

**Demonstration of Errors in the New Teaching
as affording opportunity for presenting the Truth.**

9^A. THE LORD'S TABLE AND SUPPER.

(CONTINUED).

The Distinctions between the Table and the Supper.

There is a simplicity, depth, fulness, and exactitude about the Word of God, surpassing all our thoughts, which command and charm the soul to contemplate. It would never occur to a casual reader of I Cor. x and xi that, in language, which at first sight seems so alike, there could be so much that differs in the two chapters. There are four words, "cup," "bread," "blood," and "body," which are common to them both, but when you examine what is said of each in the one chapter compared with the other, you are amazed to find how great the dissimilarity is.

To begin with, the *order* is different. The "cup" is before the "bread" in the one chapter, and the "bread" is before the "cup" in the other. In chap. x the "blood" precedes the "body," in chap. xi there is first the "body" and then the "blood." What accounts for this is the distinction between the breaking of bread from the Table side of the truth and the Supper side respectively. The Table is the order of *principle*, the Supper is that of *eating*, or the historical order. The Table metaphorically is the *stand* or ground, the Supper is what is *spread* or laid thereon. The former is in symbol what we *are* as Christ's *mystical* body, the latter is what we *do*, that is, *eat* that which is the emblem of the Lord's *literal* body given for us. Till after Christ *died* there could be no mystical body, hence the wine poured out, symbol of His death, has to *precede* the other symbol, "one loaf" in chap. x, where the mystical body is *prominent*, while in chap. xi, where it is the Lord's literal body, *before* He could die or give it in death He had *first* to become man to *have* a body. That is, His *incarnation* had to *precede* the death of His body *given* for us, but the *death* of the cross had to take place *before* there could be His *body*, the Church. The order is perfect in each case, the *mystical* body-order in Chap. x, and His *literal*-body order in Chap. xi. But there are (besides the order) many other striking and interesting differences. In Chap. x it is the *cup* that we "*blss.*" in Chap. xi the *cup* that ye "*drink.*" In the one it is the *bread* that we "*break*" in the other it is the *bread* that ye "*eat.*" It is the *blood* of "*Christ*" and the *body* of "*Christ*" in the former, but the *body* and *blood* of the "*Lord*" in the latter. In Chap. x you find "*one loaf,*" in Chap. xi simply the "bread" or loaf. In the one Chapter it is the "*Lord's Table,*" in the other the "*Lord's Supper.*" It is "*partake*" of the Lord's Table in Chap. x, but "*eat*" the Lord's Supper in Chap. xi. In the original the thanksgiving of Chap. x is "*eulogistic,*" (*i.e.* speaking well of,) that of Chap. xi is "*eucharistic.*" (*i.e.* thanking well or from the heart.) See how different the same four terms, cup, bread, blood, and body are spoken of in the two respective chapters. The Spirit has not made and recorded all these distinctions

without a purpose and He expects us to mark and appreciate their spiritual significance. He desires us to know both the Table and the Supper aspects of the breaking of bread (as the trouble He has taken to distinguish them shows) and enter into the meaning of each, and of the differences between them. It was by the baptism of the "One Spirit," that the "one body," which the "one loaf" represents, was formed. He is its *bond* and animates it as a *whole*. Moreover, where ungrieved, He gives the consciousness of the unity and, if not realised, love in one of its most perfect forms is wanting. How sweet to find oneself united to "all saints," wherever they may be, in the unity of the body of Christ as members together of that which He nourishes and cherishes as man does his own flesh! In symbol the Lord's Table is intended to express this, but in order to do so, it is clear that the grand principle essential to the existence of such a unity, must characterise the meeting of those gathered together for that purpose. Is it not sad that the breaking of bread of the New Teaching has lost this character entirely, so that those connected with it are deprived of the privilege of giving expression to what they are as part of and united to Christ in the closest of all ties, for the simple reason that the bread which *they* break is denied to have any such meaning? This brings us to

The Lord's Supper.

