

**Breaking
the Bread
in Remembrance
of the Lord**

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PREFACE

And when the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for I say, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

(Lk. 22:14–16)

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

(Matt. 26:26–29)

On the night the Lord was betrayed, He prepared a supper for His disciples. This was out of His immense grace and mercy. The Lord knew the time had come for Him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved His own who were in the world, He would now show them the full extent of His love. He foresaw the many trials they would encounter after His departure, so He prepared for them the Passover, that they would remember Him each time they took the bread and the cup. Partaking of the bread and the cup enabled them once again to receive God's unforsaking love, unlimited mercy, and power of resurrection, giving them the strength to complete the course until they arrived in the kingdom of the Father where they would drink the new cup with the Lord. Therefore, the "bread-breaking service in remembrance of the Lord" is indeed the most important, abundant and glorious service. If conducted well, this service will bring great delight to both the Lord and us.

The Lord's servant Bro. Hong has delivered several enlightening messages on bread breaking, several of which have been compiled in

this publication. May the Lord use this book to greatly establish the churches and saints through their partaking of this one bread and one cup until He comes.

Grace of Jesus Christ Crusade
Mount Zion
May 10, 1992

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Break the Bread in Remembrance of the Lord

*The Lord's Servant Bro. Hong's Message
during the Bread-Breaking Service on Mount Zion on Dec. 24, 1989*

Christians in the denominations generally consider believing in Jesus a mere religion. Some were brought up by parents who supposedly led a Christian life but who had not personally experienced salvation. Therefore, their baptisms were only rituals.

In these last days, God raised up His maidservant Sis. Kong to restore the full truth of Blood, Water and Holy Spirit. This was not only the restoration of the truth, but also the manifestation of the power of salvation.

God chose Sis. Kong, a woman despised by men, to display His salvation. Sis. Kong personally experienced the power of the Lord's salvation. She did not write a theory, but related her testimony to the truth. Her preaching of the witness of Blood was much different from that of the denominations, for she bore witness to the *blood* with her own life. Many believers consider water an initiation rite into a religion. But Sis. Kong preached that water baptism is a testimony of being separated by God from the world and from the power of the devil and of coming into the name of the Lord. This kind of baptism is a powerful declaration of faith; a declaration which can be compared to the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea, setting them far beyond Pharaoh's reach. If we have such firm confidence in the water baptism, we will experience the glory the Israelites experienced. Therefore, nothing the New Testament Church does is a ritual, including bread breaking.

The denominations hold "Holy Communion" without the testimony of the bread and the cup. They welcome any Christian to take part. To them it is only a ritual. I hope that New Testament Church services—including delivering of messages, praying and bread breaking—never become a formality. We should experience the power of the Lord's sal-

vation in every service so that we may benefit from them. Otherwise, they will become a burden to us.

We break bread in remembrance of the Lord. So before we eat the bread and drink the cup, we must compose ourselves. We should come before the Lord with a quiet spirit as Mary did. Let us have intimate fellowship with the Lord who died for us. Let us also enjoy the salvation He prepared for us, and use bread-breaking service as an opportunity to thank Him and to give Him our heart. The Lord, who shed His blood and sacrificed His life for us, will enjoy our love, our praise and our thanks toward Him. Both the Lord and we will enjoy this mutual love. This we will not, however, have this experience if the service is rushed and must end in a hurry. Therefore, we must face the bread-breaking service seriously. The more we meditate on the Lord's love and His death, the easier it will be for us to offer our thanks and praise to Him. The more we understand this love and are filled by it, the more we will offer better sacrifices to Him and maintain a closer and deeper union with Him. Therefore, we must be more focused during bread-breaking service than during any other service so that we will not miss out on His grace.

We must come before the bread and the cup with enlightenment and faith. We come before the crucified Lord, our Big Brother who prepared the salvation by suffering and dying for us, so that we might be reconciled to God. We are no longer far away from Him or separated from Him. Here we find the blood of redemption that has been shed for us for the remission of sins. This blood saves us all. If we have such recognition and faith, we will surely find the bread-breaking service enjoyable, and it will become a source of new strength. We will naturally praise our dear Lord from our heart and give ourselves to Him willingly. The Lord will also be comforted to see the fruit of His labor.

We should always observe the leading of the Holy Spirit in a bread-breaking service. After enjoying the Lord's salvation, we may, under the Lord's leading, come to God the Father to remember His great love.

The Father sacrificed His only begotten Son, sending Him to this world to bear our sins and prepare the salvation. Therefore, toward the end of the bread-breaking service, we must offer our most sincere praise to the Father. Brothers and sisters may, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, choose to sing a hymn or utter prayers of thanks. There is no need for us to plead miserably for our infirmities, for the salvation has already been accomplished. As long as we receive His bread and cup with a thankful and praising heart, the Lord will be satisfied and we will be relieved of our burdens.

I feel that we must raise the standard of our bread-breaking services so that they can reach a more abundant realm. We should not simply sing a few hymns and try to end the service as soon as possible, for if we continue in this way, our bread-breaking service will become a formality, and be of no benefit to us at all. I hope that, starting with the next service, all brothers and sisters will come with their spirits prepared. Let the Lord enjoy our praises—praises from the people He has redeemed. There is no need to rush through the bread-breaking service. We must bring our heart before the Lord and pay attention to the motivation of the Holy Spirit. Remember that the leading of the Holy Spirit is new and living. Sometimes the Holy Spirit will remind us of the Lord's suffering. So we should ponder over His love accordingly. And when the Holy Spirit makes us feel the greatness of this Name above all names, we should praise His Name during service. In this way, bread breaking will increase in richness, and we will enjoy more of the Lord's abundant grace, regain strength to run the course ahead of us, fight the good fight and bear a glorious testimony for Him.

Partake the Blood and Body of Christ

*The Lord's Servant Bro. Hong's Message
during the Bread-Breaking Service on Mount Zion on Feb. 24, 1991*

Bread-breaking service is a time to remember the Lord who shed His blood and died for us. It is a feast to enjoy His love. Through eating the bread and drinking the cup, we enjoy the abundant salvation He accomplished for us. This service is different from all other services—we do not come to this service to pray for grace or to hear sermons. We come to this service to remember and enjoy the Lord, to bear witness to His salvation and to let the Lord enjoy our presence. Therefore, the bread-breaking service is glorious and sacred, and we must take part in it with a serious attitude.

Due to time constraints, we used to rush through our bread-breaking services. We would not take the time to remember our Lord, or to thank and praise Him. What's more, the hymns we sang were not abundant enough. We must improve this service and reestablish its importance.

