

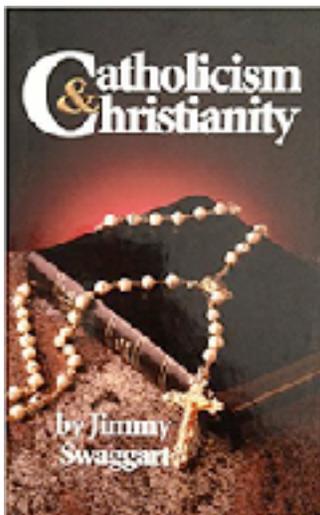
Who Says the Mass is a Sacrifice?

Jimmy Swaggart says it is NOT and wrote:

“The Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation is, without question, one of the most absurd doctrines ever imposed on a trusting public... Roman Catholic errors are inevitably human innovations that were inserted into the church during the early centuries. This teaching on the Eucharist follows this pattern.



“In the first century, as described in the New Testament, Holy Communion was a meal of fellowship eaten as a memorial to the death of Christ and a symbol of unity among Christians both with each other and with Christ.



“In the second century it began to shift toward a *ceremony*, in which Christ was present in some undefined form. This was not yet the eventual Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation which was a development of the Middle Ages but it was a *beginning* in this unfortunate direction.

“By the third century the idea of sacrifice began to intrude, whereby Christ's body and blood were mysteriously produced by an ordained priest for the gratification and benefit of both the living and the dead.”

Oh, really?!?! Look what the first century Christians taught.

Didache, written in 1st Century:

“Assemble on the Lord’s Day, and break bread and offer the Eucharist; but **first make confession of your faults**, so that your **sacrifice may be a pure one**. Anyone who has a difference with his fellow is not to take part with you until they have been reconciled, so as **to avoid any profanation of your sacrifice**. For **this is the offering** of which the Lord has said, ‘Everywhere and always bring me a **sacrifice that is undefiled**, for I am a great king, says the Lord, and my name is the wonder of nations’ [Malachi 1:11].

Clement of Rome, 3rd successor of St. Peter wrote, “Our sin will not be small if we eject from the episcopate [bishop or group of presiding bishops] those who blamelessly and holily have offered its Sacrifices.”⁴¹ (Clement of Rome, *First Epistle to the Corinthians* 44 (written between 60 and 96 AD), in Jurgens, *Faith of the Early Fathers*, 1:11.)



According to Protestant historian Philip Schaff, “The Lord’s Supper was universally regarded not only as a sacrament, but also as a sacrifice, the true and eternal sacrifice of the new covenant, superseding all the provisional and typical sacrifices of the old; taking the place particularly of the passover, or the feast of the typical redemption from Egypt” (*History of the Christian Church*, 2:245).

Biblical Analysis of Sacrifice:

Mal 1:6-12 and **1 Cor 10:14-21** In both of these two passages, one from the Old Testament and one from the New, we read of something called “the Table of the Lord.” One might ask what is the Table of the Lord”?

The Table of the Lord is a synonym for “altar” which in the context of Malachi is a place of animal sacrifice.



The Protestant United Bible Society Handbook on Malachi (used for assistance in translating Scripture) comments on this phrase, “The word **table** is often used in the

Old Testament to refer to the table on which the bread of God’s presence was placed (Exo 25:23–30); but in the present context it clearly has a wider meaning, and may be translated “altar,” Indeed the whole Temple ritual may be implied. As verse 8 shows, the prophet has animal sacrifices particularly in mind...”

(David J. Clark and Howard A. Hatton, *A Handbook on Malachi*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 2002), 383.)

Let’s allow Scripture to interpret Scripture!

Malachi 1:6-12

“A son honors *his* father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?” says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name. But you say, ‘How have we despised Your name?’



7 “You are **presenting defiled food** upon My altar. But you say, ‘How have we defiled You?’ In that you say, ‘**The table of the LORD** is to be despised.’

11 “For from the rising of the sun even to its setting, My name *will be* great among the nations, and in every place incense is going to be offered to My name, and a **grain offering** *that is* pure; for My name *will be* great among the nations,” says the LORD of hosts.

12 “But you are profaning it, in that you say, ‘**The table of the Lord** is defiled, and as for its fruit, its **food** is to be despised.’

1 Corinthians 10:14 “14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

15. **I** speak as to wise men; you judge what I say.

16. Is not the cup of blessing which we Christians bless a **participation** in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we Christians break a **participation** in the body of Christ?



17 Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread.

18 Look at the nation Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices **participants** in the altar?

19 What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol

is anything?

20 No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God; and I do not want you to become **participants** in demons.

21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot **partake** of the **table of the Lord** [altar] and the table of demons.

St. Paul Compares Three Sacrifices: Israel's, Pagans and the Christian Sacrifice

Sacrifice	Sacrifices	Participants...	Given to	Altar
Israel	Animals, etc.	...in the Altar	Yahweh	Temple Altar
Pagan (Gentile)	Animals, things	...in demons	Demons	Table of Demons
Christian	Bread & Wine	... in Body & Blood of Christ	God	Table of the Lord

It would seem Paul is saying that there are three types of sacrifices known to the local Christians at the time of his writing, and prevalent in their society.

It seems quite obvious if we compare the usage of the “Table of the Lord” in Malachi and in 1 Corinthians — that the Altar in the Catholic Church, which is called the Table of the Lord, is actually an altar of sacrifice. We partake of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Revelation 5:6 “And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders **a Lamb standing, as if slain**, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.” Jesus still presented before the throne of God as the eternal sacrifice which is made present again in space and time.

1 John 2:1-2 “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we **have** an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; 2 and He Himself **is** the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the whole world.”



The image to the right is entitled “The adoration of the Lamb” and is taken from Revelation 5 where the slain

lamb is standing in heaven as the eternal sacrifice.

No just our past sacrifice, but our sacrifice *today!*

“Do this in remembrance of Me” is loaded with Sacrificial overtones!

Early Church Precedent

Read *Crossing the Tiber* for Fathers on Sacrifice

Ignatius “Make certain, therefore, that you all observe one common Eucharist; for there is but one Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, and but one cup of union with His Blood, and one single altar of sacrifice—even as also there is but one bishop, with his clergy and my own fellow-servitors the deacons.

The Navarre Bible, volume on the Minor Prophets says, “Therefore, the early Christian writers read this announcement [Malachi’s new sacrifice or offering on the Table of the Lord) as a prophecy of the sacrifice of the Eucharist: “Gathered together every Sunday, break bread and give thanks after you have confessed your sins, so that your sacrifice will be pure. No man who is in dispute with his neighbour should join in the gathering until they are reconciled to one another, so that the sacrifice will not be profaned. For this is the sacrifice of which the Lord said: *From the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is offered to my name, and a pure offering; for my name is great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts*” (*Didaché*, 14, 1–3).”

“This interpretation, which runs through virtually all the Fathers, found its way into the teaching of the Magisterium: “This is the pure offering, which cannot be defiled no matter how unworthy and evil those who profane it are; for thus God told us through the prophet Malachi, when he said that a pure offering be made to his Name, the Name that is great among the nations (cf. Mal 1:11)” (Council of Trent, *Doctrine on the sacrifice of the Mass*, chap. 1).

(James Gavigan, Brian McCarthy, and Thomas McGovern, eds., [*Minor Prophets*](#), The Navarre Bible (Dublin; New York: Four Courts Press; Scepter Publishers, 2005), 343.)