

## **The Fourth Lateran Council and the Eucharist** *Medieval Church History – Session Sixteen*

“Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.”

—John 6:53 NKJV

- I. Introduction**
  
- II. The Development of Medieval Sacramental Theology**
  - a. Earliest Years
  
  - b. First Two Centuries
    - i. Justin Martyr (AD c. 100-c. 165)
  
    - ii. Origen (AD c. 185-c. 253)
  
    - iii. Cyprian of Carthage (d. AD 258)
  
  - c. Leading up to the Middle Ages
    - i. Theodore of Mopsuestia (AD c. 350-c. 428)
  
    - ii. Ambrose (AD c. 339-397)
  
    - iii. Augustine of Hippo (AD 354-430)
  
  - d. The Development of Transubstantiation
    - i. Radbertus (AD 785-865)
  
    - ii. Ratramnus (AD c. 800-868)
  
  - e. The Escalation and Centrality of the Doctrine of the Eucharist
  
- III. The Fourth Lateran Council**
  - a. General Information
    - i. Date: November 11, 1215<sup>1</sup>
  
    - ii. Attendance: ~1,200 (~800 abbots, ~400 bishops)
  
  - b. Issues Addressed/Canons

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<sup>1</sup> This is the start date. The end date is uncertain, though it almost certainly did not extend into December 1215.

- c. Codification of Transubstantiation
  - i. Canon 1: “There is indeed one universal church of the faithful, outside of which nobody at all is saved, in which Jesus Christ is both priest and sacrifice. His body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine, the bread and wine having been changed in substance, by God’s power, into his body and blood, so that in order to achieve this mystery of unity we receive from God what he received from us.”
  - ii. Making Sense of Transubstantiation
    - 1. “Substance”: that which makes something what it is (and not another)
    - 2. “Accidents”: that which is contained in substances but which do not change the nature of the substance<sup>2</sup>

#### IV. Responses

- a. It is new.
- b. It is nonsensical.
- c. It is unbiblical.

#### V. Conclusion

- a. Our Church’s Practice
- b. Union with Christ Crucial

#### *Recommended Resources*

Berkhof, Louis. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1938; pp. 644-659.

Bray, Gerald. *God Has Spoken: A History of Christian Theology*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014; pp. 453-493.

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Translated by Robert White. 1541. Reprint, Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2014; pp. 623-643.

Cunningham, William. *Historical Theology*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2 vols. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1863–1864; 2:142-143.

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<sup>2</sup> A more precise definition is the following: “Substance is being existing in itself; accident is being existing in another as its subject”; Louis of Poissy, *Elementary Course of Christian Philosophy*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York, NY: O’Shea & Co., 1893), 189.