We must face the testimony of bread breaking seriously. The Bible says, "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 all partake of that one bread" (1 Cor. 10:16–17). For we, being many, are one bread and one body. This is the testimony of unity—the testimony of the body of Christ. Through eating the bread and drinking the cup, we testify that we partake of the blood and body of Christ. In Christ, we are united, not divided. Although there may be a hundred of us, even a thousand or tens of thousands of us, we are still sharing one bread, one body. The testimony of "oneness" will not change, no matter how large the congregation. We must pay close attention to this as we partake of the Lord's body and blood. When attending this service, we must understand the significance of the bread and the cup. Only this kind of bread-breaking service will satisfy God's

heart.

In 1 Cor. 11:17–31 Paul said, “Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse. For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it. For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you. Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord’s Supper. For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk. What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you. For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes. Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body. For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.”

Brothers and sisters, when those at the Church of Corinth came together to eat the bread and drink the cup, why did they not do it for the better but for the worse? Because they ate and drank in an unworthy manner, making themselves guilty of the Lord’s body and blood. Anyone who eats and drinks without discerning that they are the Lord’s body and blood will be eating and drinking judgment to himself.

Therefore, we have to take the bread-breaking service seriously, lest we come together for the worse and not for the better.

How can we come together for the better for (benefit from) a bread-breaking service? We must first examine ourselves and discern the Lord's body before we take it. What do we examine? Whether we are united with all the saints; whether we can have fellowship with other members of the body; whether we are in harmony with them. This is what we neglected in the past. Of course, I am responsible for this because I did not explain this truth thoroughly to you. So the churches and the saints failed to take this matter seriously, and this service gradually became routine. But we must not remain in such an unholy condition, always failing to meet God's standard. Otherwise, we will come together for the worse and not for the better, as Paul said.

We must examine ourselves closely to see whether we are involved in anything that opposes the holiness and unity of Christ's body. If we notice anything, which makes us guilty of the Lord's body and blood, we must deal with it. If it is a personal shortcoming toward the Lord, then confess the sin and repent before Him. If it involves another member of the body, resolve the matter with that person. The Lord's blood was shed for us, and the cup is His blood of the new covenant, which God has prepared for us in the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. It is for us, we who trust in Him and repent before Him, to enjoy. If we deal with our sins, the Lord is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, that we may have fellowship with Him in the light. In this way, we will benefit from eating the bread and drinking the cup. But if we fail to examine ourselves, we will suffer loss. And if we examine ourselves, but refuse to do away with our sins, we will also suffer.

Over the years, I have heard about many instances in which we failed to pay attention to the unity of the body. Paul said to the Church of Corinth, *"When you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you... there must also be factions among you..."* Brothers and sisters, I

see that there is also disharmony among us, although to different degrees. Some people have created their own factions and refuse to let go of their personal grudges. There is no tolerance, forgiveness, acceptance, support, care or love between them and others. Disunity of this kind will only make us suffer loss, especially when we come for this bread-breaking feast. Therefore, we should not be in a hurry to eat the bread and drink the cup before we thoroughly examine ourselves to see if we have any grudges against anyone. We must also find out if it is difficult for us to coordinate or have fellowship with other members of the body, or if we harbor illwill toward anyone. We must deal with these things before we eat the bread and drink the cup. Then we will benefit from it. If any of us refuses to examine himself, or refuses to get rid of these sins after discovering them, it would be better for him to abstain from the bread and the cup until he is ready to do so in a worthy manner. Now that I have made the truth clear to you, if anyone continues to take the words of God lightly, I will not be responsible for his loss.

Brothers and sisters, eating the bread and drinking the cup is a solemn matter because the Lord's body is sacred. It is not a body hidden in the dark. He does not allow us to partake of any works of darkness. Does this then mean that we should stop attending the bread-breaking service? No. While we may skip other services under certain circumstances, we cannot skip the bread-breaking service. We will not stop taking the bread and the cup because of our sins. In fact, even though we may have committed countless sins, the Lord's precious blood was shed for us long ago. He is always willing to cleanse away our sins. But for the blood to be effective, we must first confess our sins before the Lord. In flesh, we have not reached perfection and holiness, and it is inevitable that we will have weaknesses. But whenever we are weak, let God's light reveal our sins. We must also confess our sins, deal with them, forgive one another, and ask for the Lord's forgiveness. We must never be discouraged from partaking of the bread and the cup. Let us come before the Lord with a serious attitude, examine ourselves thoroughly and get rid of our sins. Then when we eat the bread and drink

the cup, we will gain the Lord's salvation. Therefore, let the bread-breaking service work to our benefit. We must immerse ourselves in the body so that, together, we may build up the body of Christ and manifest the testimony of unity.

Today is the first time we have come to the front to take the bread and the cup. We used to pass them around. Because we are still in the process of learning, we tend to appear somewhat confused, and our attitude when taking the bread and the cup is not serious enough. But as long as we are willing to learn, we will improve. This is the Lord's body, so we must accept it with fear and piety. During mass, Catholics come forward and kneel at the altar, waiting for the so-called clergy to put the bread in their mouths. We are by no means justifying or imitating them. What I am trying to do, however, is to get us to feel more strongly about the holiness of the bread-breaking service.

Based on tonight's service, I see that we have a lot of room for improvement. With a respectful attitude, we should hold the bread and the cup with both hands, or, at least, pick the bread up with one hand and place it into our mouth with both hands. Of course, using both hands throughout would be better. This also goes for taking the cup. It is only appropriate if we can do it with godliness. We must also teach our children to practice what is fitting for the saints.

After singing and praying in the spirit, the bread and the cup will be blessed. Following that, as the cup is being divided, we must examine ourselves respectfully before the Lord. We must be serious; otherwise we may eat and drink judgment to ourselves for not discerning the Lord's body. After examining ourselves, we should then come forward, one after another, to take the bread and the cup.

It is good for us to then choose some hymns to sing. But to ensure that the hymns we choose are under the leading of the Holy Spirit, we must be familiar with the hymns' words. Then we will be able to sing them well and touch their spiritual meaning. If we have not read through or sung the hymns before, we may choose something inappropriate to

sing during a bread-breaking service. Therefore, in addition to reading the Bible, we must also try to memorize our hymns so that we will have a stronger feeling about the hymns and sing them with greater anointing of the Holy Spirit.

In addition, when we attend services, especially the bread-breaking service, we must pay a little more attention to how we dress, because we are coming to the Lord's feast. It would be rude for anyone who attends a feast to dress poorly. If we can pay attention to this, our service and worship will be more accepted by God. Of course, the Lord does look not at our outward appearance, but at our heart. Now that we have been personally invited by the Lord Jesus to His feast, we should feel embarrassed to come to the occasion in a pair of slippers.

