

WHAT DID OUR REFORMERS TEACH?

Church Association Tract 119

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"Feeding on Christ, in the heart, by faith, with thanksgiving," is the Christian's *daily privilege and daily necessity*. Unless he thus eats Christ's flesh, and drinks His blood," or, *equivalent words*, "*dwells in Christ, and Christ in him*," there is "no" spiritual "life" in him. —(St John vi. 56.)

The setting forth of this *truth*, so plainly revealed, and so simple in its very mystery, is the only safeguard against error respecting the Lord's Supper.

There cannot be *two* ways of "eating Christ's body" and "drinking His blood;" and he who does it "by faith" *daily*, will also do it "by faith," when, in communion with his brethren, in the special act of sacramental *remembrance* at the Lord's Table, he realizes the *real presence*, promised by the Saviour, "whenever two or three are gathered together in His Name."

This is what the Reformers taught.

Thus Tyndale says:—"The Papists draw and wrest the 6th of John to the carnal and fleshly eating of Christ's body in the mouth, when it only meaneth of eating by *faith*. For when Christ said, 'Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you,' this *cannot* be understood of the Sacrament. For Abraham had life. And all the old holy fathers; John Baptist, Simeon, and all the Apostles, had life already by faith in Christ; of which *not one* had eaten His flesh, and drunken His blood, with their bodily mouths. But truth is, that the righteous liveth by His faith; therefore, to believe and trust in Christ's blood is the eating that there was meant, as the text well proveth."

Archbishop Cranmer also says:—"Christ in the 6th of John spake not of the material and Sacramental bread, nor of the Sacramental eating (for that was spoken two or three years before the Sacrament was first ordained); but He spake of Spiritual bread, many times repeating 'I am the bread of life, which came from heaven,' and of Spiritual eating by faith, after which sort He was at the same present time eaten of as many as believed on Him, although the Sacrament was not at that time made and instituted."

And the famous Bishop Jewel says: "If no man may eat the flesh of Christ, but only in the Sacrament, then all Christian children, and all others whatsoever that depart this life without receiving the Sacrament, must needs be damned, and die the children of God's anger." "This principle," he says, "is not only false in itself, but also full of dangerous doctrine." He adds, "But little care these men (Dr. Harding and other Romanists) who or how many perish, so their fantasies may stand upright."

THE TEACHING OF THE RITUALISTS.

The Rev. G. R. Prynne, of St. Peter's, Plymouth, in *The Eucharistic Manual*, pronounced by the Rev. G. Nugee, before the Ritual Commission, "one of the best books on the Holy Communion," says, "Unless men . . . feed upon Christ's body and blood in the Holy Communion, they cannot remain united to Christ, and if not united to Christ they cannot come to eternal life. . . . Not to receive the Holy Communion is to forfeit our salvation. . . . Those Christians who are never present when the Holy Eucharist is offered up, never plead for their pardon and forgiveness in that one way which Christ ordained that they should plead for it."

NOTE OF COMMENT.

It thus appears that the controversy of the day is not one of Ecclesiastical millinery or theatrical display, but of man's eternal doom. It is really whether men "are saved by grace through faith," according to the Scripture, or through the Sacraments, according to the priest. "If through the Sacraments, then,—as according to Ritualistic teaching, the only way of salvation is by partaking of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament, and as this body and blood can only be conveyed to individual Christians by priests descended in a direct line from the Apostles—the future state of every man depends upon his receiving or not receiving the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament of His Supper at the hands of a priest of the true Church.

"As the matter is so weighty, it will perhaps be better to speak plainly; if a man do not partake of the body and blood of Christ in the Sacrament at the hands of a true priest he cannot go to heaven, but must go to hell!"

In view of this teaching, are we not right in saying with the first Archbishop of the Reformed Church of England—"All such priests as pretend to be Christ's successors in making a sacrifice of Him are His most heinous and horrible adversaries?"