Literally it is the *Lordly* Supper. It is something upon which we feed, something that we *eat*. Not forgetting what is recorded in the Gospels; however important in its place, we go direct to the fresh revelation respecting it, which the Apostle Paul received from *heaven*, for it is with *that* the church according to the mystery hid in God, is chiefly concerned, because at the time our Lord inaugurated this institution on *earth*, it was not even in existence. Whether as the house or the body, the creation-day of the Church was Pentecost. Hence it is the Supper as re-given from the Lord in glory that we have to abide by, the last revealed account. What a touching proof of Christ's unchanged and unchangeable love! He could not bear to be forgotten by those for whom He *gave* Himself, and so loved with a special love that nothing short of *uniting* the objects of it to Himself would satisfy His heart. *United* affection is so prized by Him that He re-announced from above all heavens these sensible signs in order to *express* in the *Table* the indissoluble bond by which, through the One Spirit, He has joined us to Himself, and to *proclaim* in the *Supper* that matchless love which would go even to death—the love that passeth knowledge. Occupation with Himself in the realised sense of what we *are* to Him and He to us on the one hand, and the remembrance of *Him* in the death that *He* died in its fathomless depths, when He was alone for the glorifying of God and for us. Does not this challenge the loyal response of every true heart? Do we not see why He desires us to partake of the Lord's Table and eat the Lord's Supper every Lord's day during the time He is absent? How affecting to read! "For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus, in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread, and having *given thanks*, brake it,

and said, This is My *body* which is for you, do this in *remembrance* of Me. In *like manner also* the cup, after having supped, saying, This cup is the New Covenant in My *blood*, this do, as often as ye drink it, in *remembrance* of Me. For as often as ye *eat* this bread and drink the cup, ye announce the *death* of the Lord till He come. So that whosoever shall *eat* the bread or drink the cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and of the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself and so let him *eat* of the bread and drink of the cup. For he that *eateth* and drinketh unworthily *eateth* and drinketh judgment to himself not *discerning* the (Lord's) body." (1 Cor. 28-29.)

The Lord's Table of 1 Cor. x should never be, though it too often is, severed from the Lord's Supper of Cor. xi, being only two *aspects* of the *same* breaking of bread. Looked at as a *meal*, viz., eating bread and drinking wine, the Supper for simplicity could not be surpassed, but as a spiritual feast it is exhaustless and profound beyond description. Only allow what is said to speak for itself and the truth becomes its own interpreter. It starts with "For I received from the Lord." How plainly this *fresh revelation* of the Supper (while there is none as to baptism) connects this feast with what is characteristic of this church period, *i.e.* the out-calling and the home-bringing of the body and the bride of Christ, with which at this moment all the Persons of the Godhead are occupied. Then the Spirit, by the very mention of "in the night in which He was *betrayed*," at once appeals to, and engages, our affections. In these few words what a tale is told of the *evil* heart of man, yet by its very blackness only serving to bring into relief that Heart of infinite Love which nothing could quench! Prefaced by these two points of precious interest, we cannot refrain from noting how strikingly the main features of the feast itself unfold themselves. We give *thanks*, that is why it is called the Eucharist, both in connection with the *bread* and the *cup*. We *eat* the bread and drink the wine, we *appropriate* Him as *dead*. We *remember* Him as He *was* according to the symbols. We *announce* or proclaim the Lord's *death*. We *look forward* to the Lord's *Coming*. We *discern* the Lord's *body*.

Primarily, therefore, the Lord's Supper is a feast of THANKSGIVING. Hence the first note in the tune of praise to our adorable Lord which the Spirit calls forth from the united hearts of those gathered together to break bread on the first day of the week, is *thanksgiving*. That goes before the breaking of the bread everywhere and always. But as the oneness of the loaf symbolises the oneness of the body, there is no coming together to break bread which God can own in this age, unless there is the confession of "one body" in the doing of it. Those so coming together find the Lord in the midst according to His promise. He presides and directs, while the Spirit acts, guides, and energizes. As is the case each Lord's day, the object of our coming together is to break bread, but we do not merely come as bread-breakers, and when there, the Lord may direct this member or that, as led by the Holy Ghost, when and as He pleases. There may be only two or three, but we comprehend with *all* saints the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, for we are necessarily, and in love, bound up with all the other members of