May the Lord be gracious to us so that we may learn all these things with a serious attitude. As the brothers and sisters who conduct the bread-breaking service must learn, so must the rest of the brothers and sisters who attend the service. We hope that we will become more experienced. Let us continuously enjoy the Lord's bread and cup that we may continually find more grace and be established.

Eat the Bread and Drink the Cup in a Worthy Manner

*The Lord's Servant Bro. Hong's Message
during the Bread-Breaking Service on Mount Zion on March 3, 1991*

The bread-breaking service is definitely not a ritual; it is a testimony. The Lord's bread and cup is a testimony displayed in the universe: that Jesus, the Word who came in the flesh, the Son of man, has finished the salvation. He was crucified for the sins of the world, rose from the dead, ascended on high, sent the Holy Spirit, and built the glorious New Testament Church, which is His body. The bread and cup, which we display here, is the testimony of Christ's body (the church). Christ's body, as symbolized by this bread, is a body of mysteries. And how did this body of mysteries come about? The Lord's body, in order to bear the sins of the world, was broken through crucifixion. This accomplished the salvation, which now enables believers to have a share in this body of mystery. And as they partake of the bread and the cup, this body is displayed in the universe. This is a testimony that shakes heavens and earth—a testimony that Satan fears most. The appearance of this body is a lethal blow to the devil, for it is through this body that the devil will be trampled underfoot. Therefore, our breaking of the bread in remembrance of the Lord is a necessity. It is to display the body of Christ in glory and in power. This body will destroy Satan's dominion and crush the foundation of hell.

I hope that all New Testament Churches will, through our bread-breaking services, fully manifest the fullness, glory and power of Christ's salvation. Brothers and sisters, we must be serious about the bread-breaking service. We must examine ourselves thoroughly before we eat the bread and drink the cup. And what do we examine? How do we examine? First of all, we must examine ourselves as to whether we discern the Lord's body with a fearing heart. We must see if there is anything in us that is not worthy of the Lord's body, or if we have done

anything against His body. In the past, before this truth was fully discussed, we took the bread and the cup casually. The Lord will not count that against us. But now that the truth is preached, we must come before the bread and the cup with a godly heart or we will suffer loss. Since the bread is the Lord's body, we eat the bread to testify that, although we are many, we are one body. Therefore, the condition of those who partake of the bread must measure up to the reality and nature of the body. Let them examine themselves and discern the Lord's body before they eat the bread and drink the cup.

The Lord Jesus left the glory and riches in heaven, humbled Himself, and came to this world as the Son of man—the Word who became flesh. The Lord's body came with such humility. We want to be part of this body, but do we resemble the Lord Jesus, the Word who became flesh? If we only seek our own glory and refuse to humble ourselves, we will be eating the bread and drinking the cup in an unworthy manner.

When the Lord Jesus came in the flesh, God prepared for Him a body to do the Father's will, that is, to bear the sins of the world. Therefore, the Lord's body appeared because He forsook the glory of heaven and humbled Himself. And this body was to be broken for the world. This body was for others, not for Himself. This is what makes the body abundant. Therefore, we must examine ourselves to see if our condition is worthy of the Lord's body. If we do everything for ourselves and care only for our own gain, we are not worthy of the Lord's body. If we do not pour out our lives or deny ourselves like the Lord, we are not worthy of His body. If we eat the bread and drink the cup in such an unworthy manner, we will not only fail to benefit from it, we will also end up humiliating and despising the Lord's body. Therefore, as we examine ourselves we must look for things that stop us from reaching the testimony of His body. If we find such things, we must deal with them seriously before eating the bread and drinking the cup.

The Lord's bread and cup are the salvation He has prepared to make up for our human weaknesses and trespasses. The bread and the cup

are not to condemn us, but to deliver us from the punishment of sins so that we, who are full of weaknesses in the flesh, may enjoy God's salvation in Christ. Therefore, if we discover that we have any shortcomings or weaknesses after we examine ourselves, let us prostrate in the Lord's light. As long as we repent sincerely, the Lord is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins. We can then enjoy the Lord's bread and cup. Then we will again enjoy the Lord's forgiveness and the power of His salvation, and our spiritual lives will be even more established.

Those who refuse to examine themselves, or who refuse to deal with their sins after they have examined themselves, should refrain from eating the bread and drinking the cup, lest they suffer loss. I feel very strongly about this. I have already told you the truth, and if you still take the bread and the cup in a casual manner, you are definitely coming for the worse and not for the better. The Lord's words are our light and our salvation, but also our judgment. Let's be serious in receiving the bread and the cup. We should examine ourselves closely, discerning the Lord's body.

Brothers and sisters, why did I ask the congregation to come to the front to receive the bread and the cup instead of passing them out? I was concerned that some people would take the bread and the cup too quickly (before examining themselves thoroughly), if the bread and the cup were suddenly passed to them. That would be detrimental. To allow you enough time to examine yourselves, I asked that we stop passing the bread and the cup out, but that you come forward only when you are ready.

I am not saying that everyone who participates in the bread-breaking service must be holy. We are still in the process of reaching perfection. As long as we are sincere in facing God's light, confessing our sins, putting aside our imperfections, and striving toward perfection by the Lord's grace, we can come forward to take the bread and the cup. Sometimes, we deal away with our sins one day, but fail again the next day. What are we going to do then? We have been weak six days of the

week and only come to examine ourselves on Sunday. Aren't we trying to deceive the Lord? Well, it all depends on our intention. The Lord knows that we are sometimes caught in sins, still, it would be terrible if we continually dwelled in our weakness and rejected the Lord's light. We would eventually become insensitive toward sin. The Lord is not worried that we will sin; He is worried that we wouldn't feel anything when we do sin, and are without light or lack the determination to prostrate in the light.

A sister once asked me, "Bro. Hong, my flesh is so corrupt. What can I do? Is there a chance for me? How can I be delivered from my weakness?" I told her, "If you are aware that you are weak and that you have fallen short of the Lord, it is proof that you still have the light and that the Lord has not forsaken you. Guided by this light, you should come before the Lord to ask Him for forgiveness and grace. He will hear your prayer. But He will not be pleased if you have no feelings when you sin, if you don't hate yourself for it, and if you let your flesh take over."

