

# A Maximum Understanding of the Body of Christ A Catholic Perspective

Revised edition with NDE supplement

This book explores the maximum interpretation of many existing ideas, and offers new ideas concerning the large topic of the body of Christ. These new ideas are offered within the framework of a traditional study of the body of Christ. It is not a book of *new dogma*, but of new or revisited *possibilities*.

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Christ, that is the entire body of Christ, was intended by God to be the fulfilled whole of creation. Angels, humanity, even the lion that lies down with the lamb were all intended to have a final form as Christ. We need not even wait until Heaven to begin our evolution into Christ, and all of this is supported by scripture, doctrine and the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

With this destiny in mind, many teachings take on a new maximized form. Perhaps not so new, as the saints have spoken of our destiny as Christ, even the divine Christ for two thousand years. St. John of the Cross, the desert fathers, the mystics and others all speak of us as the ongoing Christ, and even of our final divinization.

Christ — who is our intended destiny — was revealed progressively, first as the Trinitarian Son of God, then as the human Jesus Christ. We shall examine (among many other topics in Christology), this pattern by which God creates then unites his creation into himself. The spiritual angels found their intended destiny in the *spiritual* Son of God. God's human creation finds its destiny in and as the *human* Christ, who we know as Jesus.

This communion is an original intention and not only a redemption from sin. God's communion with creation proceeds not because of sin, but in spite of it. The "mechanics" of spirit, sin, virtue, Heaven, Hell, Purgatory and more will all be examined. We begin the study of Christ with a brief examination of God.

## **God**

God is all that is absolute existence. As absolute existence, God is necessarily uncreated. God's existence is not conditional upon any person, thing or act. As absolute existence, there are no conditions under which God cannot exist. Absolute existence does not preclude God from having other attributes, and we shall see that our own attributes of awareness, intellect, and free will existed first

in the principle of our creation — God. This article examines God incrementally, beginning with God as pure existence.

It is impossible that God not exist. If anything exists, it is either unconditional existence (God), or a creation of God, since there could be no other source. Either way God exists. God is not the world or ourselves, because both of these were brought into being, and are not unconditional existence.

God is both the cause and the effect of his own being. We observe that God's essence (to be), is the same as his existence (to be). This is quite different from the essence of a human (rational, physical being), or the existence of a human, (to be created from others). If we trace back the traits of essence and existence of all things to their source, we arrive at God.

It is impossible that something arise from nothing.<sup>1</sup> All creation depends upon the previous step of creation, but an endless chain of cause and effect could not include an absolute and uncreated being. Absolute being must therefore be outside of any creation chain. Scientific investigation into creation supports the idea of our finite universe arising from an infinite source. Regressing back to the point of creation shows that our many dimensions (spatial, logical, mathematical, spiritual, physical) existed once as a single super dimension. This super dimension is traced back to an infinite single point of being, which has no prior cause.

The key element of God is eternal or absolute being. *Eternity is the unified existence of cause and effect, God is the cause, and God is the effect.* Internal to God this absolute being may be *revealed* as distinct ways, and even divine persons.

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<sup>1</sup> Nothing is the complete absence of any being, (being is anything that exists: matter, energy, ideas, virtues, emotions). Nothing has no quality or quantity; no spirit, matter or idea; it cannot be measured or even thought of. The vastness of outer space is not nothing, because it can be measured, observed and described — it has qualities. From this we see that something cannot arise from nothing; existence cannot be derived from non-existence.

CCC 297 speaks of creation from nothing. This is understood to mean that God creates upon a foundation of nothing, but nothing remains nothing. When God first created, God alone existed. God could not take preexisting matter or spirit (other than himself) to form into creation. God 'donates' his attributes to creation, forming creation in his own image around its own core of nothing. Creation is the detached attributes of Christ. Scripture often states that without God, man is nothing.

Among the many attributes we observe in creation are awareness, intellect, and free will. All these necessarily had their origin directly or indirectly, in the principle of creation. Therefore the Principle of creation (God), is an aware and intelligent being of free will. God is not an unaware force of nature. God is a free, aware, and intelligent being — a divine person.

