

THE THEOLOGY OF THE EUCHARIST: WORSHIP THAT MAKES US WHOLE

1. Eucharist, Agape, Holy Sacrifice, Mass, Divine Liturgy: What's in a Name? (October 26)

Names we give to the Eucharist shape the way we welcome God's healing, presence, and fellowship.

2. The Words of Institution (Consecration): Are They Magical? (November 2)

Jesus' words "This is my body" make sense if we become aware of the many ways Jesus is present in our celebrations.

3. The Invocation of the Holy Spirit (Epiclesis): The Eucharist's Forgotten Act? (November 9)

The Holy Spirit is called to sanctify bread, wine, and the community.

4. The Great Thanksgiving (Doxology): What Does the Eucharist Have to Do with Praise? (November 16)

The Eucharistic turns everything into praise and thanksgiving to the Father.

5. "Do This in Memory of Me" (Memorial): Are We Remembering or Re-Living? (November 30)

The Eucharist is more than remembrance - it unites us to Jesus' death and resurrection, until he comes again.

6. The Eucharist as Meal and Sacrifice: How Do These Fit Together? (December 7)

We become a sacrifice to God by being united in one body through the sharing of one bread.

7. One Bread, One Body (Communion): How United Do We Really Become? (December 14)

The Eucharist heals us from division and isolation by calling us into fellowship with each other and with God.

8. "Go in Peace to Love and Serve the Lord" (Mission): How Does the Eucharist Shape Our Lives? (December 21)

The Eucharist blends into everyday life as God sends us out to love, serve, and be his witnesses to the world.

4. THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (DOXOLOGY): WHAT DOES THE EUCHARIST HAVE TO DO WITH PRAISE?

9. English *Thanksgiving*

10. Greek *Eucharistia* - *eu-* ("good") and *charizesthai* ("to show favor")

10.1. Grace is Greek is **charis**

10.2. The Eucharist/Thanksgiving is our way of *giving grace for grace – the sign that we acknowledge that all is grace, gift.*

10.3. It makes us *grateful* and *graceful*.

10.4. Giving thanks is more than acknowledging the gift.

10.5. It is *finding the delight/fulfilment that there is in giving.*

Acts 20:35 - Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

"There is greater happiness in giving than in receiving".

1 Corinthians 4:7 - What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

Augustine's Confessions 1:1 - Great are you, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is your power, and of your wisdom there is no end. And we, being a part of your creation, desire to praise you — we, who bear about with us our mortality, the witness of our sin, even the witness that you resist the proud, — yet we, this part of your creation, desires to praise you. You move us to delight in praising you; for you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.

11. Anthropological viewpoint

11.1. From an anthropological standpoint, gifts are rarely "pure." Gift exchange always involves obligation.

11.2. Even when it looks voluntary, a gift establishes or reinforces social bonds, status, or mutual dependence. The act of giving creates a network of reciprocity that holds communities together.

11.3. In this sense, every gift carries a kind of social debt. I means, "I am connected to you."

12. From the viewpoint of evolutionary psychology

12.1. Gift-giving encourages reciprocal altruism: helping others now in expectation of future help.

12.2. It also functions as signaling: generosity can display resources, reliability, or fitness, enhancing one's reputation or attractiveness.

12.3. Even seemingly altruistic gifts (like charity or parental giving) have underlying evolutionary benefits: they strengthen kin survival, alliance, or social standing.

13. Thus from an anthropological and evolutionary psychology point of view, gifts are *transactional*. They serve social or biological purposes that maintain cooperation and cohesion. Every gift is part of a wider system of exchange that sustains human societies.
14. From the Christian viewpoint of Eucharist seen as response to *charis*, to grace:
 - 14.1. The gift of giving thanks is not a duty but *a delight*. There is joy in giving.
 - 14.2. The gift is unconditional and non-transactional.
 - 14.3. This is why only Jesus can give thanks properly – and we can do so only in union with him.
 - 14.4. Hence the Eucharist as our sacrifice of praise is agreeable to the Father *because* it is taken up in Jesus' own sacrifice of praise.