Some people see themselves as being so incorrigible that they do not take the bread and the cup. They think that in this way they will not suffer loss. However, this mentality will cause them to suffer greater loss! Why? Because the bread and the cup are the salvation the Lord has prepared for our weakness. It is meant for us to enjoy. And if, because one refuses to put down his own weakness, he keeps himself from taking the bread and the cup, he will be despising the Lord's salvation. His loss and sin will be greater still. The Bible says, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" (Heb. 2:3). Therefore, each weekly bread-breaking service is an opportunity for us to enjoy the Lord's salvation—a salvation that He has displayed before us time and again. We cannot be too timid to come for the bread and the cup because of our weakness, nor can we refuse to come because we are unwilling to stop committing some sins. In both cases, we will suffer loss. Paul said that we must eat the bread and drink the cup in a worthy manner: Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

Therefore, we cannot eat and drink without examining ourselves, nor can we neglect the bread and the cup because we refuse to examine ourselves. The only way to enjoy the Lord's rich salvation is to examine ourselves and then take the bread and the cup.

We must teach our younger generations to take the bread and the cup with a godly heart in the Lord's presence. This is fitting for the saints and pleasing to God. As such spiritual virtues are increasingly restored in us; the Lord will be increasingly glorified.

Furthermore, since we only come forward after we have examined ourselves in our seats, there is no need for us to examine ourselves again at the bread-breaking table here in the front. That doesn't mean that we have to act hastily as we come to the table. Rather, we should come in a godly manner and with a calm spirit. After we have examined ourselves in our seats, we can come forward with a thankful heart. Let us come one by one, without bumping into each other. Also, we must be serious in our actions and God-fearing in our attitude as we come forward. I hope that the bread-breaking service on Mount Zion will improve. Let our service here be an example to all New Testament Church churches—not only in the way we conduct this service, but also in the reality of life.

The bread-breaking service this evening was better than before. When we come before the Lord with fear and thankfulness to enjoy His salvation, how delighted is His heart and how satisfied is our spirit! This is the starting point for us to draw near to the Lord. From now on, may the Lord's grace, power and love fill us more and more. We shall renew our strength to live a consecrated and victorious life on earth. The Lord will be glorified and this generation will gain hope through us. I believe that the Lord will continue to bless our bread-breaking service. During the next bread-breaking service, if we have more time, we can offer more prayers of praise and thanksgiving. We can pick more hymns so the Holy Spirit's leading can be more abundant and glorious, and we will enjoy more of the fullness of the Lord's salvation.

When we have fully recognized the reality of the salvation brought to us through the Lord's bread and cup, we will naturally be filled with thankfulness and be moved to utter prayers of praise and thanksgiving. The Lord's delight will be apparent, and His Spirit will fill us even more.

Our Lord loves to hear us praise His salvation. Since He has done so much for us, He will not be satisfied if we remain silent. Therefore, after we have enjoyed the Lord's abundant salvation, we should express our thankfulness. The bread-breaking service is a rich story of love; a story of life. When the Lord's love fills us, our own love will merge with His, producing a power so great that it will explode and wipe out Satan's fortress in the hearts of men. Such mutual love can even destroy the entire Satanic domain. So let us fully enjoy the Lord's salvation during every bread-breaking service, thereby allowing the Lord to enjoy our love. His heart will be captured by us when He sees how we, His very own children, have learned how to thank and praise Him. As long as He is satisfied, He will withhold no blessing from us. We hope that our bread-breaking services will become more and more glorious. Let us enjoy more and more of His rich salvation. Let us increase our prayers of thanksgiving and songs of praise to the Lord. Let us enjoy the Lord's love so that He may enjoy ours. That is the highest realm—one, which satisfies the hearts of both God and men. This is the realization of the heavenly kingdom. May the Lord bless the bread-breaking service of all New Testament Church churches.

How to Enjoy the Lord's Bread and Cup

*The Lord's Servant Bro. Hong's Message
during the Bread-Breaking Service on Mount Zion on March 30, 1991*

We thank the Lord for gathering all churches here to have a bread-breaking service. Before we start, I would like to say a few words. Let us read 1 Cor. 11:17–31.

I have talked about bread-breaking on several occasions because I felt that on Mount Zion we were not conducting this service well. Frankly, we were being somewhat casual and our services were becoming mundane. Perhaps the brothers and sisters from down the mountain have experienced the same thing: that your bread-breaking services have become more of a formality. I feel that we must correct this condition immediately, otherwise our services will not benefit us at all, but will actually cause us to suffer loss. Then it would be better to stop these services altogether. It is for this very reason that the entire Christian world has fallen—their ministration has become routine, ritualistic. Having lost the spiritual reality, their ministration is in vain. But the bread-breaking service of the New Testament Church must benefit the saints and allow us to enjoy the salvation that Jesus Christ prepared for us. Jesus Christ will then gain our praise and enjoy the fruit of His labor. Then this service will glorify God and fill our needs.

Paul the apostle once sternly told the Church of Corinth that they had not come together not for the better, but for the worse. Why? Because there were divisions and factions among them. They were not of one mind and were not building their lives in unity. They had gone against the law of the body and lost the testimony of the body. This was why Paul said that they ate the bread and drank the cup for the worse. The problem was so bad that they were eating and drinking judgment to themselves. For that reason, many among them were weak and sick, and many slept (had died). This was a serious matter. Therefore, Paul admonished the Christians at the Church of Corinth to examine

themselves before they ate the bread and drank the cup: to partake of the bread and the cup in a worthy manner.

While divisions and factions among us today may not be so obvious, there are many cases of discord resulting in the testimony of unity being ruined. Tonight we are breaking the bread here, and this bread is the body of Christ. The body of Christ is not divided, but whole. By shedding His blood and dying for us, the Lord Jesus broke down the middle wall of division between us. His body was broken for us that we might become one body in Christ and that we might be reconciled to God and live in harmony. This is the meaning behind the bread and cup of the Lord. Therefore, as we break the bread, we must examine ourselves and deal with our sins in God's light, especially the sins of divisions and factions. If we have such sins among us, we must repent sincerely before the Lord. Brothers and sisters who hold grudges against each other, or who cannot forgive and fellowship with each other, must examine themselves and deal with these sins before eating the bread and drinking the cup. If we eat and drink without recognizing the body and the blood of the Lord, we will be guilty of sinning against the body and the blood of the Lord. We will be drinking judgment to ourselves. This is our loss.

Let us be serious about the bread-breaking service. Before we take the bread and the cup, we should examine ourselves to see if we have been found guilty of the Lord's body, have ruined the testimony of unity, or have within us anything that defiles us. If the answer is "yes," then we must deal away with these things thoroughly in the Lord's light. If you examine yourself, but find it hard to let go of your shortcomings, you should abstain from the bread and cup, lest you be found guilty of His body and blood. This blood of the Lord was also shed for the person you hate. The Lord has forgiven him, so why don't you? We must come before this bread and cup with a serious attitude.

