



Dixie-ese—Part 1

by Joe Sixpack

I can't recall whether I've mentioned it in previous installments, but I became a Catholic when I lived in the deep South. I was like a fish out of water down there, because we "Yankees is differ'nt". Anyway, that's where I began working in lay evangelization. I was reminiscing the other day about some of my experiences in evangelization. People are no different there than in the North... sort of... but the deep South does offer some unique challenges. For instance, I had to become proficient in a language I call Dixie-ese. To demonstrate my point, I'd like to relate a memorable incident here for you. It's an exchange between me and a man who eventually became my godson; his name is Len. I warn you, though, unless you're good with languages, Dixie-ese is apt to be a little difficult to understand.

Joe: Okay, Len, let's think for a moment about what we've discussed before we begin this lesson. First we talked about the nature and existence of God, and His creation in man and the angels. We've also covered Christ, His virgin birth, and the Immaculate Conception.

Len: Yeah. Ah still cain't believe that y'all Cath'lics didn't whup Madonna fer stealin' that.

Joe: We've all been tempted, believe me. Anyway, we've covered all the creed, paying particularly close attention to the divine origins of the Catholic Church.

Len: Humph. That's when Ah wanted ta rearrange yore grill work!

Joe: Why, Len?

Len: 'Cause ya was always tawkin' 'bout the Church sez this an' the Church sez that. Church, Church, Church. Ya've said lots o' good stuff, Joe, but anyone can claim that stuff. What Ah wanna know is what's the Cath'lic Church got what nobody else's got? What makes y'all thank yore so special?

Joe: Len, that's what I want to talk about today. After we finished the creed we began work on the sacraments.

Len: That stuff sounds purddy blah too, Joe. So what special sac-r-ment we gonna look at today? Yore startin' ta bore me.

Joe: Today we'll look at the Holy Eucharist.

Len: The what?

Joe: Eucharist, the special sacrament. The Holy Eucharist is the very heart of our holy and ancient faith. Christianity makes absolutely no sense without this most precious of the divinely-instituted sacraments. It's beyond my imagination what attraction exists in non-Catholic Christianity for those who don't accept

the fullness of Christ's teaching on the Holy Eucharist. It is the singular truth of the Holy Eucharist that has made me fall helplessly, hopelessly, passionately in love with Jesus and His Catholic Church.

Len: Sounds in 'restin', but why does it make ya love the Church?

Joe: Because you won't find the Holy Eucharist in any Protestant church.

Len: Okay. So what izzit?

Joe: I'm going to teach you this first of several lessons on the Eucharist strictly from the Bible. We're going to start at the Last Supper. Let's look here at Luke 22. We'll begin with verses 14 and 15. It says: "And when the hour came, he sat at table, and the apostles with Him. And he said to them, 'I have earnestly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.'" Why do you think Jesus would earnestly desire to share this particular passover with the apostles? What makes this one any different from any other?

Len: Ah reckon 'cause He knew it'd be His last.

Joe: If you were on death row like He was about to be, would you earnestly desire your last meal?

Len: Ah see yore point. Ah don't reckon Ah would. So whah did He wanna eat this'n?

Joe: Let's read on and see. In verses 19 and 20 it says, "And he took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' And likewise the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.'" Matthew, who was present and gives a first-hand account, tells the story about the cup a little differently. In Matthew 26:27-28, it says, "And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.'" When Jesus said "This is my Body," the substance of the bread was changed into the true Body of Jesus Christ. Only the appearances of the bread remained—that is, all that remained of the bread are those things which effect the senses: taste, appearance, touch, and smell. The same is true of the wine. When Jesus said "This is my Blood," the entire substance of the wine turned into His real Blood. Therefore, the divine Jesus' Body and Blood are really present in the Holy Eucharist.

Len: What kinda idiot ya take me fer, Joe? That's just a bunch o' symbol stuff. We used to do that ever' fifth Sunday at church when Ah was a young'n. Don't hand me that!

Joe: Settle down, Len, and answer this question: Can you condemn your soul to hell for abusing a symbol?

Len: Course not! That's stupid!

Joe: You're right, it is stupid. But if the Eucharist is only a symbol, why did Paul say you condemn yourself if you receive it unworthily?

Len: He didn't say no sucha thang.

Joe: Oh, but He did. Let's look at I Corinthians 11:27-29. Paul writes: "Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself." If, as you say, the Eucharist is just a symbol, why does Paul say an unworthy man (that is, a man in mortal sin) will be profaning the body and blood of Christ? Why does He say that such a man will be drinking judgment on himself? That's pretty strong for a symbol.

I've run out of room, so I'll continue this next week. Sometimes people can better relate to What We Believe... Why We Believe It through stories—even if they are in Dixie-ese. Be sure to ask your questions at JoeSixpackAnswers.com. and sign up for my free email course and my weekly free webinars.