasy. Section Seven: The Authority of Scripture These passages establish the sufficiency of Scripture as the final authority — against Rome's claim that Sacred Tradition stands alongside Scripture as a co-equal source of divine revelation. 2 Timothy 3:16–17:” “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” All Scripture.” All good works. Perfect. Thoroughly furnished.”

The claim of sufficiency is comprehensive and leaves no category of spiritual life or theological truth requiring a supplementary source. 2 Peter 1:3:

“According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.” All things pertaining to life and godliness — already given.” The supply is complete. Nothing pertaining to the Christian life remains to be supplied by tradition. Jude 3:”

“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” Once delivered. Hapax.” The same word used of Christ's once-for-all sacrifice. The faith is complete. It was delivered once.”

It is to be contended for — not supplemented. Acts 17:11:

“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” The Berean standard. Testing all teaching — including apostolic teaching — against Scripture daily. Commended as noble.” The final standard is Scripture — not tradition, not councils, not institutional authority. Mark 7:7–9, 13:”

“Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men... Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.” Christ's categorical condemnation of traditions that contradict, supplement, or displace the Word of God.” The precise structure Rome claims for Sacred Tradition. Isaiah 8:20:”

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” The standard applied throughout this examination. To the law and to the testimony.” Scripture is the measure. Everything is tested by it. Everything is accountable to it. Section Eight: Assurance, Liberty, and the Gospel Invitation These passages establish the assurance, liberty, and peace that the biblical Gospel produces — in direct contrast to the anxiety, bondage, and uncertainty that Rome's sacramental system generates. Romans 5:1:”

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Justified — past tense, completed verdict. Peace — settled, objective, relational reality. With God.”

Through Christ. By faith.” Not through sacramental performance. Romans 8:1:

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” No condemnation. For those in Christ Jesus. Now. Not conditional. Not provisional.”

No condemnation. Romans 8:15–16:” *“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” The Spirit of adoption — not bondage to fear. Abba, Father — the cry of settled, familial, unbreakable relationship.*

The Spirit bearing witness — not the priest certifying adequacy. 1 John 5:13:

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life.” Know. Not hope.”

Not suspect.” Not tentatively conclude. Know. Written by an apostle, under inspiration, for the explicit purpose of producing settled certainty of eternal life in believers. Galatians 5:1:

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.” Liberty. Freedom.” The command to refuse entanglement in any system that requires human performance as a condition of standing before God. John 8:36:”

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Free indeed."

Not provisionally free." Not free within sacramental limits. Free indeed — the freedom of those liberated by the Son Himself. Hebrews 10:22:

"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Full assurance. Draw near — directly, boldly, without human intermediary. Full assurance — not the anxious uncertainty of one whose standing depends on the adequacy of their last confession."

Matthew 11:28–30:" Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Come unto me. Not to the Church.

Not through the priest." Not after sacramental qualification. Unto me. And the promise: rest. Not conditional rest.

Not rest pending adequate performance. Rest — given freely to all who come. John 6:37:

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." In no wise cast out." Under no circumstances. For no deficiency of qualification or performance. Those who come are received."

The promise is unconditional and absolute. Revelation 22:17:

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Freely. Without cost. Without merit. Without mechanism."

Without institution. Without priestly mediation. Freely — the last great invitation of Scripture, standing open to every thirsty soul.

APPENDIX E

Glossary of Roman Catholic Terms

Twenty Terms Defined from Rome's Own Official Sources

This Glossary This glossary exists for one purpose: precision. Throughout this examination, Roman Catholic doctrinal terms have been used — transubstantiation, latria, ex opere operato, concomitance, and others.

These terms carry specific, technically defined meanings in Roman Catholic theology. They are not casual vocabulary.

They are precise doctrinal designations with official definitions in Rome's own authoritative sources. An apologetic examination that uses these terms without defining them from official sources opens itself to a legitimate objection:

"You have not engaged what we actually teach. You have attacked a caricature." This glossary removes that objection entirely." Every term defined here is defined from Rome's own official sources — the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), the Council of Trent (cited by Denzinger number where applicable), the Code of Canon Law (CIC), and the General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)."

Where Rome's own definition creates a tension with Scripture that is addressed in the main examination, a cross-reference to the relevant Part is provided.

But this glossary does not argue — it defines.

The argument has been made in the body of the work.

This appendix simply ensures that every term used in that argument is anchored to what Rome herself means by it.

The Protestant reader will find here a clear explanation of what Catholic doctrine actually claims — without distortion or caricature.

The Catholic reader will find here their own church's official definitions — and can therefore evaluate whether the examination has engaged those definitions fairly.

The Glossary Anathema Official Definition: In Roman Catholic usage, an anathema is the most severe form of ecclesiastical condemnation — a formal declaration that a specific doctrine, when denied, places the one who denies it outside the bounds of Catholic communion and, in Rome's framework, outside salvific grace.

The Council of Trent used anathema repeatedly to define the boundaries of essential Catholic doctrine. Source: Council of Trent, Session 7, Foreword:

"If anyone says... let him be anathema." — This formula appears throughout Trent's canons. CCC 2089 defines anathema in the context of heresy as the formal rejection of a truth that must be believed with divine and Catholic faith. Usage in This Examination: Throughout this work, anathemas from Trent are cited to demonstrate that the doctrines addressed — transubstantiation, the propitiatory sacrifice of the Mass, the necessity of sacramental confession — are not peripheral Catholic opinions but essential defined doctrines whose denial Rome formally condemns. See Parts One, Two, Three, Five, and Six. Concomitance (Doctrine of) Official Definition: The doctrine that where one element

of the Eucharist is present — either the bread (now Christ's body) or the wine (now Christ's blood) — the whole Christ is present: body, blood, soul, and divinity together.” This doctrine arose to address the practice of communion under one kind only (giving communicants bread but not wine) — Rome teaches that receiving either element constitutes receiving the whole Christ because body and blood cannot be separated. Source: Council of Trent, Session 13, Chapter 3:”

“For Christ whole and entire exists under the species of bread and under any part whatsoever of that species; likewise the whole Christ is present under the species of wine and under its parts.” CCC 1377:” “Christ is present whole and entire in each of the species and whole and entire in each of their parts, in such a way that the breaking of the bread does not divide Christ.” Usage in This Examination: The doctrine of concomitance is addressed in Part Four in the context of the partial host problem — if the whole Christ is present in every particle of every host, the implications for what happens during distribution and digestion create irresolvable internal contradictions within Rome's own framework. Consecration Official Definition: The act within the Mass, performed by an ordained priest, at which the bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Christ.” It occurs at the words of institution — “This is my body” and “This is my blood” — spoken by the priest acting in persona Christi.”

At the moment of consecration, transubstantiation takes place. Source: CCC 1375:

“It is by the conversion of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood that Christ becomes present in this sacrament.” CCC 1412:” “The essential signs of the Eucharistic sacrament are wheat bread and grape wine, on which the blessing of the Holy Spirit is invoked and the priest pronounces the words of consecration spoken by Jesus during the Last Supper.” Usage in This Examination: The act of consecration is examined in Parts One, Two, Three, and Four.” The claim that an ordained priest's words produce the physical presence of Christ's body and blood in the elements is examined against Scripture's testimony about Christ's sole high priesthood, the universal priesthood of believers, and the nature of Christ's glorified body. Dulia Official Definition: The honor and veneration given to saints and their images in Roman Catholic practice. Dulia is distinguished from latria (the worship due to God alone) and hyperdulia (the special honor given to the Virgin Mary).”

Rome teaches that dulia is not worship but honor — a lower form of directed devotion than latria, appropriate for created beings who are in heaven with God. Source: CCC 2132:

“The Christian veneration of images is not contrary to the first commandment which proscribes idols. Indeed, 'the honor rendered to an image passes to its prototype,' and 'whoever venerates an image venerates the person portrayed in it.'” Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae II-II, Q. 84, A. 1: distinguishes latria (due to God) from dulia (due to created beings worthy of honor). Usage in This Examination: The dulia/latria distinction is examined in Parts Five and Six and Appendix C. Rome's defense of image veneration depends on this distinction — the claim that bowing before and directing devotion toward images of saints constitutes dulia (honor) rather than latria (worship).” The examination shows from Scripture that Exodus 20:5 prohibits bowing to and serving images without making the distinction Rome's defense requires. Ex Opere Operato Official Definition: Latin:”

“from the work performed.” The doctrine that the sacraments of the Catholic Church confer grace by virtue of the sacramental act itself — not by the merit or holiness of the minister performing it, and not contingent on the faith of the recipient (though the recipient must not place an obstacle to grace).” The sacrament works because God acts

through the validly performed rite — not because of the subjective disposition of the performer or receiver. Source: Council of Trent, Session 7, Canon 8:”

“If anyone says that grace is not conferred by the sacraments of the new law through the act performed, but that faith alone in the divine promise is sufficient for the obtaining of grace: let him be anathema.” CCC 1128:” “This is the meaning of the Church's affirmation that the sacraments act ex opere operato (literally: 'by the very fact of the action's being performed').” Usage in This Examination: The ex opere operato principle is foundational to understanding why Rome's sacramental system produces the pastoral consequences examined in Part Six.” If the sacrament confers grace by the act performed — regardless of the faith of the recipient — then the system becomes mechanical: grace is obtained through the correct performance of the rite rather than through personal faith in Christ's finished work.”