The Bible tells us that as often as we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death. This bread symbolizes the Lord's

body, and the grape juice inside this cup symbolizes His blood. This cup is, therefore, the new covenant in His blood. And the appearance of His blood and body here is a statement that the Lord Jesus has died for us to fulfill the salvation. His body was broken and His blood shed for us. We were formerly sinners who deserved to suffer in the lake of fire. But we thank God for sending His only begotten Son to die for us on the cross, thus accomplishing the eternal salvation. We must have this kind of recognition when we come before the bread and the cup. We must know that this bread is the Lord's body, which was broken for us, and this cup is the Lord's blood, which was shed for us. On the cross He bore our sins and delivered us from the curses we brought upon ourselves due to degeneration. Through death, He destroyed the devil that held the power of death, and brought the dominion of sins and the world to an end. Therefore, when we come to receive the bread and the cup, we must see the richness of this salvation that the Lord Jesus has accomplished for us.

This blood has the power to forgive sins, and also to deliver us from the dominion of death. The lamb mentioned in the book Exodus was only a symbol of the true Lamb—the Lord Jesus—whom God has prepared for all mankind. This Lamb shed His blood and died for us. If we believe in the power of His precious blood, our sins will be forgiven and we will be spared the fate of death. We are sinners, we are weak, constantly failing and falling. But if we confess our sins, disclosing all our trespasses before Him, we will enjoy the salvation. Then, the dominion of sins and the power of death will fall.

1 Cor. 10:16–17 says, “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 all partake of that one bread.” Brothers and sisters, we, being many, are one bread and one body, for we all partake of the body of Christ and are part of the body of Christ. If this is your recognition of the body of Christ, then when you touch this bread, you will also touch the glory, abundance and power of this body. The bread-

breaking service will give you enough strength to remove the works of the devil in you and to display the testimony of unity of Christ's body.

What the devil Satan fears most is the testimony of the body of Jesus Christ. But it is that very testimony that most glorifies Jesus, the head of the body. This is because this body will trample on snakes and scorpions and make the enemy the Lord's footstool. Therefore, if we examine ourselves and discern (recognize) the Lord's body and blood, then when we take the bread and the cup, our weakness will turn to strength; the sicknesses of our spirit, soul and body will vanish; and the power of death will have no more position in us. Jesus Christ, our head, is the Lord of life. His fullness flows through the whole body through our eating the bread and drinking the cup. Brothers and sisters, let us enjoy Christ's forgiveness of sins, experience the power of the resurrection of Christ's body, and display the testimony of Christ's body in the universe. The enemy will become our footstool and Jesus Christ, the head, will be glorified and praised. This is the kind of bread-breaking service we desire.

God the Father is waiting for all His enemies to become the footstool of the Lord Jesus. But when can this be done? When the body of the Lord Jesus Christ has grown up and fully displays the testimony of the body. May we see the abundant testimony of Christ's body during the service this evening. Let us all be completely set free and boast victory over the dominion of sins. Let us boast victory over the world and the devil. Let us sing to the Lord and rejoice in His salvation! May the Lord gain the glory and the devil Satan is put to shame!

In the Body of Christ

*The Lord's Servant Bro. Hong's Message
during the Bread-Breaking Service at Bethel on April 21, 1991*

As we come together to partake of the bread and cup during the bread-breaking service this evening, we are all sharing in the testimony of Christ. The Bible says, "For we, being many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread" (1 Cor. 10:17). This bread proclaims the Lord's body, and the breaking of this bread is a proclamation that the Lord's body was broken for us. As we come together to eat this bread, we are eating the Lord's flesh and partaking of His body. For we, being many, are one bread and one body. Therefore, this bread proclaims that the Lord, after His body was broken, gained a body of mystery. God is greatly glorified when this body of Christ is displayed as proclaimed by the bread. But to Satan, this is shaking because the gates of Hades shall not prevail against the body of Christ.

The Lord's body, as proclaimed by this bread, is the fullness of Him who fills all in all. In Christ dwells all the fullness of God, and the fullness of Christ is found in His body. In other words, if we wish to enjoy God's abundant salvation, we must be closely linked with this body. Then, all the riches of Jesus Christ will become ours. If we are separated from the body, we will have no part in the riches of Christ, the head.

Some brothers and sisters are really poor. I am not referring to material poverty, but spiritual poverty—a person may be wealthy on earth, yet have a dirt-poor spiritual life. Such a person will not have much to expend spiritually, so to demand just a little of him will leave him completely broke. If just a few honest words are spoken to him, he will stop attending services and start calling the New Testament Church cruel. This is poverty. But other brothers and sisters are indeed rich. Demands can be made of them and stern criticism given them. They can handle every setback calmly. Why the big difference? The determining factor is

whether they are living in the body of Christ. Why are some people spiritually poor? Because they are not in the body. Therefore, there is no way for them to enjoy the riches of Jesus Christ. For us to have an abundant spiritual life and to be a strong Christian, we must constantly live in the body of Christ. In other words, we must not be separated from the church. We must come to service often and not isolate ourselves. We must unite with all the saints. A Christian who isolates himself will lose the way to God's richer grace.

The purpose of the body of Christ is to trample the enemy and destroy the power of hell. Therefore, if a person wants to overcome the enemy, he must be in this body. A person may be spiritually strong, but once separated from the body, he will surely become weak at some point. Therefore, our bread-breaking is not a ritual—it is life. Through eating the bread and drinking the cup, we will become more closely united with the body and become part of the testimony of the body, which we will display in the universe. This is the Lord's most powerful testimony that glorifies God and causes Satan to tremble in fear. When this body appears, it will trample the dominion of death and hell, thus eliminating all the sins and destruction brought by the devil. Therefore, it is crucial for the body of Christ to appear.

We come together for services so that we may know the Lord Jesus better and grow to a perfect person, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. God sets up the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to build up the body of Christ. The more abundant the body of Christ, the more she will satisfy God's heart. Then, God will be glorified even greater, the devil Satan will be frightened even more, and snakes and scorpions will be trampled all the more. So when we come together for the bread-breaking service today, let us put down our personal feelings and come into the body of Christ. Then God will be glorified among us. I hope that brothers and sisters will pay attention to how the body feels as a whole.

If we do everything for the sake of this body, it will be like Mary

anointing the Lord with an alabaster flask of fragrant oil. This is pouring the most precious thing on the body, which is the body of the Lord Jesus. The Lord said, "*She has done a good work for Me.*" Brothers and sisters, if you have no idea what a good work is, work with the body more and give what you have to the body (church). Then you are doing a good work. The Lord Jesus wants us all to be like Mary. That is, every one of us should do everything for the church, because the church is the Lord's body.

