



THE BREAKING OF BREAD

**NOTES OF AN ADDRESS
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The Breaking of Bread.

1ST CORINTHIANS xi. 18-26.

HERESIES are brought about not by error, but by presenting the truth in a way that would produce a party spirit. If we present anything in a way that would produce a party feeling, it really becomes heresy, and if others listen to it a party is consequently formed. Heresies produce a divisive feeling amongst saints; instead of seeking to keep and maintain the unity of the Spirit, there is a divisive feeling operative, a divisive element working. In such a state of things God comes in and those who stand true to the truth are manifested, they do not manifest themselves, but they *are* manifested. God makes it plain that they are holding the truth—it may be feebly, very feebly—still they are holding it, and they are manifested.

“And shame them that have not.” The rich who had plenty to bring made a display of their wealth, that is the opposite of unity,

the opposite to what the Spirit of God would produce. "I praise not" (the *you* should not be there)—I have not a syllable of praise to give—"I praise not." The Apostle received and he delivered, and that is the mark of a true servant. He *receives* and he *delivers* what he gets. He neither adds to it nor takes from it. "*Till He come*"—not the coming *for* us, but the coming *with* us. God will have a witness to the death of Christ on the earth till Christ comes with the saints. After the church is taken home there will still be a testimony to the death of Christ. His faithfulness demands that there should be a testimony to His death till He come.

Now, the fellowship of the Christian constitution is *one*, and one only. It is neither one and a half nor two—it is *one*. Get that thought down into your souls—it is *one*. The tendency is to lose the true sense that there is only one fellowship in the Christian constitution. Had things been according to God this word would not have been needed, for all would have been together, all would have been in unison. It is very perplexing now for young people especially when they are not settled in their souls to get settled. People think it is easy, but it is not. The difficulty lies in not knowing that there is only *one fellowship* in the Christian constitu-

tion. Take all the different companies of Christians, each with their own shades of opinion, that are in existence at the present time, each, no doubt, would write on their respective doors, "We are right," and they are acting on that—"We are right."

I do not know how you feel about it, but it is giving me considerable exercise. There is an inner sense with all of us desiring to be right, and if there is a single thing, even although it is negative, we will gather up and hold on to it to confirm where we are. We will gather up everything to secure the sense that we are right where we are. We need not retire *into* ourselves for *certainty*, and when we get the truth into our souls we do not need to go *outside* of ourselves. The certainty for every Christian lies in the grand fundamental truth, there is "one Head," not two heads—"one body," not two bodies—"one Spirit," not two spirits—"one hope," not two hopes, and "one home."

Those Judaising teachers were not holding the Head from which all the body by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God, Col. ii. 19. It was not the Colossians themselves so much, but more those who went in and troubled them. If we are holding the Head the next thing is the "one body," not

two, but "one body," and that is simple enough. "One Head," "one body," "one Spirit," "one hope," "one home," and if these great *ONES* get into our souls in the power of the Holy Ghost we do not need to go outside of ourselves for that wonderful sense of certainty which only the Spirit of God can give, but if we have not that we will be tossed about by every shade of opinion we listen to. It requires exercise, and it requires that we should be before God in secret prayer; that is where to get certainty, and that is where to get power. You will get help at meetings, and help by reading books, but unless you get into the closet you never get certainty.

A young man recently said to me, "that he could not find time," and I replied, "my dear brother, if you cannot find time you will have to *take* time." No one can be established apart from secret dealings with God. No one knows the certainty of the truth apart from communion with God. You will have to *take* time, and if you do not take it you will not have the confirmed sense in your soul that you are breaking bread in the very spot where Christ would have you. You will not have spiritual assurance. Somebody will come along with a plausible story and you will be affected by it because you will lack

the spiritual vigour that will throw everything off which is not the truth.