God cannot increase in ability or virtue, nor be corrupted or lessened in any way. Sin and evil are corruption of God's perfect and complete design in creation. Sin is the lacking of goodness, which was once present. Sin is the perfect made imperfect.

We necessarily have our origin, (via direct or extended means) in God. We shall see that God made all of creation for its own benefit and for God's joy, with the intended goal of full union with God. It was to have been that simple, but sin entered into creation, and with it came new alternate possibilities.

## **Spirit**

The topic of spirit should be dealt with before most other topics, since spirit is the "mechanism" as created by God by which creation operates. Events in creation are not a consequence of God pulling strings from Heaven, they are a consequence of humanity pushing levers on earth. These interconnecting levers are spirit: respect, moderation, reverence, love, hate. Just like matter, spirit is a creation of God. God is not a creation of the spirit world; rather, God creates and what he creates is first of all, spirit.

***Spirit is intangible but as real as matter; and it has real effect. Spirit is immaterial being. Being is anything that exists: a rock, an idea, energy, emotion, logic, a person. Patience, respect, hate, reverence, morality, memory, free will are all spirit, and all have real effect in our world. Spirit is the underlying framework of all creation, and corruption of the willed moral virtues degrades the operation of all creation.***

Spirit forms matter, spirit forms spirit, spirit forms events. Consider that anything that can be described in terms of logic, will, virtue, act, emotion, mathematics or physical law has these same immaterial spirits or qualities as its foundation. It is commonly

known that energy and matter are the same substance in different configurations. Spirit, matter and events, likewise have an equivalence. Gospel accounts of this equivalence are the episodes in which Jesus makes bread, arms, legs (Mt 15:31), from nothing but his will; even events may be formed, the many biblical prophecies by Jesus and others link moral action to distant future events. Immaterial acts are real, and have real effect in our world, beginning with ourselves. "Spiritual efficacy" is the principle of the real effect of spirit.<sup>2</sup>

Spirit by definition has no finite boundaries, will is the boundary for spirit—God’s will, man’s will. Because of moral free will, virtue may be corrupted into vice. ***God is not the origin of evil; abuse of virtue by moral beings is the origin of evil.*** Deviation from the original perfection of God’s moral design necessarily causes disorder in our world. Any deviation from perfection can only be degradation.

We might observe that the material world is the real and normal order of creation, but before our material world existed, spirit alone was the medium of existence, (as with the community of the angels). This spiritual universe was no less real, and cause and effect were real within this spiritual realm. Indeed the world of matter is more like an overlay for the world of spirit. Spirit is the unseen framework of the entire universe, and was created as such by God. The practical consequences of this are that acts of patience, moderation, justice, generosity, chastity are real with real effects. The vices of these virtues are also real with real effect in our world. Spirit forms matter; spirit forms spirit; spirit forms events.

The idea that everything has a spirit is a necessary truth because everything has some immaterial qualities: logical or mathematical descriptions, willed moral virtues, time, emotion. Hundreds of years ago, St. Thomas Aquinas spoke of any *thing*

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<sup>2</sup> At a human societal level, most legal systems include the idea of moral infractions, (which are increasingly less enforced). The idea is that a person's character is the core from which his actions derive, it is his own personal spiritual framework, and no less real than body or property. Therefore an attempt to corrupt a person's morals is a type of assault on the real character, will and soul of that person. Harming the character of a person will result in harmful acts in the future. Ancient Israel took severe steps to remove such immaterial threats to their society, as commanded in the Law of Moses.

having an underlying spirit that is mineral, vegetable or animal in nature. Disorder in our world is actually virtue which has become (partially) corrupted due to a lacking or misproportion. This corruption by misproportion comes about by willed mischoice by humanity.

We must give correct attention to God, ourselves and others in all our actions. If we fail in this, the resultant act is usually weighted towards self, at the expense of God or others. Sin is a misproportion of virtue, leaving a relative lacking of some virtue.

To take the quality of respect for example; we observe that when we give undue effort to self, dignity is corrupted into arrogance. If we fail to give proper moral effort to God, then irreverence results. If we fail to give others their due, then disrespect results.

In this example, if the student increased awareness of his own dignity, he would do well. But if he fails to also increase his efforts toward God's virtue of humility, then a relative lacking and resulting arrogance might result.

