## DO YOU BREAK BREAD?

IF 80,

Why, When, Where, and How?

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# DO YOU BREAK BREAD?

Why, When, Where, and How should Christians take the Lord's Supper?

In the night in which Jesus was betrayed, after the passover supper, "He took bread and gave thanks, and

brake it, and gave unto them" [His is the new testament in my blood,

disciples], "saying, This is my body, which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saving. This cup

which is shed for you." (Luke xxii.

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to prepare a place for them, and to return and receive them to Himself, that where He was, they might be also. And, knowing the heart's forgetfulness, and the cold influence of the world, He left with them ere He departed this one simple, loving re-

Jesus was about to go to the cross, and to the Father, leaving His beloved disciples in the world. He was going

quest, "This do in remembrance of me."

Having offered Himself, the true Passover, upon the cross, and been buried in the grave, He was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and took His seat at the right

Father, and took His seat at the right hand of God. (Rom. vi. 4.) From thence He again speaks to the hearts of His own, to the same effect, by His servant Paul. (See 1 Cor. xi. 23.)

For nearly nineteen centuries has

(1 Cor. ii. 13.)

He lingered there in mercy and grace to sinners. But for this, you and I, dear Christian reader, had been shut out. What response then shall we make to Him who is our Saviour and our all? It is not some hard thing He bids us do, but simply to remember Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us. (Eph. v. 25.)

His precious blood has made our peace, and now He presents Himself to our hearts. How can any of His loved ones refuse to give Him joy by refraining to fulfil His loving desire?

But it is of the utmost importance that every Christian should know His mind about this blessed institution, as Christendom generally has so widely departed from the simplicity of Scripture, robbing the Lord's Supper and the Lord's table of their true meaning, that many are in the greatest confusion on the subject. The Romanists in their masses, and the Protestants in their sacraments, have

both distorted them from their true character and place in the Church. The former treat the Supper as a fresh sacrifice, thus totally denying the perfection of the one sacrifice of Christ once for all. The latter often make it a partial means of salvation. And frequently, too, unconverted persons are allowed to partake, whereas nothing can be plainer in the Word of God than

that participation in the Lord's Supper is the privilege only of true Christians. Holy Ghost. (John vi. 47; 1 Cor. vi.

19.) The Supper should never be taken as a means of getting blessing, but as a thankful remembrance of our Lord by those who have received blessing already. A true faith and godly walk entitle members of the body of Christ to a place at the Lord's table. It is the privilege of all the children of God who are not scripturally disqualified. There are four points I now desire to lay simply before the reader—Why, when, where, and how are we to take the Lord's Supper? I will reply first to these four questions with quotations of Scripture, and then further

endeavour to explain them.

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#### WHY?

"This do in remembrance of me." (Luke xxii. 19.)

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come." (1 Cor. xi. 26.)

#### WHEN?

"Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread," &c. (Acts xx. 7.)

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come." (1 Cor. xi. 26.)

"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts ii. 42.)

## WHERE?

"Where two or three are gathered together in" (or unto) "my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. xviii. 20.)

"If therefore the whole Church be come together into one place." (1 Cor. xiv. 23.)

"When the disciples came together to break bread . . . there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together." (Acts xx. 7, 8.)

How?
"For I have received of the Lord

that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as

often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death

till He come." (1 Cor. xi. 23-26.)

"I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we, being many, are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of

that one bread." (1 Cor. x. 15-17.)

Having quoted Scriptures, let me

DO YOU BREAK BREAD? now seek briefly to lead your heart further, beloved fellow-Christian, into the simplicity of it all; that our Lord

may have joy in your loving subjection to His blessed wish, and that you may have joy in giving joy to

Him. The first point is-Why then are we to take the Lord's

Supper? In remembrance of Jesus, that our hearts may call Him to mind. The breaking of bread tells

of His body given for us upon the tree; the drinking of the cup tells of His precious blood shed for us. In

partaking of these memorials of His love we shew the Lord's death. In the Presence of God, and of the holy angels, and surrounded by the unseen powers of darkness and wicked-

DO YOU BREAK BREAD? 12 ness-Satan and his angels,-and a world of guilty and lost sinners, we

announce the marvellous fact that the Lord of glory, Jesus the Christ of God, stooped to the cross of Calvary, suffered, bled, and died. We announce the most wondrous event that ever happened in the history of

the universe, how that its omnipotent Creator as Man (sin apart) endured that awful shame and woe, that God might be glorified, the power of Satan annulled, and the question of sin met

But God raised Him from the

once and for ever. dead, and gave Him glory, thus showing to all His estimate of the one perfect offering. There sits the mighty Victor at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens, awaiting

the glorious moment, known alone to

then should be found fulfilling His

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words, doing this in remembrance of Him, and thus showing His death until He come.

"If a man love me, he will keep

my words," &c. (John xiv. 23.)

"He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings." (John xiv. 24.)