His one body in which the Spirit so acts that the joy of each is the joy of all, being the power and living source of every bit of genuine thanksgiving that flows out of the heart, and, though in weakness, is truly realising according to our capacity that which will constitute our eternal blessedness when Christ shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. What a joy thus to give thanks in *unity* on the principle of the whole body, for only so given could the thanksgiving be in *truth* as well as in spirit. When so gathered in view of the symbols of the Lord's death, it would be a poor coming together where there was no *praise*. It says "the cup of blessing which we *bless*," and *thanks* are also given in connection with the bread. Hence thanksgivings and praises are distinctly called forth by what the Supper presents. Indeed if we have hearts at all, how could we keep their outflow in? The symbols appeal in the strongest way to that which produces the highest praise, namely, the remembrance of Christ, of His death and blood shedding, whether as offered up to God, or in connection with His affection and devotedness for us, leading us to adore and celebrate the worthiness of the Lamb that was slain, thus anticipating what will be our eternal employment in heaven, not to speak of bringing us into harmony with its mind even now. What a privilege, then, to shut the door on the distractions that surround us here, and, with the emblems of the betrayed and dead Christ before us, render out of full hearts the thanksgiving of which He is worthy! Nowhere is this more in place than in the coming together in assembly to eat the Lord's Supper. In fact, you cannot break the bread without *first* giving thanks, but is that thanksgiving to rise to adoration and worship, or is it to be reduced to the level merely of that which is called "saying grace" at a common meal? The Spirit is free and sovereign in His operation in God's assembly acting in the members of the body according to what flows down from its *Head in heaven*, and as the Lord in the *midst* here directs, whether it be *praise* upward or *ministry* downward for the good and blessing of the whole. Let the man, be who he may, beware, that dares to interfere with Him.

But it is also a feast of *appropriation*. We *eat*, as well as give thanks. We eat the *bread*, we drink the *cup*. We appropriate Him, but in what character? It is not as the "manna" that we eat Him in the Supper, which is Christ *before* He died. Nor is it as "the old corn" which is Christ risen and *glorified*: (though in their places we assuredly feed on Him as both these). Let the symbols speak for themselves. It is Christ as He was *between* these two. It is not the Lord *living* before His death, nor living *after* His death, whether risen or ascended, but Him *dead*. What the emblems represent is eating His flesh and drinking His blood, yet not the once for all eating to *get* life, we *have* that, but the eating of Him as the *food* of the life we already possess. I feed on, and am nourished by, the "Christ who loved us and gave Himself for us, an offering and sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." Never was food like this. Christ, but Christ as offered up. "This is My body." What body? His body dead with the blood poured out. *Death* is what stands out in the forefront here, yes, the *greatest* death that ever was, or ever will be in this world—the death of God's

beloved Son—the death of the Prince of life. There is nothing like it in time or eternity, either as to what it is in *itself*, the infinitude of what it *comprises*, or its measureless *results*. Intrinsically and spiritually it is greater even than glory. We are to share that; but in this He was alone, wholly alone. No other Person of the Godhead even could die that death. He accomplished that glorious work Himself. A spotless victim, an absolute obedience, a perfect love! Think of what it is to feed on that! And do not spoil it by mixing up anything else with it. This is a far deeper thing than “remembrance,” which is a different part of the Supper altogether as we shall see. This is *eating*, and so eating that He dwells in me and I in Him. “He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood dwelleth in Me and I in him.” With the outgoings of my inmost soul I eat, I feed on Christ *dead*, and the result is, I dwell in Christ *living* and Christ *living* dwells in me. The *food*, mark, as to the *symbols* from the Supper point of view is His flesh and His blood, while John vi is what these emblems *symbolise*, not the Supper as such.

It is further a feast of REMEMBRANCE. “This do in remembrance of Me.” Accordingly remembrance is one of the prominent points, and, like the *thanksgiving* is repeated *twice* over, while the *eating* is verbally stated by the Apostle no less than *five* times and is besides *implied* in “This is My body which is for you,” though the “Take eat” of Matthew is omitted according to the best authorities in 1 Cor. xi.