From this we see that moral corruption is a matter of lacking or deficit of what should be present. A lack of effort toward God leaves a relative predominance of self. The results are not theoretical, but take the forms of war, poverty, famine and disease.

Spirit interacts directly with spirit according to common elements. The biblical ideas of a family or a nation sharing in the effects of virtue or vice are examples. If a virtue is corrupted by a person of ancient Israel (to take a common biblical example), then all who share common virtues will suffer to some degree. Persons who are of the same: family, tribe, nation, world will all feel the effects of another's good or bad action.

This is the basis for the Biblical belief that children benefit or suffer from their parent's virtue or sin. It was true for Adam and Eve, and it is still true today. *This communal nature of spirit was created by God to benefit humanity*, but with the advent of the disorder of sin, disorder was shared in addition to goodness.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> A model showing the communal nature of spirit might be as follows. God is love (love is commitment), and all of creation is necessarily derived from love. Outside of God, this love is created love and may be corrupted by sin.

All of creation is derived from God's created and perfect love, but having this common and sustaining origin of created love, the parts affect the whole, which then affect the parts.

God's good judgment is also a factor by which spirit affects other spirit, matter or events. God is incapable of creating evil, but as our parent he does assign the evil of our sin to creation, according to his good judgment. In assigning the evil created by humanity, its disorder must be felt, but God could not assign evil with only an evil outcome possible.

A criticism of monotheism is that God seems to punish people by directing disorder (war, famine) upon them. In reality the evil of sin generated by humanity *must be effected within creation* (absolute divinity cannot be corrupted), God simply assigns our evil. God as our parent directs our evil according to his good judgment, for the highest goal — the salvation of souls. It is not a matter of God punishing our bad behavior, but of God assigning our disorder. This assignment may be made directly, or by extension, by the workings of nature for example. 1Cor 5:5 describes our evil being effected in this life, sparing condemnation in the next.

Just as goodness may be mediated into evil, evil may be mediated into goodness. It is a matter of anger being morally mediated into patience, greed mediated into moderation and trust, indifference into piety.<sup>4</sup>

The human soul is a spirit; the soul is a "form", which gives function and purpose to one's body and actions. A human person might be thought of as a soul to which the property of physicality had been added. ***One's soul is the totality of one's immaterial attributes, and the operating principle of one's being.***

Animals are considered to have a soul (though not immortal as in humans), which governs their operations. The human soul has traditionally been partitioned into that part which governs moral

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<sup>4</sup> The matter/energy equivalence is common science, with matter being a particular configuration of energy. Energy (gravity, light, etc.) is immaterial and considered spirit, but not all spirit has a direct equivalence with matter. Moral spirit has an equivalence with virtue, action and events, not matter. Patience or anger has no direct physical form, but modifies the action of moral being (anything that has existence is being, and moral being is simply willed action). Moral being may also affect non-moral being. Irreverence may equate to drought, which is the degraded action of proper rain.



activities (superior partition or spiritual soul), and that part which governs non-moral activities and the body, (inferior partition or material soul).

It is thought that the human soul is created by God using both direct and indirect means. Those faculties of the soul which govern the body are created at conception by biological means. Those faculties of the soul having a moral dimension are thought to be created directly by God.<sup>5</sup>

The human soul is not static, but has the ability to “grow”, and change. We may know our soul by observing our will, which in turn governs our thoughts and actions. Intellect, will and memory are properties of our soul.

Injustice and suffering in our world may only be truly eradicated by restoring its damaged spiritual foundation, which is the cause of evil. To give assistance after the fact is good, but even better is to prevent the disorder by avoiding those moral acts that degrade the spiritual foundations of our world and its people. This prevention is difficult to observe, because we are attempting to observe that which is prevented.

There is not a lack of good ideas in our world, but these do not take root in hearts because of moral disorder (sin) which corrupts will, faith, brotherhood and reasoning. War, hatred, greed and even disease, catastrophe and natural disasters are caused by the ongoing damage to the spiritual foundation of our world.