The next point is—

When are we to take the Lord's Supper? As to this the Lord has not laid down any positive command, but has fully indicated in His word what His mind is about it, and the spiritual

believer, whose conscience is exercised, will not be slow to discern. One thing is very clear, that every true, loyal heart will surely respond, "I should like to remember Him often."

Let us see what light the Scriptures throw upon it. In Acts ii. 42 we read that three thousand Christians,

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who had just been added, "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread,\* and in prayers." This passage clearly shows how they understood their Lord's words, and that the breaking of bread was not an occasional, but an oft-repeated act.

an oft-repeated act.

Again, in Acts xx. 7, it is recorded,

"And upon the first day of the week,
when the disciples came together to

Breaking of bread was the commonly used
term for an ordinary meal, and is sometimes
employed with that meaning (see Luke xxiv.
30-35; Acts xx. 11; xxvii. 36, 36); but at
other times for the Lord's Supper.

DO YOU BREAK BREAD? break bread, Paul preached" (or discoursed) "unto them, ready to depart on the morrow." The first day of the week, or the Lord's day, is the day after the sabbath (Matt. xxviii. 1; Rev. i. 10), when our Lord rose from the dead.

And we learn from this verse that it was the practice of the early disciples to come together on this day to break bread in remembrance of their Lord. This is the object assigned for which they assembled. Paul was there, and preached or discoursed to them after; but they did not come together to hear Paul

preach, but to remember Jesus their

Lord in His death. Some may think, as they read this,

that there is nothing here to show that the disciples came together every 16 DO YOU BREAK BREAD? first day of the week. But let me remind you, dear reader, that we show the Lord's death till He come,

and thus in coming together on the first day of the week it may be for the last time. Christ's coming again is so presented in Scripture, that His people may ever be kept in the attitude

of waiting for Him. (Luke xii. 35, 36; 1 Thess. i. 9,10.) And there will never be a Lord's-day that you may remain on this earth, but that if you open your Bible and read Acts xx. 7, you will find it saying, " And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread."

Further, we find, in John xx. 19, 26, that two successive weeks, upon the first day, Jesus stood in the midst of the assembled disciples, saying,

"Peace be unto you," &c.

"This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come."

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In many quarters the importance of the Lord's Supper has been lost sight of, and made a secondary thing. The pulpit is often brought into un-

due prominence, and the blessed re-

membrance of the Lord put into the background, as an after-service once a month, or less frequent still. May God in His grace lead any Christian who reads these lines to search His blessed Word, and follow it, instead of

being led by the traditions of men. We learn then from the above passages that the Lord's mind is, that His saints should break bread

at least every first day of the week, oftener if suitable occasions present themselves, and continue stedfastly

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## Our third point is-

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therein.

Where are we to take the Lord's Supper? In Matt. xviii. 20 we read, "Where two or three are gathered together in" (or unto) " my name, there am I in the midst of them." . My

reader, ponder these words. There is a far deeper significance attached to them than many think.

Christ has gone from this world, and during His absence would have His saints gathered together unto His

name. Note the words, "Unto my name." There, and there only, has

our Lord promised His blessed presence in the midst. Where? "Where

to the other.

independency, of whatever nature. Christ has not promised to be in the midst of such. Man has made sects, parties, systems, and organizations innumerable; there is a perfect Babel of names from one end of Christendom

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But, as one has said—

"Let names and sects and parties fall,
And Jesus Christ be all in all."

And Jesus Christ be all in all."

Mid all the confusion our resource

is in God and the Word of His grace, and the promise is true to-day as on the day our Lord uttered it. His

the day our Lord uttered it. His Presence is in the midst of the two or three gathered to His name. Unto 20 DO YOU BREAK BREAD?

My name, and no other—the name of God's Holy One. Meeting together as the members of an established church, or religious system or society, however earnest and well-intentioned some or all may be, is not the same as gathering to Christ's name. But

some may reply, "But we have the Lord's Presence with us." Granted, as individuals. This is true of every Christian, and many have a special realization of the fact when meeting anywhere where the Word of God is preached, and His praises sung, &c. But the Presence of Christ in the midst is perfectly distinct from this, and unless you are amongst those gathered together unto His name

(Matt. xviii. 20), you have never known the reality of this precious truth. There is nothing like it elsewhere for God's dear people on earth. Are you thus gathered to His name?

And let me add, that the primary act, when gathered to His name, should

act, when gathered to His name, should be the remembrance of Christ in His death. The two or three, or twenty or thirty, or two or three hundred, as the case may be, gathered together are on the ground of God's assembly. And on all occasions, when assembled thus, Christ is there. This is true of all assemblies of Christiansso gathered throughout the length and breadth of

throughout the length and breadth of the globe. Though thousands of miles may part the different assemblies, each one having local responsibility representing the whole, yet all form part of the one Church of God upon earth. All saints form part of the Church of God; while all saints gath-

22 DO YOU BREAK BREAD? ered unto the name of Christ are on

the ground of the Church of God. Christ died that He should gather together in one the children of God

that were scattered abroad. (John xi. 49-52.) "He that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad." (Matt. xii. 30.) The wolf catcheth and scattereth the sheep. (John x. 12.) Dear reader, are

you scattered or gathered?