This is the structural opposite of the biblical Gospel's declaration that grace is received through faith alone (Ephesians 2:8–9). Hyperdulia Official Definition: The special honor given to the Virgin Mary in Roman Catholic practice — distinguished from dulia (honor given to saints) by its higher degree, and from latria (worship due to God alone) by its still being directed toward a creature. Mary receives hyperdulia because of her unique role as the Mother of God (Theotokos) and her sinless conception (Immaculate Conception). Source: CCC 971:

“The Church's devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship... The liturgical feasts dedicated to the Mother of God and Marian prayer, such as the rosary, an 'epitome of the whole Gospel,' express this devotion to the Virgin Mary.” Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae III, Q. 25, A. 5: establishes the threefold distinction of latria, hyperdulia, and dulia. Usage in This Examination: Hyperdulia is referenced in Part Five and Appendix C in the context of the dulia/latria/hyperdulia distinction Rome employs to defend image veneration and Marian devotion.” The examination does not address Mariology in full — that belongs to a separate treatment — but notes that the theological scaffolding Rome constructs to justify directed devotion toward Mary and the saints rests on distinctions Scripture does not make. Immolation Official Definition: In Roman Catholic eucharistic theology, immolation refers to the sacrificial offering of Christ in the Mass — His being offered as a victim to God.”

Rome distinguishes between the bloody immolation at Calvary and the unbloody immolation in the Mass, teaching that they are one and the same sacrifice offered in different modes. Source: Council of Trent, Session 22, Chapter 2 (Denzinger 940):

“In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, that same Christ is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner, who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the Cross.” CCC 1367:” “The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice.” Usage in This Examination: The immolation language is examined in Part One as part of the irreconcilable conflict between Rome's Mass as ongoing propitiatory sacrifice and Scripture's declaration that Christ's sacrifice is finished, unrepeatable, and final.” The use of immolation language — even qualified as "unbloody" — implies an ongoing sacrificial act that Hebrews 10:12 forecloses.”

In Persona Christi (Acting in the Person of Christ) Official Definition: The theological principle that an ordained Catholic priest, when celebrating the Eucharist and pronouncing the words of consecration, acts not in his own person but in the person of Christ — as Christ's representative and instrument.

The priest's words are therefore Christ's words, and the consecration is Christ's own act performed through the priest. Source: CCC 1548:

“In the ecclesial service of the ordained minister, it is Christ himself who is present to his Church as Head of his Body, Shepherd of his flock, high priest of the redemptive sacrifice, Teacher of Truth.” This is what the Church means by saying that the priest, by virtue of the sacrament of Holy Orders, acts in persona Christi Capitis.” CCC 1566.”

“It is in the Eucharistic cult or in the Eucharistic assembly of the faithful (synaxis) that they exercise in a supreme degree their sacred office; there, acting in the person of Christ.” Usage in This Examination: The in persona Christi principle is examined in Part Three in the context of Rome’s defense of the sacerdotal priesthood.” The examination shows that 1 Timothy 2:5 — “one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” — does not permit the mediatorial function to be delegated to human institutional representatives. Acting in persona Christi as a justification for priestly mediation distributes what Scripture declares exclusive without scriptural warrant. Latria Official Definition: The highest form of worship in Roman Catholic theology — the adoration and worship due to God alone. Latria is distinguished from dulia (honor given to saints) and hyperdulia (special honor given to Mary).”

Rome teaches that latria is appropriate only when directed toward God — and, because the consecrated host is truly and substantially Christ (God incarnate), the consecrated host is to receive latria when displayed in the monstrance for Eucharistic adoration. Source: Council of Trent, Session 13, Canon 6 (Denzinger 888):

“If anyone says that Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, is not to be adored in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist with the worship of latria, including the external worship, and that the sacrament, therefore, is not to be honored with extraordinary festive celebrations... or is not to be publicly exposed for the people’s adoration... let him be anathema.” CCC 2096–2097: defines latria as the virtue of religion by which God alone is given the worship of adoration. Usage in This Examination: Latria is a critical term in Parts Five and Six and Appendices B and C. Rome’s requirement that the consecrated host receive latria — the worship due to God alone — directed toward a visible physical object displayed in a monstrance, constitutes the direct application of the Second Commandment’s prohibition:” “Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them” (Exodus 20:5).” The examination shows that by Rome’s own category — latria as the highest worship — the adoration of the monstrance is worship of a visible object, which the commandment explicitly forbids. Magisterium Official Definition: The teaching authority of the Roman Catholic Church — specifically the authority vested in the Pope and the bishops in communion with him to authentically interpret and define matters of faith and morals for the universal church.”

The Magisterium claims to interpret both Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition with binding authority. Its definitions, when made under specific conditions (ex cathedra or in ecumenical councils), are held to be infallible. Source: CCC 85:

“The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone.” CCC 100:” “The task of interpreting the Word of God authentically has been entrusted solely to the Magisterium of the Church, that is, to the Pope and to the bishops in communion with him.” Usage in This Examination: The Magisterium’s claim to be the sole authoritative interpreter of Scripture and Tradition is examined in Part Six.” The examination shows that this claim creates a self-referential circularity: the authority of the Magisterium is established by the sources it claims to authoritatively interpret.”

The Berean principle (Acts 17:11) establishes Scripture — not an institutional teaching office — as the standard by which all teaching is tested. Mass (The) Official Definition: The central act of Roman Catholic worship — also called the Eucharist, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, or the Lord's Supper in Catholic usage.

The Mass is defined as the re- presentation of Christ's sacrifice at Calvary — not a new sacrifice or a repetition, but the same one sacrifice made present through the priestly act of consecration.

It is a propitiatory sacrifice that obtains grace for the living and the dead. Source: CCC 1322:

“The holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation.” Those who have been raised to the dignity of the royal priesthood by Baptism and configured more deeply to Christ by Confirmation participate with the whole community in the Lord's own sacrifice by means of the Eucharist.” CCC 1367:”

“The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice: 'The victim is one and the same: the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different.'” Council of Trent, Session 22, Canon 3 (Denzinger 950):” “If anyone says that the sacrifice of the Mass is only one of praise and thanksgiving, or that it is a bare commemoration of the sacrifice consummated on the Cross, but not propitiatory... let him be anathema.” Usage in This Examination: The Mass is addressed throughout the entire examination. Its propitiatory nature is examined in Part One against Hebrews' declaration of the finished sacrifice. Its requirement for priestly consecration is examined in Part Three.” The philosophical framework of transubstantiation required to make the Mass what Rome claims it is is examined in Part Four. Mortal Sin Official Definition: A sin of grave matter, committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent, that destroys sanctifying grace in the soul and results in the loss of charity — placing the soul in danger of eternal damnation if not repented of and absolved through sacramental confession before death. Mortal sin is distinguished from venial sin, which weakens but does not destroy the soul's relationship with God. Source: CCC 1857:”

“For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must together be met: 'Mortal sin is sin whose object is grave matter and which is also committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent.’” CCC 1861:” “Mortal sin is a radical possibility of human freedom, as is love itself.” It results in the loss of charity and the privation of sanctifying grace, that is, of the state of grace.”

If it is not redeemed by repentance and God's forgiveness, it causes exclusion from Christ's kingdom and the eternal death of hell.” Usage in This Examination: Mortal sin is central to the pastoral analysis in Part Six. Rome's distinction between mortal and venial sin creates the anxiety cycle examined there — because mortal sin requires priestly absolution before communion, and the adequacy of the believer's contrition and the completeness of their confession are perpetually uncertain, the system cannot produce the settled assurance Scripture declares available to every believer. Propitiatory Sacrifice Official Definition: A sacrifice that appeases God's wrath, obtains forgiveness of sins, and applies the merits of Christ's atonement to those for whom it is offered.

Rome teaches that the Mass is a propitiatory sacrifice — not merely commemorative or expressive of praise and thanksgiving — that obtains grace for the living and the dead, including those in purgatory. Source: Council of Trent, Session 22, Chapter 2 (Denzinger 940):

“And forasmuch as, in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the mass, that same Christ is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner, who once offered Himself in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross; the holy Synod teaches that this sacrifice is truly propitiatory.” CCC 1414:” “As sacrifice, the Eucharist is also offered in reparation

for the sins of the living and the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal benefits from God." Usage in This Examination: The propitiatory nature of the Mass is the central issue of Part One. Trent's Canon 3 explicitly anathematizes anyone who denies the Mass is propitiatory — not merely commemorative." The examination shows from Hebrews 10:14 that believers are "perfected for ever" by one offering, leaving no propitiatory work for any subsequent sacrifice to perform. Real Presence Official Definition: The doctrine that Christ is truly, really, and substantially present in the Eucharist — body, blood, soul, and divinity — not merely symbolically, figuratively, or by virtue of the faith of the recipient."