Let us now look at the breaking of bread. There is no sweeter occasion on earth than the breaking of bread, in addition to secret communion with God. Preaching and everything else is nothing as compared with these. In the supper the world's verdict is what we begin with. Their verdict and their choice were, "Not this Man, but Barabbas." In Barabbas was seen the three qualities which go to constitute the texture of this world. (1) It is first sedition, or an undermining of, and rebellion against, the ruling authority—the city, representing the complete rule of God. He broke through that rule which made way for what followed. (2) He was a murderer. A murderer is one who sheds the blood of one who is made in the image of God. (3) He was a robber, *i.e.*, he was a man who took the property of another and used it for his own interests. Sedition—rebellion against divine authority and rule. Murder—violence toward his fellow man. Robbery—appropriating that which was not his own. These are the three things which characterised Barabbas, and these are the three things which characterise the world which said "Not this Man, but Barabbas." The choice of Barabbas was the choice of his principles.

Think for a moment on the mercy that has enabled us to reverse that verdict. The world's verdict is *unwithdrawn* and it has to be accounted for to God, and no power will enable the poor world to escape, while the simple child of God has received mercy to reverse the verdict and say, "*Not Barabbas, but this Man.*" Tell me what is your sense of that mercy? There is not a reason in one of us that we should get ability from God to reverse that verdict—it is all mercy—it is all grace, and all we can say is, "Thank God for ability to reverse the world's verdict, "*this Man, not Barabbas.*" If you think that out and expand it a little it will help you to break bread, but you will have to think it out and expand it, or the breaking of bread will become very formal. But there should be a little expansion each Lord's Day and you break bread with a zest, you break bread with a joy in your soul, you break bread with a gladness that will gladden the heart of Christ.

Well, the next point I want to touch is, "*the night* in which He was betrayed." The translators pushed in the word "*same,*" and it breaks the sense. It is *the night* in John xiii. 30. When Judas received the sop he went out and it was *night—night—night*. It *was night* and it will continue to be night

until Christ comes as the Sun of Righteousness with healing in His wings. While in the night, however, what a wonderful truth that we are *not of it*; we are children of the day and not of the night. We are in the night, but not of the night. We are in the world, but not of the world. Once you were *darkness*—not merely dark, but *darkness*, the article itself, and now ye are light in the Lord. Ye are children of the day, and what are you doing? You are breaking bread in the light of the love of God as revealed in the death of Christ. That is what you are doing. When you meet together with a few who love the Lord on Lord's Day morning, do you come with a sense that the light of the love of God is revealed in the death of Christ? Do you come with that sense? I think we have too little thinking. That's my feeling. As children of the day we have had ability to reverse the verdict of the world, and are children of the day and not of the night. To the eye of God every little company should be a ball of light setting forth the revelation of His love. The night in which He was betrayed He took bread and when He had given thanks said, "This is My body which is *for you*," and that *you* covers from Pentecost to the coming of the Lord. YOU—the children of the day. "My body for you."

If you get that into your soul, in the light of the personal love of Christ your soul will thrill as you take the bread—it will thrill. You will take the bread with all the virgin vigour of a first time and the sober sense in your soul that it might be the last time, and you are taking it "till He come."

When I broke bread first it was all *myself*, *myself*, now it is all *Christ, Christ, Christ*. I do not come to get my heart touched; I go to touch His heart. I want Him to know that He has enabled me to reverse the world's verdict, and it is He, He alone who has to get the honour, not another. In the very scene where He has died there is a band who are the children of the day, who have ability to change the world's verdict, and they are taking the bread in the light of the love that made Him die—and that the love that made Him die, could not die. It is as living to-day as ever. "My body for you." Oh, my friend, when you think of Him in this way, you gladden the heart of the blessed God. Do not be afraid He will not have to say to you; do not think He will miss you. He will make you rejoice, but you go there to make Him rejoice, and He will not disappoint you. That is the bread, and mark you it is just "*one loaf*," and may God save us from the confusion of more than one loaf. "My

sheep hear My voice." They do not begin to analyse the voice of strangers—they just say, "that is *not* the Shepherd's voice." Oh, let us avoid all arguments. One Head, one body, one loaf; if that is held firmly in your soul, then nothing can shake you, nothing, nothing. There may be children of light in different places, but you know the Head, and the body.