## **Christology**

### **God the Trinity**

We cannot speak of God creating any part of himself, but God does progressively reveal himself, to humanity and even to his own self. The Trinity is three divine persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Not three Gods, but three divine persons, the three of which

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<sup>5</sup> We mention multi-path metaphysics here. Metaphysics concerns itself with spiritual cause and effect. In proposing or defining the metaphysical path to an end, we too often assume only one path. For example we may say that God created Adam and Eve directly, or that God created Adam and Eve by way of evolution. The unlikely possibility exists that God used one method to create Adam and another to create Eve. It is possible that God will fulfill every good possibility during his eternal career, using every possible way, then create more projects.

constitute the one God. The Trinity of God is a mystery—not fully understood, and incapable of full understanding by any human.

Godhead is undifferentiated, unexpressed, absolute and singular being. Godhead is the simple, essential, unified, core God. Godhead is the necessarily first and fundamental revelation of God. Every movement of God — every act of thought, will and love further reveals and defines God. “When” Godhead acts in such a way as to reveal the divine Son, Godhead reveals himself to be God the Father. God makes revelation simply by thinking or willing. When God thinks of himself, his image the Son of God is revealed.

The Trinity is eternal, but far from static. In the Nicene creed, we read that Christ was begotten of the Father, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. “Before” God was revealed as the Trinity, God was revealed as undifferentiated Godhead. Even today Christ adds members to himself as the body of Christ grows.

The revelation of Godhead as the three distinct persons of the Trinity is thought to be non-optional. “When” Godhead thinks, he “first” thinks of himself, (what else, no creation yet). In doing so, Godhead reveals the trait of intellect, beyond the trait of pure being of the Godhead. When Godhead thinks of himself, he generates the complete image of himself who is the Son of God; and Godhead is now God the Father. The Son of God is the fullest expression of God. The Son of God himself is not yet *fully* revealed; the human children of God are called to be yet more expression of the Son of God, as the body of Christ.

The first and non-optional act of the newly revealed God the Father and God the Son is to love each other. The Father and the Son directing their wills toward each other generates the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit may be thought of as the bond of love (commitment) between the Father and the Son.

In example, think of two people having a common pursuit; this might be marriage or a business perhaps. As this pursuit is cultivated it becomes a real separate entity, this third entity becomes more than words. A marriage or a corporation is given a certain legal status and rights of its own. The efforts of the two people give real form to the third entity.

This example is necessarily inadequate. When God thinks and wills however; it is as real as it gets. The love of the Father and the Son toward each other is divine, selfless, full, intense, real, and permanent. Included in these thoughts is the possibility of creation outside of God. The Holy Spirit who results is divine, independent, full, intense and permanent.

The Holy Spirit is the acting agent of creation, sent by the Father and the Son, and is a real and complete divine person. The Holy Spirit is the result of the mutual willing of the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is not necessarily God's *proportional* will. It is possible, even likely that the Holy Spirit is God's compete, but weighted will, with favoritism toward mercy, joy and peace.

### Jesus Christ

Jesus is the created human nature of the Trinitarian Son of God. Jesus is the Son of God extended into creation. The doctrine concerning the divine and human natures of Jesus is summarized in the Catechism, CCC 464-483. Existing dogma of this hypostatic (underlying) union limits itself to declaring that in the single divine person of Jesus Christ there existed a complete man, and complete God. Jesus had a human body, soul, intellect and will; and every faculty of God was part of Jesus, including the divine intellect and will. These existed in the one divine person of Jesus Christ; distinctly and functionally, without confusion or opposition.<sup>6</sup>

The *distinct* faculties of soul of Jesus and the Son of God — will, awareness, intellect — are shown by the many instances of Jesus exhibiting will, knowledge and consciousness distinct from God, (Mt.26:39, Jn.6:38, Jn.5:30, Mt.24:36).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The early Christian Council of Chalcedon (AD451), declared that the two natures Jesus Christ — the human nature of Jesus, and the divine nature of the Son of God — each retains its own properties and are united in one person of Christ. "Christ" is a title, which has become a name for the entire body of Christ, which now consists of Jesus and many others.

<sup>7</sup> Definitions must be understood when speaking of the person of Christ:

— "Person" is the title given to a moral being. A person is considered human or divine according to his highest mode of existence. Jesus was a complete human man, and completely God. Since Jesus' highest mode of existence is divine, he is considered a divine person.