Rome uses "Real Presence" to distinguish its position from Protestant views that Christ is present only symbolically or only to the faith of the believer. Source: CCC 1374:

"In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist 'the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained.'" Council of Trent, Session 13, Canon 1 (Denzinger 883):" "If anyone denies that in the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist are contained truly, really, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ... let him be anathema." Usage in This Examination: The Real Presence doctrine is examined throughout Parts Two and Four." The examination is careful to distinguish between the Reformed affirmation of Christ's genuine spiritual presence in the Supper — received by faith, mediated by the Holy Spirit — and Rome's claim of physical, substantial presence in the elements."

The examination does not deny Christ's presence.

It locates that presence correctly: spiritual, by the Spirit, received through faith — not physical and substantial in transformed bread and wine. Re-Presentation Official Definition: Rome's preferred term for what happens in the Mass with respect to the sacrifice of Calvary.

The Mass does not repeat or add to the sacrifice of Christ — it makes that one sacrifice present again (re-presents it) across time, so that its benefits can be applied to those present at each celebration.

The prefix "re-" in this context means "again" in the sense of making present, not repeating. Source: CCC 1366:

"The Eucharist is thus a sacrifice because it represents (makes present) the sacrifice of the cross, because it is its memorial and because it applies its fruit." CCC 1364:" "In the New Testament, the memorial takes on new meaning." When the Church celebrates the Eucharist, she commemorates Christ's Passover, and it is made present: the sacrifice Christ offered once for all on the cross remains ever present." Usage in This Examination: The representation concept is examined in Part One, Section C — "Why Re- Presentation Does Not Rescue the Doctrine." The examination shows that regardless of the terminology used, any propitiatory offering of Christ — even qualified as representation rather than repetition — implies that the original sacrifice required ongoing application through priestly mediation, which contradicts Hebrews 10:14's declaration that believers are "perfected for ever" by one offering. Sacred Tradition Official Definition: In Roman Catholic theology, Sacred Tradition refers to the body of teaching that the Apostles received from Christ and transmitted to the Church through their preaching, example, and institutions — preserved in the Church through the Magisterium and expressed in the writings of the Church Fathers, liturgical practices, and conciliar definitions."

Rome teaches that Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture together constitute the single deposit of the Word of God, to be received and venerated with equal reverence. Source: CCC 78:

“This living transmission, accomplished in the Holy Spirit, is called Tradition, since it is distinct from Sacred Scripture, though closely connected to it.” CCC 82: “As a result the Church, to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is entrusted, does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone.” Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence.” Council of Trent, Session 4 (Denzinger 783): receives both Scripture and apostolic traditions “with an equal affection of piety and reverence.” Usage in This Examination: Sacred Tradition as a co-equal authority with Scripture is examined in Part Six.”

The examination shows that Scripture's own claim of sufficiency (2 Timothy 3:16–17), Christ's condemnation of traditions that make the Word of God of none effect (Mark 7:13), and the Berean principle (Acts 17:11) collectively foreclose Rome's elevation of tradition to equal authority. Furthermore, Rome's most distinctive doctrines — including transubstantiation — cannot be demonstrated from the apostolic era and therefore fail Rome's own standard of apostolic transmission. Sacrament Official Definition: In Roman Catholic theology, a sacrament is an efficacious sign of grace, instituted by Christ, entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to the recipient through the sacramental rite.

Rome recognizes seven sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance (Confession), Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.

Each sacrament confers the grace it signifies *ex opere operato* — by the valid performance of the rite. Source: CCC 1131:

“The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us.” CCC 1113: “The whole liturgical life of the Church revolves around the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments.” Usage in This Examination: The sacramental system as a whole is examined in Parts Three and Six.” The examination focuses particularly on the Eucharist as the summit of Rome's sacramental economy and on the pastoral consequences of a system in which grace is mediated through institutional rites rather than received directly through faith in Christ's finished work. Sanctifying Grace Official Definition: In Roman Catholic theology, sanctifying grace (also called habitual grace) is the grace that inheres in the soul as a permanent quality, disposing the soul to live with God and act by his love.”

It is distinct from actual grace (transient divine assistance for specific acts) and is the condition necessary for salvation. Sanctifying grace can be lost through mortal sin and must be restored through sacramental confession and absolution. Source: CCC 1999:

“The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it.” CCC 2000: “Sanctifying grace is an habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that perfects the soul itself to enable it to live with God, to act by his love.” CCC 1861: mortal sin causes “the privation of sanctifying grace.” Usage in This Examination: Sanctifying grace in Rome's framework is central to the anxiety cycle examined in Part Six.” Because mortal sin destroys sanctifying grace — and because the believer's ongoing standing before God depends on maintaining a state of sanctifying grace through the sacramental system — the system cannot produce the settled assurance that Scripture declares available to every believer. Romans 8:1 — “no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” — does not fluctuate with the state of the believer's sanctifying grace.”

It rests on union with Christ — permanent, objective, and unlosable. Transubstantiation Official Definition: The doctrine that at the words of consecration in the Mass, the entire substance of the bread is converted into the substance of the body of Christ and the entire substance of the wine into

the substance of His blood — while the accidents (observable properties) of bread and wine remain unchanged.

The change is total at the level of substance and imperceptible at the level of accidents.

This conversion is called transubstantiation. Source: CCC 1376:

“The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring: ‘Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood.’ This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation.” Council of Trent, Session 13, Canon 2 (Denzinger 884):”

“If anyone says that in the sacred and holy sacrament of the Eucharist the substance of bread and wine remains conjointly with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ... let him be anathema.” Usage in This Examination: Transubstantiation is the central doctrine examined throughout this entire work — addressed in Parts One through Seven, all Appendices, and the Conclusion.” The examination shows from Scripture that the doctrine has no biblical warrant, rests on a philosophical framework without apostolic authorization, contradicts Scripture’s declaration of Christ’s incorruptible glorified body, violates the blood prohibition reaffirmed by the Holy Spirit, and produces a pastoral system of anxiety rather than the liberty and assurance the biblical Gospel declares. Venial Sin Official Definition: A sin that does not destroy the soul’s relationship with God — as mortal sin does — but weakens charity and merits temporal punishment. Venial sin does not require sacramental confession for forgiveness (though confession is encouraged) and does not prevent the reception of the Eucharist, though it disposes the soul less perfectly to receive it. Source: CCC 1855:”

“Venial sin weakens charity; it manifests a disordered affection for created goods; it impedes the soul’s progress in the exercise of the virtues and the practice of the moral good; it merits temporal punishment.” CCC 1863:” “Venial sin does not set us in direct opposition to the will and friendship of God; it does not break the covenant with God.” Usage in This Examination: The mortal/venial distinction is referenced in Part Six in the context of the anxiety cycle Rome’s system produces.” The distinction creates the specific pastoral burden examined there — the conscientious Catholic must determine not only whether they have sinned but whether each sin rises to the level of mortal sin requiring priestly absolution before communion.”

This determination itself — requiring assessment of gravity of matter, full knowledge, and deliberate consent for each offense — is a burden Scripture never places on the believer approaching God’s table. A Final Note on This Glossary Every definition in this glossary has been drawn from Rome’s own authoritative sources.

No Protestant interpretation has been imposed on these terms.

No inference has been substituted for direct quotation.

The definitions are Rome’s own — stated in Rome’s own words, from Rome’s own documents.

The examination throughout this work has engaged these definitions as Rome states them.

Every critique has been directed at what Rome actually teaches — not at a caricature, not at a misrepresentation, not at a Protestant imagination of what Catholicism might mean.

If a Catholic reader finds that the examination has misrepresented any doctrine, they are invited to produce the official source that establishes the correct definition — and to evaluate whether the examination's engagement with the correct definition changes the scriptural verdict. We believe it does not.

The scriptural testimony examined in Parts One through Seven stands against Rome's doctrine as Rome herself defines it — precisely, officially, and in Rome's own words. The standard remains:

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” — Isaiah 8:20

APPENDIX F

The Pattern of Corrupted Worship

What God Condemned in His Own House

The prophets of Israel were not polemicists.

They were not debaters constructing arguments to win disputes.

They were men who stood in the council of God, received His Word at personal cost, and delivered it to people who in most cases refused to hear it. Jeremiah was thrown into a cistern. Isaiah tradition holds was sawn in two. Amos was told to go home and stop prophesying. Hosea was commanded to live out his message in his own marriage. They spoke anyway.

Because the Word of God burned in them and could not be contained.

We present their words here in that spirit — not as ammunition in a theological dispute but as the living Word of God that was true when it was spoken, is true now, and will be true until heaven and earth pass away.