May God enlighten us and lead us to do the good work. I repeat: If we do everything for the body (church), we are pouring the fragrant oil on the Lord. This is doing a good work, a work that brings God delight and us great blessings. An offering made in the body will not be in vain. If we immerse ourselves into the body, the riches of Christ's body (the church) will be ours. When we immerse ourselves in the body, we are not disappearing, but becoming part of something bigger. We are not losing, but gaining. May the Lord help us that we all may live in the body and become the richest children of God.

Any local church, which immerses itself in the body, will definitely be the most revived and abundant. But if it remains on its "home turf," and is so self-centered that it isolates itself from the body and never cares for the needs of the body, this church will definitely become poor. I am certain of this because I have seen it happen again and again. Those who immerse themselves into the body will definitely become rich; those who isolate themselves will definitely become poor and weak. May we all pay attention to the testimony of the body that God wants us to achieve. This is the secret to gaining God's blessings and delight.

Brothers and sisters, do you want to be blessed and rich? Then you must live in the body. You must care for the things concerning the body. For example, the New Testament Church churches in East Malaysia should pay attention to what is happening on the consecrated lands in West Malaysia. This is a mystery. As soon as the body is abundant, all the members of the body will also be abundant. The fullness of Jesus

Christ, the head, is distributed throughout the body. Therefore, it is absolutely impossible for us to enjoy the abundance of Christ outside this body.

I have visited all the consecrated lands during this trip. On some consecrated lands, I was comforted to see the companions zealous for the work of the body. God's delight and blessings were evident among them. This is very good. I hope that we will hold fast what we already have and continue to strive forward. May the New Testament Church churches in East Malaysia catch up with the others.

Enjoy the Fullness of Christ's Body

*The Lord's Servant Bro. Hong's Message
during the Bread-Breaking Service on Hebron on April 14, 1991*

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the slain Lamb. He was killed willingly for the sins of the world, thus accomplishing the eternal salvation. Being exalted by God, He has been made both Lord and Christ. God has given Him the name, which is above every name. Before Him, angels shall prostrate, and at His name all knees shall bow. He is worthy of all honor, power, wisdom, riches, glory, love, and praise. All of these should be rendered to the slain Lamb forever and ever.

The Lord Jesus is the King of kings. He is the head of the church, which is His body. How blessed we are to have the King of kings as our head and for us to be members of His body. As we eat the bread and drink the cup here, we are receiving the Lord's body and sharing in His salvation. This is the salvation God has prepared for us in Christ so that the riches of this King and Savior may become ours.

On the night that the Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed, He gave us this bread and cup so that we might remember Him and enjoy His salvation. Therefore, we must receive this bread and cup with a thankful heart. It is through partaking of this bread and cup that we become part of the glorious body of Christ. This is the body, which will trample snakes and scorpions, the body, which will make all the enemies our Lord's footstool, and the body, which will reveal the riches of Christ, the head. By partaking of this bread and this cup, not only we will have a share in this body; we will also be completely immersed in this body. Only with such recognition will we be able to grow each time we partake of the bread and the cup. We will also be more aware of the feelings of the body and enjoy more of its riches. All the riches of Christ, the head, will only be ours to enjoy if we are in this body. But if we isolate ourselves and refuse to become part of the body, we will definitely become poorer and weaker.

Why is the New Testament Church so strong and majestic? The reason is simple. The New Testament Church is the body of Christ. Why are some brothers and sisters stronger than others? Because they are in the body. Since they are in the body, Christ—the head—belongs to them, and they are as strong as Christ. This is the secret to the growth and establishment of our spiritual lives. If we can remember this each time we eat the bread and drink the cup, the riches of Jesus Christ, the head, will be ours to enjoy. This is a certainty. Although we take different pieces of the bread, they are all of the same bread. So, as we eat it, we become one in the body of Christ and display the testimony of unity.

Without this insight and faith, we will be doing nothing more than eating and drinking. But if we do eat the bread and drink the cup with this faith and insight, we will be strong spiritually. Through His Spirit, may the Lord help us understand the spiritual significance of taking the bread and the cup so that each time we do so, we will immerse ourselves into the body, coordinate with the other members and build up together to become one body.

Brothers and sisters if we eat the bread and drink the cup with faith and insight, we will enjoy the power of Christ's body. And when people meet us they will meet Christ. When Saul was persecuting Christians, Christ who had ascended on high came to stop him, saying, "*Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.*" Brothers and sisters, this is the security of being part of the body: The God of heaven will speak for us. That's why it is said: "The people of God bow down, they lie down like a lion; and as a lion who shall rouse them?" By faith, each of us can experience the power of being part of the body of Christ. We used to say to those who persecuted us: "Our God will judge you!" Everyone can say this, but not everyone can make it happen. When we say it, it carries power, because we are in the body of Christ. The power of Christ, the head, will be manifested on us. Having the power of Christ is the assurance of the New Testament Church. It is also her pride and glory.

Let us, then, treasure every bread-breaking service. Let us examine ourselves each time before we partake of the bread and the cup. If we have sins that make us guilty of Christ's body, we must deal with them. If we have done anything that has defiled this body, let us cleanse ourselves from it completely. Then when we take the bread and the cup, we will gain benefit and enjoy the riches, glory and power of the body. We will lead a strong and powerful life and be a Christian overcomer. May the Lord bless all New Testament Church churches in Southeast Asia. Let us immerse ourselves in the body.

On Hebron, all the companions work in the body—they do congregational work. At school, when the youngest son of Bro. Kim was asked by his teacher about what kind of job his father did, the boy said, "My father has a congregational job." "What is a congregational job?" the teacher asked. Bro. Kim's son responded, "You must be stupid. You don't even know what a congregational job is!" The Gentiles are foolish because they only care for themselves and do not know anything about the body. But the younger generations of the New Testament Church are amazing! Since childhood, they are taught and established in the concept of "congregation". What a blessing! We hope that this little boy will also have a congregational job when he grows up.

In the New Testament Church, everyone works for sake of the body. Everyone takes part in the congregational work. We invest all our thoughts in the body. A Christian who lives in the body will always be strong, rich, glorious, fresh, lively and happy. And who are the poorest Christians? Those who are separated from the body. They are the poorest, weakest and most seriously ill. I repeat: The poorest and weakest are those who care for themselves the most. The richest and the strongest are those who care for the body the most. I know exactly what I am saying. When I am in the body, I am rich every single day. When I am in the body, everything is fine, even if I don't have a single penny in my pocket. God has shown me His mercy all these years. Through various circumstances, He has brought me out of my narrow self to merge into the body. Therefore, I feel that I can safely say that my work is also

“congregational”. I hope that New Testament Church brothers and sisters will remember that we are all doing congregational work—the work in the body. If anyone feels that he is getting weak, come do the congregational work. Come for the bread and the cup. This will teach you how to do the congregational work in the body of Christ and enjoy its riches.