We have likely never considered the idea of one man having two intellects and two wills, (human and divine no less!) which operate seamlessly. There is no dogma as to this operation, but we may feel out an explanation.

We routinely think multiple thoughts. We might be cooking, ironing or even driving while our thoughts are fixed on our family, job or monthly budget. Likewise for our will; we routinely exert our will in two areas simultaneously. We may now envision two minds and two wills working seamlessly within the single person of Christ who had both human and divine natures.

One way to envision this arrangement is to recall the Trinitarian Son of God (who we call Christ), as having a will that was absolute in its principles. The Son of God then extends himself into creation as the human Jesus. Along with the human body, is given a human mind and will. *The human will of Jesus was a subset of the divine will.* Jesus was free to use his human free will within the bounds of the perfect divine will of the Son of God.

The human free will of Jesus was absolute in its core principles. It was not his human body or reasoning that made Jesus

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– “The Son of God” is the second person of the Trinity of God, also called the Trinitarian Christ. The Son of God may include others into his person, and does just this in enlarging the body of Christ. Jesus was not included into the Son of God, but originated from the Son of God.

– “Christ” is all who share in the life of the Son of God. Firstly, the Son of God, then angels, human Jesus and the faithful. Christ is a royal title for all children of God starting with his own Son, and ultimately including all things: Eucharist, the lion who lies down with the lamb, all else. Christ is the beginning and the end of all creation.

– “Jesus” is the man Jesus, who is now the pre-eminent individual of the person Christ. “Jesus of Nazareth” describes the human nature of Jesus. “Jesus Christ” describes the divine nature of Jesus. When Christ incarnates directly, Jesus results. When Christ incarnates indirectly, using his attributes to form nothing into something, humanity and all creation results.

– “God” is all that has absolute existence and being. It is impossible to become God, because God cannot be brought into being. However, God is free to include others into his person, and does this via Jesus who is the human nature of God.

– “Divine” refers to all who are fully included into the absolute being of God, via the body of Christ. This idea of divinization has been spoken of by the apostles and saints for 2000 years. The idea of our divinization is supported in catechism and scripture, (2Pet 1:4, 1Jn 3:2, Lk 6:40, 16:26; CCC 260, 398, 460, 795, 1988), St. John of the Cross also spoke of this idea. The book “Mystical Evolution” by Fr. John Arintero, is an extensive study of spiritual advancement from humanity to divinity and is still in print.

divine, but his (divine) will which was contained within the absolute will of God.

Jesus can be thought of as the absolute will of God, enveloped with created human attributes. Around his absolute core is non-absolute flesh, emotions, awareness and reason. His human free will was free within the bounds of the divine will. Jesus is the human nature of the Son of God.<sup>8</sup>

Under the control of the divine will of Jesus, was a human mind, body, emotions and reasoning. All these operated under the divine will, and without the distortion of sin. It will be seen that the sacrifice of Jesus was to enter into the sin of humanity and remediate it into his own virtue. This sin corrupted all except the divine will of Jesus, allowing him to morally reform sin in all the varieties that it was presented under.

The divine will of Jesus did not micromanage his human actions, rather he used his human will, which operated within the larger bounds of the divine will. Jesus' human will was used for human actions, while he had recourse to his divine, all powerful will in supernatural acts, to perform miracles for example. Likewise, the divine intellect of Jesus was used in prophetic knowledge, rather than in his work as a carpenter.

Christ is now the entire body of Christ. It is no longer a matter of one divine intellect and one human intellect. The entire body of Christ has millions of human minds and wills, not to mention its angelic members. We begin our participation in the body of Christ as a member of the human Christ. The human Christ is now the many fallible members who constitute the **ongoing Christ** on earth. We work toward perfection, in hope of one day sharing in the divine nature of God, (2Pet 1:4, 1Jn 3:2, Lk 6:40, 16:26; CCC 260, 460, 795, 1988).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The will of Jesus was divine and incorruptible. The human body and soul of Jesus was created like Adam, in that it was fully human but had no contact with sin and its corrupting effects. At the last supper, Jesus enlarged his person into the body of Christ, by including the apostles along with their sin. At this point the humanity of Jesus was corrupted and ended in death. His divine will remained incorruptible and mediated the apostle's sin into virtue, allowing their inclusion into his larger body of Christ.