We ask the reader — Catholic and Protestant alike — to receive it as such: not as our argument, but as His Word. And we ask especially the Roman Catholic reader who has come this far with an honest and humble heart to read what follows prayerfully and carefully — asking not "how do I defend my tradition against this?" but "what is God saying to me through this?" That question, asked honestly, is the beginning of the fear of the Lord. And the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

*"The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant."
— Psalm 25:14 Isaiah"*

— Worship That God Rejects Isaiah 1:11–15:

"To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats." When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear them. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood." God is not here rejecting sacrifice as such. He prescribed sacrifice."

He is rejecting sacrifice offered in the context of corrupted worship and covenant unfaithfulness. The sacrifices are multiplied. The incense burns. The assemblies are called.

The prayers are made. And God says: I am full of it. Who required this at your hand?

"Who hath required this at your hand?" That question deserves to stand alone on the page and be read slowly." When God has not required a practice — when it has been added by human authority, institutional tradition, or borrowed from surrounding religious systems — He asks this question. And the answer, when the practice is unauthorized, is: no one. Not God. God did not require it. The multitude of sacrifices. The burning of incense. The solemn assemblies."

All performed in the name of the LORD.

All conducted by the people who bore His covenant name.

All falling on the ears of a God who says: I am weary to bear them. I will not hear. The religious activity was real.

The institutional continuity was real.

The sincerity of many who participated was real. And God rejected it — because what He actually required was not the performance but the obedience. Not the mechanism but the heart.

Not the elaborate system but the simple, Wordgoverned worship He had prescribed. Isaiah 29:13:

“Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.” Christ quotes this verse in Matthew 15:8–9 — applying it directly to the Pharisees whose tradition had displaced the commandment of God.” The pattern is identical across the centuries: worship conducted with the right vocabulary, at the right institution, with the right external forms — but taught by the precept of men rather than the commandment of God.”

Their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.

Not by My Word. By theirs. Jeremiah — The Temple of the Lord Cannot Protect Corrupted Worship Jeremiah 7:3–11:

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, are these... Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?” “The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD, The temple of the LORD.” The threefold repetition mocks the incantation. Israel was using the institutional identity of the Temple as a guarantee of divine protection — trusting that the name over the door, the sacrifices on the altar, the priests in their vestments would protect them regardless of what was done within. Jeremiah’s word from God is unambiguous: the Temple of the LORD cannot protect corrupted worship.” The institution does not validate the practice. God’s name over the door does not sanctify what His Word condemns within. Jeremiah 7:21–23:”

“Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.” God strips the entire sacrificial system down to its foundation: what He actually required was obedience to His voice.” When sacrifice is multiplied beyond His prescription, offered by unauthorized priests, in unauthorized ways, incorporating unauthorized practices — it is not more worship.”

It is deviation. And God says: I did not require it. Jeremiah 44 — The Queen of Heaven, the Drink Offering, and the Cakes: A Warning God’s Own People Refused to Hear A Word to the Roman Catholic Reader To the Roman Catholic friend who has read this far with an honest and humble heart

— the following passage is brought to your attention not as a weapon but as a warning. It is God's own Word.

It was spoken to God's own covenant people — not to pagans, not to enemies of Israel, but to men and women who bore the covenant name of the LORD and who believed with complete sincerity that what they were doing was acceptable worship.

It was spoken by Jeremiah — the weeping prophet.

The man who loved Jerusalem so deeply that his grief over her desolation fills an entire book of Scripture.

The man who was thrown into a cistern for delivering this word.

The man who did not want to speak it but could not contain it.

He spoke it because God required him to. And God preserved it in Scripture because every generation of His covenant people needs to hear it. Read what follows prayerfully. Read it carefully. Do not read it asking: how do I defend my tradition against this? Read it asking the one question that matters: what is God saying to me through this?

That question, asked with a humble and hungry heart, is the question the Holy Spirit honors with an answer.

The Historical Setting Jeremiah 44 takes place after the fall of Jerusalem. The city has been destroyed. The Temple has been burned.

The Babylonian captivity has begun. A remnant of Jews has fled to Egypt against God's explicit command — choosing what seemed like safety over obedience to the Word of God.

In Egypt, this remnant has resumed a practice God had already condemned through Jeremiah in chapter 7: the worship of the Queen of Heaven.

God now confronts them directly through His prophet about this specific practice — and their response to that confrontation is one of the most sobering passages in all of Scripture.

The Practice God Condemned Jeremiah 44:15–19:

“Then all the men which knew that their wives had burned incense unto other gods, and all the women that stood by, a great multitude, even all the people that dwelt in the land of Egypt, in Pathros, answered Jeremiah, saying, As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee.” But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: for then had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil.”

But since we left off to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, we have wanted all things, and have been consumed by the sword and by the famine. And when we burned incense to the queen of heaven, and poured out drink offerings unto her, did we make her cakes to worship her, and pour out drink offerings unto her, without our men?” Read the specific practices God condemned: Burning incense to the Queen of Heaven. Pouring out drink offerings to her. Making cakes — baked ritual objects — to worship her. And read the specific defenses the people offered: We will not hearken to the Word of God — we refuse the prophetic word that condemns our practice.

We will do what we have decided — our own institutional and communal determination governs our worship.

We have always done this — our fathers did it, our kings did it, our princes did it. Tradition and authority validate the practice. Now read these five elements — the three practices and the three defenses — slowly. And then read what follows. Level One: The Queen of Heaven — A Title God Condemned That Rome Has Officially Adopted The Queen of Heaven — Malkath Hashamayim in Hebrew — was a specific religious figure venerated across the ancient Near East. She was Ishtar in Mesopotamia. She was Astarte in Canaan. She was Anat in other contexts.

She was the great female divine figure of the surrounding nations — worshipped with incense, drink offerings, and baked ritual objects bearing her image.

God condemned her worship through Jeremiah in chapter 7 and again in chapter 44 with the most severe language.

The worship of the Queen of Heaven was not peripheral apostasy — it was the specific practice that provoked God's final judgment on the remnant that fled to Egypt. Now open Rome's official documents. Pope Pius XII, *Ad Caeli Reginam* (encyclical, 1954):

“From the earliest ages of the Catholic Church a Christian people, whether in time of triumph or more especially in time of crisis, has addressed prayers of petition and hymns of praise and veneration to the Queen of Heaven.” The Catechism of the Catholic Church, 966: “Finally the Immaculate Virgin, preserved free from all stain of original sin, when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things.” The Litany of Loreto — an officially approved Catholic prayer recited in churches worldwide — addresses Mary as Regina Caeli — Queen of Heaven — and as Regina Angelorum, Regina Patriarcharum, Regina Prophetarum, Regina Apostolorum — Queen of Angels, Queen of Patriarchs, Queen of Prophets, Queen of Apostles.” The title Rome gives to Mary — Queen of Heaven — is the precise title God condemned Israel for worshipping in Jeremiah 7 and 44.”

This is not a coincidence of translation or a superficial resemblance.

It is the same title. Malkath Hashamayim in Hebrew. Regina Caeli in Latin. Queen of Heaven in English.

God condemned its worship through His weeping prophet.

Rome has officially proclaimed it, instituted a feast in its honor, and incorporated it into approved liturgical prayer.

We do not say that Catholics consciously worship a pagan goddess.

We say what Scripture says: God condemned the worship of a Queen of Heaven. He named the practice. He recorded the judgment.

He preserved the warning in His Word.

The title Rome has officially given to Mary is the title God condemned — and the warning God spoke through Jeremiah to those who refused to hear stands as written. Level Two: The Drink Offerings — Poured Out at an Altar in Unauthorized Worship The people in Jeremiah 44 poured out drink offerings — nesek in Hebrew — to the Queen of Heaven.

The drink offering was a liquid poured out in an act of directed religious devotion as part of an unauthorized worship system that God explicitly condemned.

In the Mass, wine is offered at an altar by a priest — elevated, consecrated, and in Rome's theology transformed into the literal blood of Christ, offered as a propitiatory sacrifice to God. The chalice is lifted. The offering is made. The drink is poured.

The structural parallel is precise: a liquid offering, made at an altar, by a human priest, as part of an ongoing sacrificial system, in an act of religious devotion directed toward a divine figure — in a system God has not authorized through His New Covenant Word, conducted by a priesthood God has declared superseded by Christ's eternal high priesthood.

We do not say the Mass is consciously intended as Queen of Heaven worship.

We say the structure of what God condemned — unauthorized liquid offerings, made at unauthorized altars, by an unauthorized priesthood, in an ongoing sacrificial system — is reproduced in the Mass. And God's verdict on unauthorized worship does not change because the vocabulary has changed.