The unchangeable Word of God still says, notwithstanding all man's failure and self-will, and the wide-spread confusion of Christendom,

failure and self-will, and the widespread confusion of Christendom, "There is one body, and one Spirit" (Eph. iv. 4), and the responsibility of the Christian to endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace will never cease as long as he is upon earth. (Eph. iv. 3.) All Chris-

tians are one with Christ, and with

DO YOU BREAK BREAD? one another, called in one body. (Col. iii.

15.) To belong to or join a sect is to be sectarian; to be charitable or largehearted (as people say), and go anywhere and everywhere where Christians are found, is to be all-sectarian;

practically recognizing that there is one body and one Spirit, continuing stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers, is to be unsectarian.

to be gathered unto Christ's name,

Which are you - sectarian, allsectarian, or unsectarian? And now, lastly-

How are we to take the Lord's Supper? Let the word of God

answer: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered 24 DO YOU BREAK BREAD? unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread: and when He had given

thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped,

any form or shape, whether pope,

saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft

as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.

For as often as ye eat this bread, and

drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's

death till He come." (1 Cor. xi. 23-26.)

Now, if you note this passage care-

rully, you must see that there is no

thought here (neither can you find

a trace of such a thing elsewhere in

the New Testament) of a man, in

cardinal, archbishop, bishop, elder,

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It is the Lord's table and the Lord's Supper. The Lord Himself took the head of

the table when He instituted the supper, and it is essentially His table

still. A human presidency, whatever form it may take, and however wellmeaning, is an assumption of the

rights of Christ. The Lord leads His disciples to spread His own table, and invites them as His honoured guests to partake of His

supper in remembrance of Him. He is there to meet them. Seated around His table, each heart in communion with His, the Holy Ghost, who dwells

in God's assembly, leads forth in

worship, praise, and thanksgiving to the Father and the Son. (John iv. v. 23; Heb. x. 19-22, xiii. 15; 1 Peter ii. 5.) He is all-sufficient, and leads whomsoever He will to give

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all pass it round the one to the other, each breaking and eating a portion; and likewise the cup, each partaking of the wine. The Holy Ghost, if hearts are subject to Him, will guide

and order all for the glory of God.

thanks, and break the bread, then

And God is not the author of confusion (or unquietness), but of peace, as in all assemblies of the saints. (1 Cor. xii. 7-11; xiv. 23-40.)

Again, "I speak as to wise men," says the apostle; "judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we

say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being

one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" (or loaf). (1 Cor. x.

15-17.) He addresses Christians as wise or intelligent persons, exhorting them to judge what he says, and the verses which follow distinctly show how we are to take the Lord's Supper. It is

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all in the plural, and no thought of one man administering to others, which is the prevailing custom in many places. The cup which we bless, the bread which we break; for we being many are one bread, one body. God's way is, that both the bread and the wine should be passed the one to the other. Thus we show our common interest in the death of Christ.

It is important, too, to remark that the apostle is writing to the Corinthians from Philippi, and that in speaking of the cup and the bread he says, "The cup which we bless, the bread which we break," not which ye bless and ye break, as though the

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Corinthian assembly were independent of the Philippian. "For we being many," he continues, "are one bread, one body," thus showing most clearly the oneness of God's saints everywhere. Christ is the head of the

body, the Church. (Col. i. 18.) And "as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body,"

&c. (1 Cor. xii. 12-13.)

The Lord had but one table in Paul's day, and all God's saints everywhere were one, and rememhas set up many tables since, but man's failure and self-will in nowise alter the Word of God; and it is the responsibility of each child of God,

in the midst of the prevailing confusion, to find out where the Lord's table is, and there to remember Him. But whilst enjoying this blessed privilege, let not any forget selfexamination. To partake of the memorials of Christ's love without this is to eat unworthily, failing to discern the Lord's body, and to be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. (1 Cor. xi. 27-29.) This will surely bring present judgment upon us from God, as in the case of the Corinthians; for He will not condemn (or judge) us with the world. (1 Cor. xi. 30-32.) Let a man examine himself therefore, and so let him cat of that bread, and drink of that cup. (1 Cor. xi. 28.)

One might add much more in detail in connection with this all-important truth, but the above will suffice for the object before us. May the Lord in His grace lead you, dear Christian reader, to ponder these things, and, like the Bereans of old, to search the Scriptures, and see if these things are so, and being assured of them, to carry them out practically

at all cost for His glory.

"If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." (Matt. vi. 22.)

E. H. C.

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