Be careful also to note that it does not say “This do in remembrance” of My *death*. We are said to “announce” that. It is in remembrance of Me.” We remember *Him*, but proclaim His *death*. Scripture is always right. But, what are we to do in remembrance of Him? “This.” This what? Eat the bread and drink the cup. It is *that* we are asked to *do* in remembrance of Him. But to whom do these emblems point? To Him *dead*. What do they signify? The bread signifies His body offered up, the wine His blood poured out, *i.e.* life *given*, for the “life is in the blood.” It is specifically, solely, and emphatically Christ *dead* to whom those memorials of Him refer us. No such Christ, however, as that exists *now*, which is just why we are desired to *remember* Him, seeing, as *dead*, He could not be *present*, while one, who is present, needs no remembrance. The physical signs before us in the Supper take us back in mind to what *was* present when He lay in the tomb, and we *remember* Him as He was there dead and before He rose. The Lord is now back into the glory He had with the Father before the world was in that bright and blessed scene where all the sorrow, the agony, and the death, are over for ever; yet it is just from there He re-intimates His desire to be *remembered* according to the symbols chosen by Himself for that very purpose, and can our hearts refuse to respond to His fondly expressed wish in His own appointed way? He does not request us to *remember* Him as He is *now*, for that would not be possible. As the *living* One on high we *know* Him, and are *united* to Him, but it is as the *dead* One we *remember* Him, yes, as He was when He drained the last dark drop of that dreadful cup, was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and was buried in the

grave. He ardently desires to be remembered so, namely, as He was then and can never be again.

It is likewise a feast of ANNOUNCEMENT. "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink the cup ye announce the Lord's death." We not only give thanks, eat, and remember, but we proclaim or announce, and, what we announce, is the Lord's *death*, not His resurrection. Our eating the bread and drinking the wine constitute a distinct testimony to His *death*, not His *life*, either before He died or after, but to His lifeless or life-given-up condition, for in that was the perfection of sacrifice, obedience, and love. It was the glorifying of God and the basis of all blessing. It is not only death, but the *Lord's* death, and here not so much in the sense of *efficacy* of the sacrifice, though, in all its eternal worth, that remains in full force. It is His death as such, and all that attaches to its being *His*; for who can tell the nameless things included in the immense fact that it was He, who is called the *Lord*, that had *died*? What a privilege to be permitted to bear testimony to such a *death* in the simple way of His own choice, when, and as often as, we eat the bread and drink the cup!

It is, besides, a feast of EXPECTATION. "Till He come." This testimony, or announcement, is to continue till His *coming*, no matter what the ruin may be. But it is His *coming*, not appearing, the Spirit emphatically sets before us in this connection, because our proper hope is *Himself* coming to fetch us to be *with* Him, to take us to the Father's house, the Father's home, the home of light and love. How could it be otherwise? It would not be possible for us to eat the Supper till He *appears*, for we will be caught away *before* then. Our gathering together to break bread is in view of our next gathering point—"Our gathering together to Him" in the air, which, alas! like so many other things, has lost its true place in the New Teaching. The coming *for* His saints is being swamped in the coming *with* His saints, but it is just the re-appearing of an old error; and the effect inevitably is to change the proper object of the Church's hope, for you must look for Antichrist first, instead of *Christ*, before there could be any manifestation or appearing, very different from "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, ye may be also." It diverts the whole current of the Christian's aspirations from their right channel. Let there be no mistake, it is "Till *He* come," while to *Him* the "Spirit and the *bride* say, *Come*." He answers "Surely I come quickly." The bride's response is "Amen, even so, come Lord Jesus." This is bridal affection. "Till *He* come" is bridal expectation. The Table is corporate expression. The Supper is bridal remembrance. It is noteworthy how particularly the Table is connected with the *body* side of the truth, and the Supper, which so engages the affections, as pointedly contemplates the *bride* aspect. Those, who see no more in the Supper than association, know nothing of the joy of *bridal* remembrance; for the *bride* is much more than mere association of individuals, there is *union*. "One flesh; this is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church," *i.e.* two made one, though not so close as His "own flesh," which is *many* members united into *one body*. Both are true. Others see no more than that those, who "eat," do so as *guests*.