“Who hath required this at your hand?” — Isaiah 1:12 Level Three: The Cakes — A Baked Ritual Object Bearing Divine Identity, Consumed in Worship Jeremiah 44:19:” “Did we make her cakes to worship her?” The cakes — kawwanim in Hebrew — were baked ritual objects used in the worship of the Queen of Heaven. Scholars identify them as flat, round wafers or biscuits stamped with the image of the Queen of Heaven — physical, edible, baked items that in their ritual context bore the identity and presence of the divine figure being worshipped.” They were made, offered, and consumed as part of the Queen of Heaven cult. Now consider the Eucharistic host in Rome's theology.”

The consecrated host is a flat, round, baked wafer — unleavened bread, produced according to precise specifications, used exclusively in the Mass.

Rome teaches that at the words of consecration this baked wafer becomes — truly, really, and substantially — the body of Christ: body, blood, soul, and divinity.

It bears, in Rome's theology, the full substantial presence of the divine person.

It is elevated for adoration, displayed in a monstrance for public worship, and consumed by communicants. A baked item. Flat and round. Bearing the identity and substantial presence of a divine figure in its religious system. Produced for ritual use. Consumed in worship.

The structural parallel between the kawwanim — cakes made to worship the Queen of Heaven — and the consecrated host — a baked wafer Rome teaches contains the literal body of God — is not constructed by this examination.

It is visible in the structure of both practices to any reader who examines them honestly and without predetermined conclusion.

We do not say Catholic communicants are consciously eating a pagan ritual cake.

We say the structure of what God condemned — a baked ritual object bearing divine identity, consumed in unauthorized religious worship — is structurally present in the Eucharistic host as Rome defines it. And the God who asked "did we make her cakes to worship her?" has not changed His standard for what constitutes authorized worship. Level Four: The Threefold Defense — "We Will Not Hearken" Jeremiah 44:16–17:

“As for the word that thou hast spoken unto us in the name of the LORD, we will not hearken unto thee.” But we will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense unto the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes.” The people's defense of their practice has three components. Read them carefully — because they are the same three components Rome offers in defense of transubstantiation, Marian veneration, and the Mass when confronted with the scriptural critique this examination has made. Defense One: We will not hearken to the Word of God.”

The prophet has spoken the Word of the LORD. They have heard it. They explicitly refuse it.

"We will not hearken unto thee." The prophetic word that condemns their practice will not be allowed to govern their worship." Their practice will continue regardless. Rome's equivalent: the Magisterium alone can interpret Scripture. Protestant readings of Scripture — however well-grounded in the text — are not authoritative. The Council of Trent has spoken."

The anathemas have been pronounced.

The Word of God as Rome interprets it through its institutional authority supersedes the plain reading of the text. Defense Two: We will do what we have decided.

"We will certainly do whatsoever thing goeth forth out of our own mouth." Human institutional determination — their own communal decision — is the governing authority for their worship practice."

They have decided." That decision stands. Rome's equivalent: the Magisterium has defined these doctrines. Papal authority has spoken.

What proceeds from the Church's teaching office is binding. Human institutional authority determines what is and is not acceptable worship. Defense Three: Tradition and authority validate the practice.

"As we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes." The practice has historical continuity." It has institutional support at the highest levels. Our fathers did it. Our kings did it. Our princes did it."

The weight of tradition and authority stands behind it. Rome's equivalent: the Church has always taught this.

The tradition goes back to the apostles. The Fathers support it. The councils have confirmed it.

The historical continuity of the practice is its own validation. Three defenses. Offered by God's covenant people in Egypt for a practice God had explicitly condemned.

The same three defenses are offered by Rome today for practices this examination has shown Scripture explicitly condemns. God's response to those defenses in Jeremiah 44 deserves to be read by every person who offers the same defenses today. Level Five: God's Verdict — What He Said to Those Who Refused to Hear Jeremiah 44:20–23:

"Then Jeremiah said unto all the people, to the men, and to the women, and to all the people which had given him that answer, saying, The incense that ye burned in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, ye, and your fathers, your kings, and your princes, and the people of the land, did not the LORD remember them, and came it not into his mind?" So that the LORD could no longer bear, because of the evil of your doings, and because of the abominations which ye have committed; therefore is your land a desolation, and an astonishment, and a curse, without an inhabitant, as at this day."

Because ye have burned incense, and because ye have sinned against the LORD, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil is happened unto you, as at this day." God's memory is precise.

He remembered every act of Queen of Heaven worship — in every city, in every street, by every king and prince and ordinary person across generations.

He bore with it until He could bear no more. And then He could no longer bear.

The result was desolation, astonishment, and curse.

Not inflicted on open pagans who never knew His name.

Not inflicted on enemies of Israel who had always worshipped other gods. Inflicted on His own covenant people — who knew His name, who had His Word, who had His Temple and His priesthood and His prescribed worship — and who corrupted what they knew with practices He had not authorized and had explicitly condemned. Jeremiah 44:26–27:

“Therefore hear ye the word of the LORD, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, I have sworn by my great name, saith the LORD, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord GOD liveth. Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them.” God swore by His great name.” He would watch over them for evil and not for good.”

The judgment was final and comprehensive.

This was God's verdict on His own covenant people for worshipping a Queen of Heaven with incense, drink offerings, and cakes — while refusing to hearken to the Word of God, while appealing to institutional authority, while defending the practice with the weight of tradition.

We do not pronounce this verdict on Roman Catholics. That is God's prerogative alone. We present what God said.

We trust the Spirit of God to apply it to the heart of every reader who is willing to hear.

The Pastoral Word This Passage Demands Jeremiah did not deliver this word in triumph.

He wept over Jerusalem (Lamentations 1:16).

He wished he had never been born rather than speak words of judgment over his own people (Jeremiah 20:14–18).

His grief was the grief of one who loved the people he was warning — whose agony over their desolation was inseparable from his faithfulness in delivering the word that condemned them.

We write in that spirit. To the Roman Catholic friend who has read this far: we do not want your desolation. We do not want your judgment. We want your freedom.

We want you to know the liberty of the Gospel — the direct, unmediated, uncomplicated relationship with the living God through His Son, by His Spirit, grounded in His finished work.

We want you to come to the table Christ actually set — bread and wine, covenant signs, the death proclaimed, the return anticipated, the living Lord present through His Spirit — and find there the rest He promised to all who come to Him.

What Rome has built — however ancient, however institutional, however sincerely maintained — was built without scriptural authorization. The Queen of Heaven title. The drink offering of the Mass.

The baked ritual object bearing divine identity.

The threefold defense of tradition, authority, and refusal to hearken to the Word.

These are the elements God condemned through His weeping prophet.

They are present in Rome's system. God's Word on them stands as written. Come out of her, my people. Come to Christ. Come to the table He actually set. Come to the Word He actually spoke. Come with a humble and hungry heart to the Spirit who will lead you into all truth. He will not cast you out.

“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” — John 6:37 Hosea”

— Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge Hosea 4:6:

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” Destroyed for lack of knowledge — not lack of religious activity. Israel's worship was extensive. Their sacrifices were numerous.”

Their priests were busy.” Their institutions were functioning.

What they lacked was knowledge of God's Word — and the destruction of that knowledge was not accidental.

It was the consequence of a system that had substituted institutional religious activity for personal knowledge of the written Word.

The people did not know the Word of God because the system they were in did not require them to know it. The priests knew the rituals.

The princes maintained the institutions.

The people participated in the prescribed activities. And God's Word — the law of His God — was forgotten. Not denied.

Not openly rejected. Forgotten. Replaced by the performance of the system. Hosea 6:6:

“For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.” Christ quotes this verse twice in Matthew (9:13; 12:7) — applying it directly to the religious leaders of His own day whose institutional religion had displaced genuine knowledge of God.” The pattern Hosea identified in Israel's corrupted worship is the pattern Christ identified in the Pharisees — and it is the pattern this examination has identified throughout Rome's system: institutional religious activity multiplied beyond scriptural prescription, displacing the simple, direct, Wordgoverned worship God actually requires.”

What God desires is knowledge of Him — personal, direct, Word-grounded knowledge of the living God.

Not the performance of prescribed rituals administered by an institutional priesthood.

Not the reception of sacraments through a mediatorial class.

Not the ongoing offering of sacrifice by ordained representatives. Knowledge of God. More than burnt offerings. Amos — The Rejection of Unauthorized Worship Amos 5:21–24:

“I hate, I despise your feast days, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies. Though ye offer me burnt offerings and your meat offerings, I will not accept them: neither will I regard the peace offerings of your fat beasts. Take thou away from me the noise of thy songs; for I will not hear the melody of thy viols.” But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.” I hate. I despise. I will not accept. I will not regard. I will not hear. Five rejections in four verses. God's categorical refusal of worship conducted in His name but not according to His Word. The feasts are real. The offerings are offered. The songs are sung.”

The assemblies are gathered. And God says: away with it. Take it away from me.

The worship God accepts is not the worship that is most elaborate, most institutionally impressive, most historically continuous, or most sincerely offered.

It is the worship that conforms to His Word — offered in the manner He prescribed, by those He has made priests through Christ, in the spirit and truth He requires.