Hebrews 13:15f - Through [Jesus] then let us continually offer up *a sacrifice of praise* to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.
15. Phenomenology
 - 15.1. We start perceiving the true nature of reality only when we see it as *gift* and us as the beneficiary of gift.
 - 15.2. We give because we have been given.
16. Gratitude in Mindfulness
 - 16.1. Moment by moment grateful awareness.
 - 16.2. Gratitude in mindfulness is the mindset and habit of noticing good things, appreciating them, and recognizing that they often come from outside ourselves (other people, relationships, circumstances).
17. **“Be Thankful” by Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850–1919)**

Be thankful that you don't already have everything you desire,
If you did, what would there be to look forward to?
Be thankful when you don't know something,
For it gives you the opportunity to learn.
Be thankful for the difficult times.
During those times you grow.
Be thankful for your mistakes.
They will teach you valuable lessons.
Be thankful when you're tired and weary,
Because it means you've made a difference.

The Sacrifice of Praise in Scripture

18. Psalm 50

1The Mighty One, God the LORD,
speaks and summons the earth
from the rising of the sun to its setting.
2Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God shines forth.

3Our God comes; he does not keep silence;
before him is a devouring fire,
around him a mighty tempest.

4He calls to the heavens above
and to the earth, that he may judge his people:

5“Gather to me my faithful ones,
who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!”

6The heavens declare his righteousness,
for God himself is judge! Selah

7“Hear, O my people, and I will speak;
O Israel, I will testify against you.
I am God, your God.

8Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you;
your burnt offerings are continually before me.

9I will not accept a bull from your house
or goats from your folds.

10For every beast of the forest is mine,
the cattle on a thousand hills.

11I know all the birds of the hills,
and all that moves in the field is mine.

12“If I were hungry, I would not tell you,
for the world and its fullness are mine.

13Do I eat the flesh of bulls
or drink the blood of goats?

14**Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving,
and perform your vows to the Most High,**

15and call upon me in the day of trouble;
I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.”

16But to the wicked God says:

“What right have you to recite my statutes
or take my covenant on your lips?

17For you hate discipline,
and you cast my words behind you.

18If you see a thief, you are pleased with him,
and you keep company with adulterers.

19“You give your mouth free rein for evil,
and your tongue frames deceit.

20You sit and speak against your brother;
you slander your own mother’s son.

21These things you have done, and I have been silent;
you thought that I was one like yourself.
But now I rebuke you and lay the charge before you.

22“Mark this, then, you who forget God,
lest I tear you apart, and there be none to deliver!

23**The one who offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice glorifies me;**
to one who orders his way rightly
I will show the salvation of God!”

Psalm 105

1 Oh give thanks to the LORD; call upon his name;
make known his deeds among the peoples!

2 Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wondrous works!

3 Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice!

4 Seek the LORD and his strength;
seek his presence continually!

5 Remember the wondrous works that he has done,
his miracles, and the judgments he uttered,

6 O offspring of Abraham, his servant,
children of Jacob, his chosen ones!

7 He is the LORD our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.

8 He remembers his covenant forever,
the word that he commanded, for a thousand generations,

9 the covenant that he made with Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,

10 which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant,

11 saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan
as your portion for an inheritance."

12 When they were few in number,
of little account, and sojourners in it,

13 wandering from nation to nation,
from one kingdom to another people,

14 he allowed no one to oppress them;
he rebuked kings on their account,

15 saying, "Touch not my anointed ones,
do my prophets no harm!"

16 When he summoned a famine on the land
and broke all supply of bread,

17 he had sent a man ahead of them,
Joseph, who was sold as a slave.

18 His feet were hurt with fetters;
his neck was put in a collar of iron;

19 until what he had said came to pass,
the word of the LORD tested him.

20 The king sent and released him;
the ruler of the peoples set him free;

21 he made him lord of his house
and ruler of all his possessions,

22 to bind his princes at his pleasure
and to teach his elders wisdom.

23 Then Israel came to Egypt;
Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

24 And the LORD made his people very fruitful
and made them stronger than their foes.

[25](#) He turned their hearts to hate his people,
to deal craftily with his servants.

[26](#) He sent Moses, his servant,
and Aaron, whom he had chosen.

[27](#) They performed his signs among them
and miracles in the land of Ham.

[28](#) He sent darkness, and made the land dark;
they did not rebel against his words.

[29](#) He turned their waters into blood
and caused their fish to die.

[30](#) Their land swarmed with frogs,
even in the chambers of their kings.