Imagine the bride eating the Supper of her Lord as a *guest*! It neither gives Him His place nor her hers. How lowering is all this!

Once more it is a feast of DISCERNMENT. "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not *discerning* the (Lord's) body." To discern the Lord's body, therefore, is one of the vital points of the Supper. But what body? His body *dead*. Introduce Him as *living*, and that which I ought to discern according to the elements is not there. As is the case with the Supper all through, it is the *body* of the Lord *given*, and to *discern* it is to have a due sense in the soul of whose body it is, entering into the wonderfulness and preciousness of His life laid down, yes, precious to God. But when this is neglected, and if there is eating and drinking of the symbols in a careless, disrespectful or unworthy manner, the one, who does so, eats and drinks judgment to himself. Though such a blessed privilege, the Supper entails a serious responsibility. It is a searching *test* of a man's spiritual state, for Scripture insists on each one *proving* or testing himself that he may so eat as befits the solemnity of the occasion, and the dignity of the Person—the Lord who died. *Discipline* is also exercised in connection with the Supper. Sin or carelessness cannot be mingled with the Lord's death, and to bring in anything of the kind would be to profane the death of Him who died rather than allow sin to subsist before God, who showed it to be the abominable thing He hates according to all that He is in His nature at the cross. Accordingly at Corinth, chastisement had to be inflicted on "many" who, in treating the breaking of bread with lightness, rendered themselves guilty in respect of the body and blood of the Lord, the discipline taking the form of weakness, sickness and even temporal death. He will not be trifled with.

Having gone carefully into what the Spirit has taught on the Lord's Supper, as found in 1 Cor. xi in all its bearings, it now devolves on us to show the grievous departure from truth which the New Teaching exhibits as to this institution.

"It is through His death that you pass over to His side; we call Him into presence through His death. The Supper is really Christ's voice to us. You don't recall Christ's death, but Himself as living who was dead. You call Him to mind as One who lives" (American Notes. p. 68).

Mark each sentence and see what it says. (1) "It is through His death that you pass over to His side." But there is not a word about "passing over to His side" in what Paul received from the Lord. As for "through His death," It is in *virtue* of His *death* but *by* His *resurrection*, that those who "eat" *have* passed over to His side already, otherwise they *ought not* to be there. Anyhow there is no such thing, even in figure, as *passing*, or eating *to* pass with respect to the Supper, while there. What the Lord asks of us is, not to pass over to Him alive and risen, but to *remember* Himself *dead*. (2) "We call Him into presence through His death." Now calling Him into *presence*, whatever it may mean, is the *opposite* of remembrance, and if it is "His death," in the sense of what the *symbols* represent, these point back to Him as He *was* with His blood poured out and His body without life. (3) "The Supper is really Christ's voice to us." Yes, but to do what? "This do in remembrance of Me." What do the emblems voice? A

living Christ? no, they take us *back* and *remind* us of Him, when His side was *pierced*, of His already *dead* body taken down from the cross, and of its *burial* in the rock-hewn tomb. (4) "You don't recall Christ's death, but Himself living who was dead." Observe how every vestige of real remembrance is absent from this statement, and the very meaning of what it is to *remember* absolutely gone! True, "You don't recall Christ's death." As already pointed out, we "announce" His *death*, but we *recall* Him *dead*. You might *call* Him to mind as the "living One," but you could not *re-call* Him. You cannot have a *dead* Christ in the *midst* any more than you can have a *living* Christ in the *symbols*. But in spirit He is *present* in the midst of the two or three gathered to His name as *alive* for evermore. It would be meaningless to recall One who is there with them, whether together for fellowship, breaking of bread, or prayers. Hence to say "you recall Him as the living One who was dead" is not to have the truth of the Supper at all, but to reverse the Lord's dying request, which is to remember or recall Him as He *was* the *dead* One, though now the *living* One, and as such needs no *recalling*. Would the Lord have requested us to eat broken bread and drink poured out wine as the symbols of Himself *living*? Yet this is what the New Teaching distinctly holds. (5) "You call Him to mind as One who lives." Is this remembrance? Assuredly not. It is clearly *present meditation* on the *living* One, which is to lose the true Supper of the Lord. *Their* Supper is having *present* thoughts of One who lives, the *Lord's* Supper is, not simply "calling," but recalling to mind Him who *was* dead, when in His life-yielded-up state, and before He lived again. This is confirmed by the words of another of the same school. "They often close just where they should have begun, namely, with the Lord risen from the dead."