“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” — John 4:24 This is the standard. Not tradition. Not councils.”

Not philosophical frameworks.” Not institutional authority. Spirit and truth — the Spirit of God working through the truth of God's Word in the heart of a believer who comes directly, boldly, and without human mediation to the throne of grace.

The Unified Prophetic Voice From Isaiah to Amos — across two centuries, five major and twelve minor prophets, addressed to both the northern and southern kingdoms — the prophetic voice is unified on every point this examination has addressed: Unauthorized sacrifice multiplied beyond God's prescription is rejected — however sincere, however elaborate, however institutionally supported. Worship taught by the precept of men rather than the commandment of God is vain — however ancient the tradition, however authoritative the institution. Images in the place of worship drive God's presence away — however beautiful, however reverently maintained.

The Queen of Heaven, worshipped with incense, drink offerings, and baked ritual objects — by God's own covenant people, defended by appeal to tradition, historical continuity, and institutional authority — is condemned with the most severe language Scripture employs.

The institution that bears God's name is not protected by that name from God's judgment on what is done within it.

What is done within it must conform to His Word.

When it does not — when it incorporates what He has not authorized, what He has elsewhere condemned, what He has explicitly prohibited — His name does not sanctify the corruption. His judgment falls on it. The prophets knew this. They said it.

They paid for saying it with imprisonment, persecution, and death. And God preserved every word they spoke in the Scripture He gave to His church for exactly this purpose:

“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” — Romans 15:4 “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” — 1 Corinthians 10:11 The prophetic record was written for us. For this generation. For this examination. For every Catholic and Protestant reader who will hold this document and decide whether they will hearken — or whether, like the remnant in Egypt, they will say: we will not hearken unto thee. The choice belongs to the reader.”

The Word belongs to God.” The application belongs to the Holy Spirit. And the invitation — always, finally, unconditionally — belongs to Christ:

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” — Matthew 11:28 “And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” — Revelation 22:17

APPENDIX G

In Honor of Anne Askew

Martyr, Witness, and Servant of the Word — 1521–1546

The Woman Behind the Witness She was born in 1521 in Lincolnshire, England — the second daughter of Sir William Askew, a knight of sufficient standing that his children were educated beyond the ordinary expectations of the age.

Anne received an education that was unusual for women of her time: she could read. She read Latin. She read Scripture. And at some point in her young life — the exact moment unrecorded, known only to God — she read it for herself.

What she found there changed everything. She found a finished sacrifice.

She found a risen Lord seated at the right hand of the Father.

She found a once-for-all offering that needed no priestly repetition, no ongoing immolation, no sacramental representation.

She found a direct and unconditional invitation: come unto me. Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

She found — in the plain text of Scripture, read with the hunger of a soul that wanted truth more than comfort — that what was being offered to her in the Mass was not what Christ had instituted. That the bread was bread. That the wine was wine.

That the Lord's Supper was a memorial of a finished work, not a re-presentation of an ongoing one.

That the priest standing between her and Christ was standing where Scripture said no priest need stand — because the veil was torn, the way was open, and every believer had boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus. She believed this. She staked her life on it. She was right.

The Marriage She Could Not Escape and the Faith She Would Not Abandon Anne's path to martyrdom ran first through an arranged marriage.

While still a teenager she was compelled to marry Thomas Kyme — a Catholic man her older sister had been betrothed to before her death. Anne had no say in it.

The marriage was miserable. Kyme was hostile to her Protestant convictions and eventually expelled her from the household. Anne left. She came to London. She read Scripture publicly.

She discussed theology with anyone willing to engage her.

She argued from the Word of God with a precision and a courage that astonished those who encountered her — and terrified those whose authority depended on no one reading the Bible for themselves and drawing their own conclusions.

She was arrested for the first time in 1545. Examined. Released. Arrested again in 1546.

This time they were determined to break her.

What they wanted was not merely her recantation. They wanted her connections.

Anne Askew moved in circles close to the court of Henry VIII — there were Protestant women among the ladies of the court, possibly including Catherine Parr, the king's sixth wife.

Her examiners were convinced she was part of a network. They wanted names. She gave them none.

The Examination — Scripture Against Institution The record of Anne Askew's examinations survives because she wrote it herself while in prison — a document of extraordinary clarity and courage that was smuggled out and eventually printed by John Bale.

In it she recorded the questions put to her and her answers — answers that were, from beginning to end, anchored in one source and one source only: the Word of God.

Her primary examiner was the Lord Chancellor, Thomas Wriothesley.

The central question put to her, repeatedly and with increasing intensity, was the question this entire examination has addressed: What do you believe about the sacrament of the altar? Do you believe the bread becomes the body of Christ? Anne's answer, in her own recorded words, was consistent and precise.

She believed the sacrament was a memorial.

She believed the bread remained bread.

She refused to say that the body of Christ was present in the bread in the manner Rome required — because she had read John 6:63. She had read Matthew 26:29. She had read Hebrews 10. She had read Acts 15.

She knew what was written. And she would not say otherwise.

When they pressed her with the words of institution — "This is my body" — she gave the answer this examination has given: that Christ spoke in figures throughout the Gospels.

That He was not held in Joseph's sepulchre.

That His body ascended to the right hand of the Father.

That the bread He took was bread after as before He blessed it — because He called it fruit of the vine after the alleged consecration. She had done the exegesis. In a prison cell.

With nothing but the Scripture she had memorized and the Spirit of God who had illuminated it to her. And she would not be moved.

When they told her the Church had defined the doctrine and she must submit, she said what every Christian who has faced institutional authority demanding submission against the Word of God must say:

"I believe as the Scripture doth teach me." Not as the Church has defined."

Not as tradition has determined." Not as the councils have pronounced. As the Scripture doth teach me. Five words. The entire Protestant principle. The entire Berean standard.

The entire sufficiency of Scripture in one sentence — spoken by a twenty-four year old woman in a prison cell under examination for her life.

The Rack — When the Body Could Be Broken But the Testimony Could Not When Anne Askew refused to name her connections at court, her examiners did something that was almost without precedent in English legal history: they put a woman to the rack.

The rack was a torture instrument designed to dislocate joints — stretching the body until the shoulders, elbows, hips, and knees were torn from their sockets.

It was used to extract confessions and information.

It was used on Anne Askew to make her name the Protestant women of the court. She named no one. The Lieutenant of the Tower — Sir Anthony Knyvet — refused to continue operating the rack after the first application, believing it had already gone beyond what the law permitted for a woman.

He left. Wriothesley and Richard Rich — the Lord Chancellor himself — operated the rack personally. When it was over Anne Askew lay on the floor of the Tower, her joints dislocated, unable to stand or walk.

They brought her a chair and continued questioning her. She still named no one. She still would not recant.

She still said: I believe as the Scripture doth teach me.

She later wrote of the experience — with a calm and a clarity that can only be explained by the presence she described: the presence of the living God with His servant in the darkness of the Tower.

She wrote that she was so racked that she could neither stand nor go.

She wrote that she was brought before the council again in a chair because she could not walk.

She wrote it without selfpity, without dramatization, and without any trace of the despair that her physical condition would have produced in anyone whose hope was not fixed on something beyond the reach of the rack.

Her hope was fixed on the finished work of Christ. On the intercession of the risen Lord at the right hand of the Father. On the promise that He had made — to her, personally, directly, without priestly mediation: him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. The rack could not reach that. It tried.

It failed. Smithfield — The Fire That Could Not Silence the Testimony On July 16, 1546, Anne Askew was carried to Smithfield in a chair — because her dislocated joints would not support her weight. She was twenty-five years old.

At Smithfield she was tied to the stake.

With her were three other Protestants — John Lassells, John Adams, and Nicholas Belenian.

The charges against all four centered on the denial of transubstantiation — the specific doctrine this entire examination has addressed. A last offer was made. The king's pardon was available.

She had only to recant — to say that the bread became the body of Christ, that the Mass was a propitiatory sacrifice, that the priest stood between the believer and God with the authority Rome claimed for him. She refused.

The fires were lit. Eyewitness accounts record that she sat upright at the stake — unable to stand, sustained by whatever held her to the post — and did not cry out.

The gunpowder bags that were sometimes tied to martyrs to hasten death had been attached.

When the fire reached them they exploded.

The crowd, which had gathered in the thousands, stood in silence or in grief. Some wept.

The Lord Chancellor Wriothesley — the man who had operated the rack with his own hands — was present. He watched.

Anne Askew was silent. Or perhaps she was speaking to the One whose body, in her conviction, was not in the bread on any altar in England — but was seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven, making intercession for His own, from whose love neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities

nor powers nor things present nor things to come nor height nor depth nor any other creature — could separate her. She was twenty-five years old.

She had read five lines of Scripture that were worth more to her than five Masses in the temple.

She had gone to the rack rather than deny what those five lines said.

She had gone to the fire rather than name the sisters in faith who had shown her kindness.