<sup>9</sup> The destiny of every member of the body of Christ is divinization, (CCC 398). The human Jesus is no exception. Jesus (who is the human nature of God), is now fully

Our participation in the body of Christ is first in the human nature of Christ (which explains why we are not divine in this life), then finally in the divine person of Jesus Christ in Heaven. It is Catholic doctrine that the faithful are the literal person and body of Christ, (CCC 795, 789; 1Cor 12:27, Rm 12:5, 1Cor 1:2, 1Cor 6:15). The Catholic Church uses the term “mystical body of Christ”, with mystical meaning mysterious, but not symbolic. The single person Christ is now all who are members of the body of Christ. The faithful on earth constitute the human nature of Christ, and those in the fullness of Heaven are the divine nature of Christ. The single divine person of Christ is constituted of many, many human and angelic members.

Jesus did not require salvation—that is membership in the body of Christ—because he was a member of the body of Christ at his creation. We in comparison, are *adopted* into the body of Christ.

**In summary:**

- The body of Christ is no longer Jesus alone, but all who constitute Christ, as the body of Christ.
- The human nature of Jesus was divinized, and the task of remediation of sin now falls on the ongoing human Christ on earth, that us. This enlarged body of Christ has perfected and divinized members in Heaven, while the ongoing human Christ on earth works toward this goal.

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divine. Jesus is now fully divine and has no contact with sin. The human nature of the Son of God is now the ongoing Christ on earth—that’s us. God relies on the ongoing Christ to continue the redemptive mediation of sin into virtue, so that new members may be incorporated into the body of Christ. The one person of Christ is made of many individual members. Members each have a particular function, Jesus is the head directing the work of the members who now remediate sin into virtue. When the person of Christ (body of Christ) makes someone’s sin into his virtue, that person now exists within Christ.

The sacrifice of Jesus on the cross has a timeless element, and its remediation of sin into virtue is still effected. Jesus and all those in Heaven may not take on additional sin, but the sacrifice and remediation of all members of the body of Christ is propagated through time, within creation. In this life we mistakenly assume time to be the core of an act, but in reality virtue is its core. Time is an outlying attribute, and the virtue of an act is not limited by time. The underlying spiritual framework of our created world is more affected by an act than by its particular time of occurrence.

- Our initial membership in Christ is in this ongoing human Christ on earth. Jesus now awaits us in Heaven where we will be incorporated into his divine nature.

### **Pre-sin, Post-sin**

Christianity is often examined starting with original sin, but it is better examined starting from its ideal form prior to original sin. Sin, death and disorder were never a part of God's plan. Even salvation was never intended, because sin and Hell were never part of the plan. What was planned was our inclusion into the divine life of Christ in this life (CCC 398, 2Pet 1:4).

This book will examine elements of the Christian faith from the perspectives of both original perfection and subsequent original sin. The current form of salvation, Eucharist, body of Christ and more were all modified by the advent of sin. Today we assume such imperfection in our world, but it was never intended. Sin and death were never part of the plan, but our reunion with Christ our creator was planned, (CCC 398). With no death planned, we were to have made divine communion with Christ in this life.

Likewise Hell was never intended by God, and Hell was not a punishment designed by God in response to sin. Hell is failed final communion, Christ attempts communion with humans (and angels). All that cannot make the personal, then general communion is left behind, that's Hell, and it did not exist until the onset of sin.

What we call the two judgments are actually the two intended communions, which were corrupted by sin and now have Hell as a possibility. The **personal communion** planned by God is now corrupted by sin into the personal judgement, and now with Hell as a possibility. The **general communion** is now the general judgement with Hell as a possibility. This general communion was Christ's desire to reunite and fulfill all of creation. Everything comes from Christ, (Jn 1:3), and all is intended to rejoin Christ, so that "God may be all in all" (1Cor 15:28), even the lion who lies down with the lamb in Heaven.