Imagine one making such an assertion with the bread and the cup before his eyes! Are these the emblems of resurrection? We *know* and rejoice in Him as the *risen* One. We *remember* Him as the *dead* One. There is no Lord's Supper otherwise.

But it is not the Table and Supper of the Lord only, the *Assembly* of God is also lost in this Teaching. *Their* "assembly" is something "you pass into through the *Supper*." It is not by receiving the same Holy Ghost as Peter and Paul, which is what Scripture says. It is for them no longer the "Assembly which is His body" (Eph. i. 22-23), or "the body, the Assembly" (Col. i. 18) formed here (and to remain till Christ comes) by the baptism of the One Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 13) sent from heaven at Pentecost (Acts ii), of which the saints at Corinth were the local *representative*, and were addressed by the Spirit as the "Assembly of God" in that place (1 Cor. i. 1-2), and it was as such they came together in *assembly* to eat the Lord's Supper (chap. xi). They *themselves* were the *Assembly locally*. Scripture says "Ye are Christ's body and members in particular" (1 Cor. xii. 27). There could be no *assembly* without them. The sense of this is now alas! completely gone for this system, and another kind of "assembly" altogether substituted in its stead, not of *persons*, but an imaginary something into which persons "pass" after they eat the Supper. For them "in assembly" does not mean that which *represents* the assembly of God in any given place

when come together as such. That is alleged to be only a "meeting," because said to be "in connection with our life down here." What they call the "assembly" does not come into existence till after the Supper is eaten, when the "Lord" is affirmed to be "called into *presence* morally by the breaking of bread"—a superstitious notion surely—as if He *died* there and then in a *mystic* kind of way *while* the bread was being broken in what is termed the "meeting," and that being over, its character changes and He comes into *presence* as the *living* One into the "Assembly" so called, when those composing the "meeting," having eaten the Supper, "pass over to His side," and thus "pass into" this "assembly" in which, it is said, "for the time being, saints *leave* the life here." Accordingly it is not anything on *earth*, such as the Spirit has formed down here, nor anything in *heaven*, but an intermediate intangible something or somewhere suspended *between* the two, in which the "life here is *left*," and to which the Supper is declared to be "introductory." There is no mistake, therefore, about the *theory* they hold. From the "meeting," which is regarded merely as "an occasion in connection with our life down here," after the breaking of bread, they "pass into" what they name the "Assembly," where, for the time being saints *leave* the life *here*," and then again pass through *that* into something higher still, called the "sanctuary." But that is not "heaven," say they, being a "place," which the sanctuary, they allege, is *not*, but only a "moral idea;" yet at this stage "worship" is supposed to come in, though worshipping in a "moral idea" is not very understandable. Anyhow the notion is persisted in, having become a characteristic tenet of that which has developed a weakness for changing divine *acts* into moral *ideas*. But it is all manifestly the product of a lively imagination, and accounts for so much that has been very painful since these and such like innovations displaced the truth. At one time so entirely did the breaking of bread seem the *sole* thing in the mind, to be gone through apparently like a task, (destroying all sense of the solemnity or reverence even proper to such an occasion) that I have actually heard a brother, one of the adepts too, affirm that "he looked for no other *guidance* when there but the *clock*, that we came together to break bread, this we might do in quarter of an hour but we usually took an hour and a half." Such is one of the sad fruits, for which one, who could say that, ought to judge himself that he be not judged. But *when* it was *taught* that the "breaking of bread should be the *first* thing in the meeting," the former extreme was no longer in evidence, but rash youths might be seen going forward and breaking the bread almost at the *start*, so that they might pass into the "Assembly" as quickly as possible after eating the Supper, by which the Lord was thought to be "called into presence," and then, through the so called "assembly," to get into the "sanctuary" stage, when "worship" was the right and proper thing. But *ministry* of the Word was discarded as out of place, and even the reading of Holy Scripture was discountenanced. As was to be expected, the inevitable effect has been that God's Word is seldom, and very often never, opened from the time they sit down till they rise. Indeed many have ceased to bring their Bibles at all, they are so rarely needed. The unseemly haste in break-