She died in the fire at Smithfield, July 16, 1546.

The Testimony That Outlasted the Fire John Bale published Anne Askew's written examinations — The First Examinacyon and The Latter Examinacyon — with his own commentary, in 1546 and 1547. They circulated widely.

John Foxe included her story in Acts and Monuments — the book that became known across the English-speaking Protestant world as Foxe's Book of Martyrs — where her testimony reached generations of readers who would never have known her name otherwise. Her testimony outlasted the fire. Her words outlasted her examiners.

Her convictions — grounded in the Word of God that neither rack nor flame could dislodge from her — became part of the bedrock of English Protestant identity and of the principle that Scripture alone is sufficient, final, and authoritative over every institutional claim.

She did not write theology in the academic sense.

She did not publish treatises or commentaries.

She simply read the Bible, believed what it said, and refused to say otherwise — at the cost of everything a human being can lose in this life.

In that refusal she stood with the prophets of Israel who spoke the Word of God against the institutional religion of their own people.

She stood with the apostles who chose to obey God rather than men.

She stood with every believer across the centuries who has looked at an elaborate religious system demanding submission and asked the question she asked: Where is this written in the Word of God?

She is with Christ now. Has been since July 16, 1546.

The body that was broken on the rack and burned at Smithfield has been raised — in incorruption, in glory, in power, in the spiritual body Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 15 — the resurrection body that belongs permanently to those who are in Christ Jesus.

She knows the answer to every question she asked in that prison cell. She knows that she was right.

Why This Work Is Dedicated to Her Witness This examination began — as its author has testified — when Anne Askew's witness rose to the top of the priority list.

When the reality of what she endured, and why she endured it, and what she refused to say, could no longer be set aside.

She was not a theologian with a library.

She was not a scholar with institutional support.

She was a young woman with a Bible and a Spirit-illuminated understanding of what it said — and the courage to say so in circumstances where saying so cost everything.

This work is the theological elaboration of what she lived.

Every argument in every Part and every Appendix is an expansion of the conviction she held: that the bread remains bread, that the sacrifice is finished, that the priest is unnecessary, that the Word of God is sufficient, and that the invitation of Christ is direct, unconditional, and open to every soul that will come. She said it in five lines. We have said it in many more.

But we have said nothing she did not already know — nothing the Spirit of God did not already teach her from the same Word He has preserved for every generation. To her memory — and to the God whose Word she refused to deny — this work is offered.

"I believe as the Scripture doth teach me." — Anne Askew, 1521–1546 "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." — Revelation 12:11 "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." — Isaiah 8:20 In memoriam Anne Askew Lincolnshire, England — 1521 Smithfield, London — July 16, 1546 Aged twenty-five years Racked for the testimony. Burned for the Word. Raised in incorruption."

At rest with Christ." — In memoriam — Anne Askew Lincolnshire, England — 1521 Smithfield, London — 16 July 1546 Aged twenty-five years "Racked for the testimony. Burned for the Word. Raised in incorruption.

At rest with Christ." "And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." — Revelation 12:11

— In memoriam —

Anne Askew

Lincolnshire, England — 1521

Smithfield, London — 16 July 1546

Aged twenty-five years

"Racked for the testimony. Burned for the Word. Raised in incorruption. At rest with Christ."

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

— Revelation 12:11

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ADDENDUM

Patristic Reference Guide

Early Church Testimony on the Lord's Supper and the Absence of Transubstantiation

Purpose and Scope

This Addendum provides a curated survey of twelve Church Fathers from the 1st–5th centuries on the nature of the Lord's Supper. Roman Catholic theology frequently asserts that transubstantiation reflects continuous apostolic tradition. The historical record refutes this claim. None of the defining features of transubstantiation appear in patristic literature:

- A metaphysical conversion of substance in which bread and wine cease to exist as bread and wine
- The Aristotelian substance/accidents framework required to explain such a conversion — this apparatus was not available until the 9th–13th centuries
- Any claim that a priest possesses the power to create Christ's body through the words of consecration
- A propitiatory sacrifice re-presented at an altar

These concepts arise only in the medieval period and are entirely absent from patristic thought. The decisive test is silence: if transubstantiation were apostolic, its defining features would appear in the Fathers who address the Supper directly. They do not.

When the Fathers use elevated or realist sacramental language ("is," "becomes," "body and blood"), they employ what may be called Sacramental Identification — calling the sign by the name of the thing it signifies — not Ontological Mutation, which would require a philosophically specifiable change of substance. The distinction is not Protestant invention; it is Augustine's own explicit hermeneutic.

Citations reference the Ante-Nicene Fathers (ANF) and Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers (NPNF) series. Where a Father is sometimes cited by Rome in support of transubstantiation, the analysis addresses that usage directly.

I. Early Patristic Testimony — Twelve Fathers

| Church Father / Dates | Source & Key Quote | Analysis — What It Shows, and What It Does Not Show |
|---|---|--|
| Ignatius of Antioch c. 35–107 | <i>Smyrnaeans 7 (ANF 1:89)</i> “They abstain from the Eucharist... because they confess not the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, which suffered for our sins.” | Context is anti-Docetist polemic — Ignatius defends the reality of Christ's incarnate flesh against those who denied He truly suffered. He is not describing a metaphysical transformation of elements. No mechanism of conversion appears. His "medicine of immortality" language (Eph. 20) is metaphorical and spiritual, consistent with John 6:63. Rome's citation of Ignatius proves too much: he also calls the Eucharist "one flesh" and "one cup" for church unity — not for transubstantiation. |

| Church Father / Dates | Source & Key Quote | Analysis — What It Shows, and What It Does Not Show |
|--|--|--|
| Justin Martyr c. 100–165 | <i>First Apology 66 (ANF 1:185)</i> <i>“...the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word... is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh.”</i> | Justin's "transmutation" language (the Greek is <i>metabolē</i>) refers to physiological digestion and nourishment, not metaphysical change of substance. He calls the elements food throughout. In <i>Dialogue with Trypho</i> 70 he explicitly identifies the rite as remembrance — supporting the memorial view of <i>Luke 22:19</i> . Justin nowhere employs substance/accidents categories, nowhere claims a priest transforms the elements, and nowhere describes a propitiatory sacrifice. |
| Irenaeus of Lyons c. 130–202 | <i>Against Heresies 5.2.3 (ANF 1:531)</i> <i>“...the Eucharist, consisting of two realities, earthly and heavenly.”</i> | Irenaeus explicitly affirms two coexisting realities — earthly bread remains present alongside the heavenly. This directly contradicts transubstantiation, which requires the substance of bread to cease entirely. Irenaeus uses Eucharistic realism to counter Gnostic contempt for material creation — the same argument does not require the elements to undergo ontological mutation. |
| Tertullian c. 160–220 | <i>Against Marcion 4.40 (ANF 3:372)</i> <i>“This is my body, that is, the figure of my body.”</i> | Tertullian's interpretation is explicitly figurative. He affirms Christ's real incarnate body against Marcion's Docetism — but the bread in the Supper remains a figure of that body, not the body itself. " <i>Figura corporis mei</i> " is unambiguous. This is categorically incompatible with substantial change. Tertullian also provides no mechanism of transformation, no priestly power of consecration, and no propitiatory sacrifice. |
| Clement of Alexandria c. 150–215 | <i>Paedagogus 1.6 (ANF 2:222)</i> <i>“[Interprets eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood as internalizing the Logos by faith and knowledge]”</i> | Clement's categories are entirely ethical and spiritual — "eating Christ" means receiving Him by faith, internalizing the divine Word. His framework is Johannine (<i>John 6:63</i>) and Platonic: the spiritual reality is primary; the material sign points beyond itself. No substance/accidents metaphysics. No priestly transformation. No propitiatory offering. |
| Origen c. 185–253 | <i>Against Celsus 8.57; Commentary on Matthew 11.14</i> <i>“[Calls the bread a symbol; warns that literalistic interpretation of "eating Christ" is not the correct reading]”</i> | Origen explicitly calls the Eucharistic bread a symbol (<i>symbolon</i>) and warns against carnal literalism. His <i>Commentary on Matthew</i> cautions that the bread is not, in itself, what sanctifies — it is the word of prayer and the faith of the recipient. His hermeneutic directly anticipates Augustine's figurative reading of <i>John 6</i> . No accidents without substance. No priestly power of creation. No repeated sacrifice. |
| Cyprian of Carthage c. 200–258 | <i>On the Unity of the Church 6 (ANF 5:423)</i> <i>“[Uses Eucharistic imagery to describe the unity of the one loaf as a figure of ecclesial unity]”</i> | Cyprian's Eucharistic references serve ecclesiological purposes — the oneness of the loaf signifies the unity of the church. He does not describe conversion of elements. His <i>Letter 63</i> discusses the cup but focuses on proper liturgical practice, not metaphysical transformation. No substance/accidents language. No propitiatory sacrifice language directed at the Supper. |
| Eusebius of Caesarea c. 260–339 | <i>Demonstration of the Gospel 1.10 (NPNF 2.1:49)</i> <i>“We have received a memorial of this offering which we celebrate on a table by means of</i> | Eusebius explicitly describes the Supper as (1) a memorial, (2) celebrated on a table (not an altar), and (3) consisting of symbols. All three points are irreconcilable with Rome's doctrine. The Supper memorializes a past, completed sacrifice; it does not re-present it. The elements are symbols — not substances that have undergone ontological mutation. |