[31](#) He spoke, and there came swarms of flies,
and gnats throughout their country.

[32](#) He gave them hail for rain,
and fiery lightning bolts through their land.

[33](#) He struck down their vines and fig trees,
and shattered the trees of their country.

[34](#) He spoke, and the locusts came,
young locusts without number,

[35](#) which devoured all the vegetation in their land
and ate up the fruit of their ground.

[36](#) He struck down all the firstborn in their land,
the firstfruits of all their strength.

[37](#) Then he brought out Israel with silver and gold,
and there was none among his tribes who stumbled.

[38](#) Egypt was glad when they departed,
for dread of them had fallen upon it.

[39](#) He spread a cloud for a covering,
and fire to give light by night.

[40](#) They asked, and he brought quail,
and gave them bread from heaven in abundance.

[41](#) He opened the rock, and water gushed out;
it flowed through the desert like a river.

[42](#) For he remembered his holy promise,
and Abraham, his servant.

[43](#) So he brought his people out with joy,
his chosen ones with singing.

[44](#) And he gave them the lands of the nations,
and they took possession of the fruit of the peoples' toil,

[45](#) that they might keep his statutes
and observe his laws.

Praise the LORD!

1. THE GREAT THANKSGIVING - EUCHARISTIC PRAYER I (BCP)

The people remain standing. The Celebrant, whether bishop or priest, faces them and sings or says

1. PREFACE

Opening section of thanksgiving addressed to God the Father, recalling His works of creation, redemption, and salvation.

The Lord be with you.

People And with thy spirit.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them up unto the Lord.

Celebrant Let us **give thanks** unto our Lord God.

People It is meet and right so to do.

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, **give thanks unto thee, O Lord**, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God.

Here a Proper Preface is sung or said on all Sundays, and on other occasions as appointed.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

2. SANCTUS

Celebrant and People

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts:
Heaven and earth are full of thy Glory.
Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

3. POST-SANCTUS

Continues the thanksgiving, now focusing on Christ and salvation history. Leads to the narrative of the institution.

The people kneel or stand.

Then the Celebrant continues

All glory be to thee, Almighty God, our heavenly Father, for that thou, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there, by his one oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction, for the sins of the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

4. INSTITUTION NARRATIVE (CONSECRATION)

The *Institution Narrative* recalls Christ's words at the Last Supper, making His sacrifice present. It's called the *Consecration* to place the emphasis on the transformation of bread and wine into Christ's Body and Blood.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,

"Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying,

"Drink ye all of this; for this is my Blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

5. ANAMNESIS

Anamnesis (Greek word meaning "remembrance. memorial"): Memorial of Christ's Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension.

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, according to the institution of thy dearly beloved Son our Savior Jesus Christ, we, thy humble servants, do celebrate and make here before thy divine Majesty, with these thy holy gifts, which we now offer unto thee, **the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to**

make; having in **remembrance** his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; rendering unto thee most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same.

6. EPICLESIS

Epiclesis (Greek: "calling upon"): Invocation of the Holy Spirit to sanctify the gifts (bread and wine) and/or the faithful (partakers).

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us; and, of thy almighty goodness, vouchsafe to bless and sanctify, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, these thy gifts and creatures of bread and wine; that we, receiving them according to thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of his death and passion, may be partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood.

7. INTERCESSIONS

Prayers for the Church, clergy, living and departed faithful, and all people.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving; most humbly beseeching thee to grant that, by the merits and death of thy Son Jesus Christ, and through faith in his blood, we, and all thy whole Church, **may obtain remission of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion.**

8. OBLATION

Oblation (that is "offering"): the offering of the consecrated elements and the Church's spiritual sacrifice to God the Father.

And here we offer and **present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies**, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee; humbly beseeching thee that we, and all others who shall be partakers of this Holy Communion, may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction, and made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him.

And although we are unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto thee any sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden duty and service, not weighing our merits, but pardoning our offenses, through Jesus Christ our Lord;

9. DOXOLOGY

From the Greek *doxa* ("glory") and *logia* ("saying" or "utterance"): a proclamation of glory directed to God the Father, *through the Son, in the Holy Spirit*. It culminates the Eucharistic prayer by returning all praise and thanksgiving to the Father.

By whom, and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost,
all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world
without end.

AMEN.