ing the bread ; however, became considerably modified when *again* the teaching *changed* to, "In assembling together, each coming from his engagements and home, saints are not for the moment free in spirit to enter into what is proper to the assembly, but they sit down for a while and partake of the Lord's Supper, and so get in touch with Christ and with one another ; " but the rest of the routine holds good, except perhaps a very occasional word of exhortation, Now were the presence and action of the Spirit in the Assembly really believed in, not to speak of the presidency of the Lord there, would any man dare to invent, much less seek to tie down divine persons to, a form of *procedure* like the foregoing, especially when it is one that undergoes repeated alteration according to the whim of every new-comer. What right has man to meddle with such things, and say when this or that is to be done in God's Assembly ? Think of their presuming to divide up the time during which the saints are gathered to break bread into sections, going even to the length of specifying what is suitable for each of these in rotation, and thus usurping the place of the Lord and of the Spirit, who will not be bound by any such arrangement, tacit or declared ! Neither will the One direct, nor the Other operate, for blessing, where so treated and grieved. If working at all, it could only be to rebuke and discipline.

This mechanical fixing of when the bread is to be broken, laying down rules for the Spirit of God, and framing what virtually amounts to an *ideal* programme in successive stages for a Lord's day morning meeting, are unworthy of Lord's Supper and of Him whose Supper it is. There is no question as to the fact that the special purpose, as stated in Acts xx. 17, for which they came together was to "break bread," but it is a mistake to deduce from this, that it ought to be the *first* thing in the order of time. The very passage itself disproves such a construction, and overthrows the whole subdivision process contended for by this system. As always in the Acts, only the simple *history* of a certain breaking of bread at Troas is given, the *doctrine* of which is in 1 Cor. x and xi ; but the very Paul, who taught *that* doctrine, was *there*, and he would not break bread on any other *principle* than that of "one body," and the *free action* of the Spirit in the "members" of it when together. You have only to read the narrative to see that the breaking of the bread on that occasion was *not* the *first* thing, nor was it the *last* thing—a most notable fact—in other words, as was becoming, it was neither too *soon* nor too *late*, and this is the only indication that we have anywhere as to the *time*, which is left purposely indefinite, so as not to interfere with the fullest liberty for the Spirit's operation, and without a trace of any pre-understood plan. Then, so far from *ministry* being excluded, *that* was specially prominent, not only *after*, but even *before* the bread was broken. Notwithstanding that the *object* of their *assembling* was the Lord's Supper, and none knew that better than Paul, he, as one of the gifts from the exalted Head, took advantage, as led by the Spirit, to use his gift for the instructing and "edifying of the body of Christ" discoursing before eating the Supper as well as after, and thus demolishing this transition from one stage to another device ; for it was as much the "Assembly of God" at *Troas* as at *Corinth*, and began and

ended as the *assembly* locally without a word or thought of 'passing into' anything else while there. Observe also, besides others (ver. 4) Luke, the beloved physician, was present, for it should read, 'we being assembled to break bread,' the word "disciples" ought not to be there, because we do not break bread as disciples, but as "members," according to the fresh revelation from heaven, and profess to be "one body" when doing it. But if the Apostle Paul went to any of the New Teaching Meetings for the breaking of bread in Melbourne and *ministered* as he did at Troas, his mouth would be *stopped*, as has been done *here* with something added to it, for a simple exhortation on "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift!" Heartless work surely!

But there is no such thing in the New Testament as the Supper being "introductory" to the "assembly," and that in turn introductory to the "sanctuary." There are the three things, but they are in no wise dependent the one on the other. Each is itself. Nor are they even presented in that order of sequence in the Word but the *opposite*. If there is a way of turning a thing upside down this System will do it. Christ entered the heavenly sanctuary as its Minister *before the Assembly*, which is His body, was formed by the Spirit sent down from Him on high, and there could be no breaking of bread as "one body" *till* the body existed.