| Church Father / Dates | Source & Key Quote | Analysis — What It Shows, and What It Does Not Show |
|--|--|--|
| | <i>symbols of His body and saving blood.</i> " | |
| Cyril of Jerusalem <i>c. 313–386</i> | <i>Catechetical Lectures (Mystagogical) 22 (NPNF 2.7:151)</i> <i>"[Uses elevated sacramental realist language, calls the elements the body and blood of Christ after prayer]"</i> | Cyril is the strongest patristic candidate for Rome's position — and the most important to answer carefully. He does use realist language. However: (1) he employs no Aristotelian substance/accidents framework whatsoever — that apparatus was not yet available; (2) his emphasis throughout is spiritual nourishment and faith; (3) he uses sacramental identification — calling the sign by the name of the thing signified — not ontological mutation. Elevated sacramental language is not the same as transubstantiation. The doctrine requires a specific philosophical mechanism absent from Cyril entirely. |
| Augustine of Hippo <i>354–430</i> | <i>On Christian Doctrine 3.16.24 (NPNF 1.2:563); Tractates on John 26.11–12</i> <i>"It is therefore a figure, bidding us communicate in the suffering of our Lord... Unless ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man... it is a figure, enjoining that we should have a share in the Lord's passion."</i> | Augustine's position is foundational and explicit. His "Rule for Figures" (De Doctrina Christiana 3.16) states that a command enjoining something wicked or absurd — such as literally eating human flesh — must be understood figuratively. He applies this rule directly to John 6. In his Tractates on John, he states: "believe, and thou hast eaten." Faith is the eating. This is not Protestant innovation — it is Augustine's own exegesis, predating both Trent and the Reformation. Augustine also distinguishes the sacrament (outward sign) from the reality (res sacramenti) — one can receive the sacrament without receiving the reality, and vice versa. This distinction is fatal to ex opere operato sacramentalism. |
| Ambrose of Milan <i>c. 340–397</i> | <i>On the Mysteries 9.50–52; On the Sacraments 4.4</i> <i>"[Uses language of the elements "becoming" the body and blood; appeals to dominical words as the agent of change]"</i> | Ambrose is the second strongest candidate for Rome, and again requires careful handling. He does use language of change and appeals to Christ's words as powerful. However: (1) he describes the Supper as spiritual food and spiritual drink throughout — the categories are nourishment and faith; (2) he has no Aristotelian substance/accidents framework — medieval metaphysics had not yet been imported into theology; (3) his language of "becoming" is consistent with sacramental identification (the sign takes on the name of the thing signified) rather than ontological mutation. Most decisively: Ambrose nowhere describes a propitiatory sacrifice offered by a priest, nowhere claims the bread ceases to exist, and nowhere mentions accidents remaining without substance — the silence on these defining features of transubstantiation is decisive. |
| John Chrysostom <i>c. 347–407</i> | <i>Homilies on 1 Corinthians 24.4; Homilies on Matthew 82</i> <i>"[Emphasizes trembling, awe, and union with Christ in receiving the Supper; uses language of the body and blood being present]"</i> | Chrysostom's language is elevated and mystical — he speaks of the Supper with deep reverence and uses body/blood language. However: (1) his consistent emphasis is on union with Christ, moral worthiness, and spiritual effect — not metaphysical transformation; (2) he nowhere employs the Aristotelian substance/accidents distinction that transubstantiation requires; (3) he nowhere describes a propitiatory sacrifice re-presented by a priest; (4) the silence on every defining technical feature of the developed doctrine is decisive. Reverence for the Supper and mystical language about Christ's presence are not transubstantiation. |

Patristic Reference Table — Twelve Church Fathers, 1st–5th centuries. No Father employs Aristotelian substance/accidents categories. No Father describes a priestly power to create Christ's body. No Father speaks of a propitiatory sacrifice re-presented at an altar. The silence on every defining technical feature of transubstantiation is decisive.

Methodological Note: How to Read Patristic Eucharistic Language

The strongest patristic candidates for Rome's position — Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose, and Chrysostom — all use elevated realist language. This language must be read in its proper framework:

- Elevated language about Christ's presence is not the same as transubstantiation. The doctrine requires a specific philosophical mechanism (substance ceases; accidents remain without a subject) that none of these Fathers knew or taught.
- The absence of the Aristotelian framework is not a minor gap — it is the entire doctrine. Transubstantiation is not a biblical or patristic term; it is a medieval philosophical solution to a problem the Fathers did not pose in those terms.
- Sacramental identification (calling the sign by the name of the signified) is a recognized and ancient interpretive category. Augustine makes it explicit. It accounts for all the realist language without requiring ontological mutation.
- The silence of the Fathers on the defining features of the mature doctrine — particularly the accidents/substance distinction, the priestly creative act, and the propitiatory re-presentation — is historically decisive.

II. Confessional Alignment — Westminster Confession of Faith 29.6

The patristic testimony surveyed above aligns with the Reformed confessional position, which is itself a summary of the biblical position:

“That doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of bread and wine, into the substance of Christ's body and blood (commonly called transubstantiation) by consecration of a priest, or by any other way, is repugnant not only to Scripture, but even to common sense and reason, overthroweth the nature of the sacrament, and hath been, and is, the cause of manifold superstitions, yea, of gross idolatries.”

— Westminster Confession of Faith 29.6 (1646)

The Confession's statement that transubstantiation is repugnant "even to common sense and reason" echoes the patristic witness: no Father was willing to reason his way into the claim that bread ceases to exist while tasting, smelling, and appearing as bread. The philosophical mechanism required to protect that claim from its obvious absurdity was not introduced until the medieval period.

The Fathers collectively affirm what Scripture teaches:

- No repeated propitiatory sacrifice — the cross was once for all
- No destruction of the bread and wine — the elements retain their earthly nature
- No carnal eating of Christ's physical body — the eating is by faith
- Spiritual reception — Christ is received by faith, not by physical consumption
- Memorial character — the Supper remembers and proclaims a completed redemptive act

III. Historical Conclusion

Transubstantiation Is Not Apostolic. It Is Not Patristic. It Is Medieval.

The doctrine of transubstantiation was formally defined at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 AD — twelve centuries after the institution of the Lord's Supper. It was philosophically elaborated by Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century using Aristotelian categories transmitted through Islamic scholarship. It was dogmatized with anathemas at the Council of Trent in 1551.

The early Church stands with Scripture:

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

— John 6:63 — *Christ's own interpretive conclusion to the entire discourse*

The decisive test — silence — is met. The Fathers never mention:

- A change of substance in the bread and wine
- Accidents (taste, smell, appearance) remaining without their natural substance
- A priestly power to create Christ's body through the words of consecration
- A propitiatory sacrifice re-presented at an altar distinct from Calvary
- A requirement to abstain from ordinary blood while consuming Christ's blood

Their silence on these alleged "miracles" is not an oversight. It is historical testimony that the doctrine did not exist in its mature form. A doctrine that required twelve centuries to develop is not a doctrine that was delivered once for all to the saints (Jude 3).

The patristic witness — read carefully and in context, with Rome's strongest candidates treated most rigorously — supports the biblical Supper as a spiritual memorial, a sign and remembrance of Christ's once-for-all sacrifice, received by faith alone, apart from sacerdotal mediation.

This Addendum reinforces the central thesis of IT IS FINISHED:

The Lord's Supper proclaims a finished work — it does not repeat it.

“It is finished.”

— John 19:30

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Wes Hazlett is the founder of Bodyguard Christian Apologetics, a ministry dedicated to equipping believers with Scripture-grounded answers to the doctrinal questions that matter most. His work focuses on the intersection of biblical theology, church history, and pastoral care — engaging serious doctrinal questions with the conviction that God's Word is sufficient, accessible, and transforming.

Wes came to apologetics not through the academy but through the pew — through encounters with sincere people whose faith had been shaped by systems that place tradition, institution, or sacrament between the soul and the finished work of Christ. That burden has driven every page of this work.

IT IS FINISHED represents years of careful engagement with Roman Catholic primary sources, patristic literature, and the biblical text — always with the conviction that the most loving thing a Protestant apologist can offer a Catholic inquirer is not clever argument but honest Scripture, stated plainly and without condescension.

Wes is committed to the Reformed evangelical tradition and the confessional witness of the Westminster Standards. He writes and teaches with the pastoral concern that doctrinal clarity and Gospel freedom are not in competition — that knowing what Christ finished at Calvary is the beginning of real rest, not the end of reverence.

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