Original sin even affected the Eucharist. With no sin or death intended, the Eucharist was to have been our inclusion into the full divine nature of Christ, in this life. We were to have communed with the divinity of Christ and the virtue of the entire body of Christ. As planned we still share in Christ, but now Christ

and the entire body of Christ takes on both the virtue and sin of humanity during the Eucharist.<sup>10</sup> This idea has consequences which are discussed in the follow sections.

Adam and Eve were to have attained perfection of human spiritual growth, and then entered into divine union with Christ, (CCC 398, 2Pet 1:4). Now with the onset of sin, we first share in the human nature of Christ, then later in the full divinity of Christ in Heaven...but what was intended was our simultaneous inclusion into the whole Christ, both his human and divine natures, and we were to do it in this life on earth. ***This divine inclusion may still occur in this life***; the divine marriage or union spoken of by the saints is this divine inclusion and it may be made in this life.

Christ was never intended as a sacrifice for sin, (because no sin was planned). We were to have communicated with Christ in this life. Jesus Christ was never intended as our sacrifice, but as our God, parent and guide in this life. Jesus Christ incarnated not because of sin, but in spite of sin. Sin became an obstacle that Jesus Christ overcame in order to make his intended communion with humanity.

The first persons intended for divine inclusion into Christ were not Adam and Eve, but the angels. The angels were not and are not helpful outsiders. ***Those who were able to make communion with Christ, did so and are now full divine members of the body of Christ.*** This divine communion was made by the Son of God directly, since the human Jesus did not then exist.

These topics and more are presented here as the standard for Catholicism; these ideas have existed for as long as the faith, but are too often not included in Catholic teaching.

The life purpose for any human was not to live it in our human natures. The ultimate purpose of each life is divinization and union with the divine person of Jesus Christ. We were not to live our lives on earth, we were to live as Christ (who is the entire body of Christ) on earth. The resurrection was never intended because death was never intended. We were to have entered into the human and divine natures of Jesus Christ simultaneously. Heaven is the person of Christ, and we would have lived Heaven on earth. Let

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<sup>10</sup> The human nature of Christ (who is now the faithful on earth) takes on sin and remediates it. The divine nature of Christ (all those in Heaven) have no contact with sin, and positive hope and prayer are their efforts.



us use this higher standard of intended divine inclusion as our basis for all other elements of the Catholic faith.<sup>11</sup>

### *Eucharistic Christ*

Just as Jesus is the Son of God in the form of man, the Eucharist is the Son of God in the form of bread and wine. Just as Jesus had created and divine natures, so does the Eucharist have the limitations of its created form, while sharing in the unlimited Divinity. The Eucharist is not the single person of Jesus, but one member of the entire body of Christ.

To understand the Eucharist one must understand that Christ is now the entire body of Christ. Christ is a title, become a name for the many who are now the entire body of Christ. Christ is not Jesus alone, but includes angelic members, bread and wine, and in the final consummation, when God will be All in all (1Cor 15:28), Christ will even be the lion who lies down with the lamb. When all this is considered, it becomes easier to envision that part of the divine body of Christ exists in the forms of bread and wine.

The Eucharistic host alone is simply non-divine bread, but the Eucharistic host does not exist alone, any more than the human Jesus was limited to non-divinity. The Eucharistic host is a non-human member of the body of Christ. It is this particular member which we receive in communion. Short of a miracle, we do not receive human flesh, because the Eucharist is divinized bread and wine, not divinized flesh.

The bread and wine however are not isolated from Jesus, and because of the communion of the entire body of Christ, we receive Jesus and all members when we receive the Eucharist.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> In a nutshell, Protestant theology has Jesus being incarnated for the purpose of saving us from sin, so that we may live our lives in Heaven. Catholic theology teaches that our divine union with Christ was intended from eternity (CCC 398), and we were to reunite with Jesus Christ and live Heaven (who is the person of Christ) on earth. Sin modified the details of this plan, but not the core plan. There is a strong element of agency in Protestant theology, (angels and even humans are agents, but not the person of Christ). There is a strong element of personality in Catholicism, (angels and humans actually become the person of Christ, who is now the entire body of Christ). See the following topics in this book for details of these ideas.

<sup>12</sup> The physical member of Christ consumed is bread, not Jesus. Therefore the answer to the oft asked question "Is the Eucharist cannibalism?", is 'no'. We eat Eucharistic

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