We come to the cup now. You take the bread to call Him to mind. It is not easy to explain it, but when you *are in it*, you do not need explanation. Explanations are superfluous when you are there. I have heard of two old brothers who argued about household blessing for over fifty years. Recently they got light, and then one said, "I have discussed it for all these years, but when once you get it, it does not need discussion." If you are there you do not need explanation, but you are calling that blessed One and the love that made Him die, you are calling Him to recognition. Use which ever word you please so long as you get it. "The cup of the new testament in My blood." Not only the efficacy of it, but in all the authority—"in My blood." We are a little slack on the authority side. In all the authority of My blood. "When I see the blood *I will* pass over you." Thank God the efficacy is there,

but we have lost the conception of the authority. How many of us see that God Himself was the very first to get freedom from the work of Christ. So soon as the work was completed, the veil was rent from the *top to the bottom*—God was out. There is a clean place and He occupies it, and He is out as a Saviour God; He is out to exercise His sovereign mercy to men. He was behind the veil until then, and He will never be behind it again. "The new covenant in My blood." The church was never under the covenant, and it was never under law, but the church has all the blessing of the covenant. God has taken the church and has put that cup into her hand. The church is the custodian of that cup, and she is carrying it through until that poor down-trodden nation Israel is brought back again. He lifts everything out of type and puts it on the plane of reality, and the great thought is the church is carrying it down, and when that poor down-trodden nation sees the mercy in thus preserving the cup she will say, "His mercy endureth forever." When you take the cup you take it with the sense in your soul of what it is to Christ. To me it is a great joy that Christ sees that nation brought back into the blessing of the new covenant. He sees universal blessing in that cup. There is

not a particle of blessing on the earth that is not on the authority of the cup, and to my soul it is a great joy to know that when I take the cup in my hand, it touches Christ in a universal way. There is the truth of all the blessing that comes to men and women ; we have the whole benefit of it now, and we are in unison with Him when we take the cup in the light of universal blessing—in the light of the world to come. If you take it in that light you will find something in your spirit in unison with Christ Himself that will make Christ glad, and you will not think on your own blessing, but what the cup is to Him. He will see to it that you get the blessing, do not mistake me, but pray that the thought will get down into your soul what the cup is to Christ Himself. It is giving Christ a taste of the joy now that He will have in the world to come. To take it in any other light is but lowering the truth—as oft as ye do it ye announce the Lord's death till He come, *i.e.*, till He come to claim the earth. You see it and are influenced by it, you are announcing His death till He comes. God delights to see His Son being recognised in the earth. It is a joy to God to see Him lifted up in the world where He was rejected. May God help us to see what the breaking of bread is to Himself—one loaf, one cup, and holding that in the

light of what it is to God—what a privilege ! What a privilege to give God pleasure in the recognition of the one head, the one body, the one loaf and the one cup, in the midst of the present confusion.

I said to a brother one day, " you are going to break bread *here* and I am going to break bread *there*, but it is not the one Head that is taking you *here* and me *there*. I am not going to say which is right, but you cannot have two bodies. I am not saying you are right and I am not saying I am right, but I do say you cannot have two bodies." He bowed his head and said, " I have got a pull up." Let us each see to it for ourselves that there cannot be two bodies. What must God see in all the confusion and differences here. If we were all holding the one Head and the one body what a sight it would be to Him in the very place where Christ was rejected. I am not saying right wrong, or wrong right, but it becomes every loyal lover of Christ to solemnly look into things in the presence of God, for, be assured, there is only *one right*. Let us be exercised to find that out and so let God have joy in looking down.

That is my word to you this evening. If ever I had an exercise it was to-day. Some think the breaking of bread is the end, but we have to come to see that it is the *beginning*-

end, not the *end-end*. Go on and on like a snowball, gathering as you go and you will never break bread twice in the same confidence in God and in Christ, but there will be an increase every Lord's Day ; it may be very little, but it will be on the side of increase. Move on, move on, there is not any sitting place here, and if you sit down you will just have to rise up again, and the Christian who thinks he will get it easy here is deceiving himself, for suffering goes along with faithfulness to Christ. You cannot separate the two things, sacrifice and obedience. Do not think it is going to be an easy thing. But oh, beloved, keep your eye on the Ascended Man, for He is the Coming Man.