May the Lord be gracious to us. May we, every member of the body, be protected and established in the body so that we will enjoy the riches, power and glory of Christ, the head. Then we will become strong and invincible Christians. We thank the Lord for giving us this opportunity to break the bread and display the testimony of the body tonight. This testimony brings the highest glory to the Lord Jesus Christ and the greatest terror to the devil Satan. Let us display the testimony of the body more and more, that we may glorify the Lord, rule on behalf of the Most High and make the enemy tremble in fear. Hallelujah!

Display the Lord's Death in the Flow of the Holy Spirit

*Sis. Sheu Discussed the Feeling of the Lord's Servant Bro. Hong
towards Bread-Breaking Services on Zion's Offshoots in Malaysia*

When the Lord's servant Bro. Hong came to Malaysia this time; he had me conduct every single bread-breaking service. Each of the three times, I had to try to touch his feelings. In Hebron, the hymns I picked were related to the victorious and abundant testimony of the body of Christ. At the end, the Lord's servant went up and chose a much different hymn—hymn 77. Then I began to realize that the abundant and victorious testimony of the body comes from the slaughtered Lamb. Therefore, no matter how glorious and victorious a bread-breaking service may be, we must always display this slaughtered Lamb.

In Bethlehem, the bread-breaking service was held in the morning. I did not have enough time to pick the hymns before the service. After the Lord's servant blessed the bread and the cup, he said aloud, "Let's sing hymn 88." Suddenly, I was enlightened in my spirit. After he went back to Taiwan, it became more and more clear to me that bread-breaking should be as follows:

1. Bread-breaking service is to display the death of the Lord and His sacrificial love. I noticed that the Lord's servant, Bro. Hong always has a strong feeling about the love and death of the Lord. The Lord's love is ever so fresh and attractive to him. He is always encouraged by those who imitate the death of the Lord, such as Sis. Kong and Sis. Hui-Siong. We must imitate the Lord's servant, who can really touch the Lord's love and immerse himself completely in it. Then, we will also be closely united with this love, the love of the Lord who died for us.

2. Breaking the bread in the flow of the Holy Spirit means displaying the death of the Lord in the flow of the Holy Spirit. We have the problem of considering the flow of the Spirit and the Lord's love as

being completely unrelated. But in Bethlehem, the Lord's servant picked hymn 88. In this way, he was displaying the Lord's love in the flow and revealing the example of how the Lord served this world. However, to be effective at this, one has to be very familiar with all the hymns. If we cannot display the Lord's death in the flow, we will make bread-breaking service dull and lifeless.

3. In a bread-breaking service, we must first display the Lord's cross before we display our own. Without the Lord's cross, we would not have our own cross. I thank the Lord for allowing me to fail in conducting the bread-breaking service. Because of that, I was able to learn more. To fail before the Lord's servant is the Lord's salvation, a chance for a person to find a way to success based on the feelings of the Lord's servant. Without failure, we cannot be saved from our weaknesses, and we will not know the right way to carry out our ministration. Now I am better able to lead brothers and sisters to have a more perfect bread-breaking service.

Break the Bread in the Flow of the Holy Spirit

*The Lord's Servant Bro. Hong's Discussion
at the David's Citadel on Mount Zion on July 29, 1991*

These few years, the New Testament Church's bread-breaking services have been conducted quite well in spirit. Yet we sometimes got off-track, and got confused. This has something to do with the history of the New Testament Church. When the New Testament Church was first rebuilt we did not have so many hymns, so the hymns we sang for gospel preaching we also sang during bread-breaking. We didn't have much choice. So we gradually took the bread-breaking service less seriously. The problem was not so noticeable when the Holy Spirit worked strongly during the service. But when the work of the Spirit was not as obvious, the services would be dull and confusing, and would lack spiritual order. I feel that we must improve our bread-breaking service. I have briefly mentioned about the significance of bread-breaking service and the proper way to carry it out. But those are only some general guidelines. After my discussion, I notice that the co-workers have found it even harder to conduct the service well; they find it difficult to decide when to praise the Father and when to remember the Lord's cross.

The ministration of the New Testament Church is a ministration of spirit. Therefore, we need to pay close attention to the working of the Spirit. But the working of the Spirit will be firm and orderly only when it is on the track of the truth. The Holy Spirit bears witness for the truth. In other words, the truth is the track and the Spirit is the train. If we know how to observe the working of the Holy Spirit in the truth, the service will be even more abundant. We must not think that it is good enough as long as the Spirit works strongly, for if we fail to pay attention to the truth, we will restrict the working of the Holy Spirit. If we can both understand the principles of the truth and perceive the working of the Holy Spirit in the truth, the Holy Spirit will work freely,

Such working of the Spirit will be limitless and it helps lift the spirit of the saints to the third heaven. Therefore, I feel the need to improve our bread-breaking service. To reach this heavenly realm, the co-workers must explain, in detail, to brothers and sisters about the truth of bread breaking. Then everyone will be put back on track. It will take time, but when it happens, our bread-breaking services will be very glorious.

On the offshoots of Zion, Sis. Sheu talked about my feelings for a better bread-breaking service. Although she mentioned only three points, her discussion was accurate and enlightening. Her first point was that the purpose of bread-breaking service is to display the Lord's death and to remember His love. The second, we must break the bread in the flow of the Holy Spirit: to display the Lord's death and remember Him in the flow of the Holy Spirit. Her last point was that during a bread-breaking service, we must first display the cross of the Lord before we display our own; for without the Lord's cross, we will not have our own cross. If the co-workers pay attention to these three points, in their learning in leading the bread-breaking service, our bread-breaking services will surely improve.

The Lord's death and love is a rich and vast topic. So in each bread-breaking service, the Holy Spirit will work in a different specific way. Therefore, breaking the bread in the flow of the Holy Spirit means being aware of the leading of the Holy Spirit at that particular time. It is not enough to say that we remember the Lord. We should remember Him in the present leading of the Holy Spirit. In this way, the Holy Spirit will move freely and enable those who participate to touch the Lord's love and of His rich salvation even more. Therefore, whoever leads the service need to pay attention to how the Holy Spirit wants us to remember the Lord. This is what we mean by breaking the bread in the flow of the Holy Spirit. If we do not remember the Lord's death in the flow of the Holy Spirit, we will bring death to the service.