All true christians are priests to day, purged worshippers, and, as holy priests, have always the right of entrance, by the new and living way Christ's death for ever secured, into the *holiest* of all, where the Minister of the True Tabernacle *is*, who was first the *sacrifice*, and by the one offering of His body once for all, has *made* them perfected for ever before God according to all its infinite value and sweet savour as He estimates it, and having Himself by His own blood entered in once for all into the holy of holies in *person*, He *keeps* them as uninterruptedly *perfect* as He is perpetually *sitting* at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, so that there is nothing to do but in *spirit* to serve or worship the living God in the Sanctuary above, the audience chamber of His immediate presence inside the vail, and this is their *inalienable* privilege, had there *never* been such a thing as the Assembly or the Supper. But by the Spirit poured out from the ascended One, the true worshippers, with consciences, through the blood of Christ, perfectly purged, were also *made* "one body in Christ and everyone members one of another" (Rom. xii. 5). "Christ's body and members in particular" (1 Cor. xii. 27), who according to 1 Cor. xi came together in *assembly* to eat the Lord's Supper. But when they did that, they did not cease to be, but were always, consecrated worshippers having access at all times into the holiest, and as such they *start* from the Sanctuary, for there is no *place* of worship now but heaven, and those, who do not worship there in *spirit*, cannot worship at all, at the same time, too, that, as to their bodies, they are *here* where they have come together to break bread. True to His promise to the two or three, they find Him in the *midst*, but the respective positions are reversed. In *body* He is *above* in the heavenly Sanctuary, while in *spirit* He is *here* with the gathered ones to His name. They, on the other hand

are *here in body*, while *up there in spirit*. Both are true at the same time. He is *present in spirit*, and though Himself, as a Divine Person, the object of *worship*, such is His ineffable goodness that He deigns to preside over and direct the praises (as everything else) in the assembly *here*, at the very moment that He is in *body* on high in the Sanctuary above receiving the praises *there*, and *presenting* them to God in the holiest, where alone in *spirit* the worshippers can worship. If you abide by the Word none of this presents the slightest difficulty. Depart from it and all is confusion or worse.

When the coming together is to break bread, that necessarily becomes the crowning act of such a gathering, but the Spirit, who is there to glorify Christ, taking of His things, and showing them to those gathered, may use prayer, praise or silent waiting, to lead up to that point as the climax, when filled to overflowing with *thanksgiving*, the bread is broken; Christ *fed on* according to the symbols i.e. *eating* His flesh and drinking His blood; that *done in remembrance* of Him; His death *announced* till He come; and His body *discerned*. Then (the object of the coming together attained) the Lord may *direct* and the Spirit *act*, so that there may be ministry, teaching, exhortation, or worship (either in the form of singing, praying, or both) as it pleases them. It is for us to be subject, and let them have their way in everything, when blessing is sure to abound. How different this from the time-table nature of the scheme conceived and practised by this system! Scripture is as plain as it is simple, and yet so blessed as to cause us to bow in the presence of such unspeakable grace.

Now lest readers should imagine that things were always as bad as this, it is well to remind them that, in days gone by, the leaders and teachers among Brethren, were not only educated but learned and scholarly as well as spiritual and godly men, full of the Spirit, mighty in the Scriptures and having the word of God dwelling in them richly. The consequence was that, what they taught and wrote, was not only edifying and deeply instructive but eminently profitable and soul-nourishing. But, sad to say, the literature and teaching of this New System, has been such, for many years now, as these older brethren would not have allowed, and would have been ashamed to see, in *print*. Except one or two of the Gospel ones, the poverty of the monthly periodicals is simply lamentable compared with what was. To suppose that the vapid theories, contradictory ideas, and uncertain opinions, with nothing sure or stable, which have characterised this New Teaching are a "development" or advancement upon the truth which the Spirit enabled these men to bring out, is self deception.

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W.S.F.