Sis. Sheu mentioned about the bread-breaking service we had in Bethlehem. We had the bread-breaking service immediately after I gave

a sermon, "From Bethlehem Our Journey Starts." During the bread-breaking, I picked hymn 88. She understood instantly that we should break the bread in the flow of the Holy Spirit. She closely observed the working of the Holy Spirit during all the three bread-breaking services held in Hebron, Carmel and Bethlehem respectively. That's why she could learn something from her experiences. When she found herself unable to keep up with the new leading of the Holy Spirit, she would try to understand it seriously. She does not take things lightly. Perhaps what was going through her mind was that since she was the shepherd in Southeast Asia, if she herself could not find the way, the flock would be lost. She has the burden in the spirit and a sense of responsibility. This is her virtue.

The one who leads the bread-breaking service must be very familiar with all the hymns. Therefore, we must not only be well versed with the Bible; we must also be familiar with the hymns. We need to find more time to listen to them and sing them. Being familiar with the hymns will help edify our spirit and help improve the way we conduct this service. If we can pick the right hymns at the right time, the Spirit will work freely and abundantly among us.

During the bread-breaking services, We often do something inappropriate: we display our own cross before we display the Lord's. Once we are touched by the Lord's love, we tend to display our own cross right away, expressing our will in following Him. However, the Lord's cross came before our cross, and the Lord loved us before we loved Him. He died for us before we were willing to die for Him. So, if we can display the Lord's cross before we express our love for Him because of His cross, our love will have a root (foundation). We will grow only when we have a root. We must have a root, which is the source of our love, for only then can we grow. Once, we chose to sing hymn 236 as soon as service started. The hymn goes, "What is most pleasant in the eyes of God? What captures His heart most? It is a life prepared to sacrifice^{1/4}" We were moved, but the motivation dried up soon because it had no root. We did not begin with remembering the

Lord's love and His selfless sacrifice. We did not begin on the right track, so the flame of the Spirit could not be kept alive.

Bread-breaking service is a time to remember the Lord. So, we will choose hymns that are about Him; about what the Lord has done for us—His path of obeying the Father's will. This is how we remember the Lord. We also need to observe the direction in which the Holy Spirit is working. In doing so, we need to be constantly keeping ourselves in the spirit. Once we are sure of the direction the Holy Spirit is working, we should choose the hymns according to the motivation of the Spirit. We will first choose hymns concerning the work that the Lord has done for us and let the Lord's love work in us. Then, we can express our response to His love. In this way, our services will be in a right sequence. Of course, remembering the Lord's love and expressing our love for Him are interrelated. As our spiritual life grows and becomes more abundant and experienced, we will be less rigid. But if you are a beginner, I advise you to follow the guidelines that I have just mentioned. After practicing for some time, brothers and sisters will gradually know how to pick appropriate hymns. If we can also follow the lively leading of the Holy Spirit at all time, the fullness and glory displayed during the service will be more than what we could hope for.

In the beginning, I feel that the co-workers yourself should take the initiative to practice according to these guidelines. You should also advise the elders and deacons who often serve in the church and who are spiritually enlightened and more advanced in spiritual life how to conduct the bread-breaking service. If the elders and deacons can catch up, the rest of the brothers and sisters will eventually be able to follow. Then there will be lesser off-track conditions in our bread-breaking services.

The bread-breaking service in the evening of July 19 was good because the co-workers were very alert. First, Bro. Tai-Ray and Bro. Jonah Chu prayed in Mandarin, followed by Sis. Grace in English, Sis. Kyoko Toyota in Japanese, and finally Sis. Rebecca in Thai. It was so abundant

to have prayers in many different languages! The co-workers' prayers were certainly outweighed those of other brothers and sisters. The Holy Spirit will have a way to work when we plainly express the Lord's glory, honor and power. Even Sis. Wu Xiaoyan, a newly returned sister, was moved by the Holy Spirit to pray in Tagalog (a Filipino dialect). She was initially too timid to pray, but once the Holy Spirit began to work, she overcame her fear. This was the first of its kind! When the Holy Spirit works, we can leap over all the hurdles, which seems most unlikely. That's why we had such an abundant service that evening.

I hope that the co-workers, upon returning to your localities, will take up the responsibility to lead the bread-breaking services. Advise the brothers and sisters who serve in the local churches and let them be trained to lead the service. During the service, prevent those who are on the wrong track to pray first; for a bad start leads to a bad end.

Since we are just beginners, we would not be perfect right away. But as long as we hold to these principles, practice will make perfect. Our bread-breaking service will surely become more and more abundant. Now you can raise your questions and we will discuss on them.

Q: Our brothers and sisters live far away from church, so we cannot come together for the bread and the cup in the evening. Our bread-breaking service starts right after the Sunday sermon. The spirit of the bread-breaking service will always be related to the sermon. When the topic of the sermon is about "attacking Babylon," the brothers and sisters find it difficult to choose hymns and the prayers of praise. These two themes seem to conflict.

A: It should not be so difficult. The work of the Holy Spirit will reach the peak at the conclusion of the sermon, and there couldn't be a better time to have a bread-breaking service. If we do it in the evening, it would be difficult to remember the morning's message. We often separate the flow of the Holy Spirit from the cross of the Lord and His love. But, actually, these two things are related. You

should go back to the three points mentioned by Sis. Sheu. Hold on to them and meditate over the things I said. Then, you will no longer find this so difficult.

If the co-workers, elders and deacons feel that brothers and sisters cannot choose the right hymns to sing, you may want to do it yourselves. Let them do it only after they are more experienced. Since we are only beginning, let's not have them choose any hymn at first, lest they pick hymns like "God Be with You Till We Meet Again." Then you will have a hard time trying to turn the situation around. We will surely make mistakes at first, but as long as we remain on the foundation of the truth, and take it one step at a time, everything will turn out fine. Our bread-breaking services will be abundant and stable if they are rooted in the Lord's cross and follow the motivation of the Holy Spirit. It will no longer be like it was in the past, when one service would be so good and the next one a complete failure.

Also follow the principles I just mentioned when it comes to praising prayers. Experienced co-workers, elders and deacons should pray first. Set the right direction so the Holy Spirit can work. Then everything will fall into place.

In the past, we did not give brothers and sisters a lot of time to offer their prayer of praise during bread-breaking service. This is something we have to improve. Remembering and praising the Lord are done not only through singing, but also praying. Only then can we call it a wonderful praising. If we have sung the hymns well and elevated the spirit of praising, then we must let the brothers and sisters pray instead of continuing with singing.

Also, when hymn singing reaches the peak, and when the congregation is done with singing and praying in spirit, it is better to bless the bread and the cup immediately. After that, ask the brothers and sisters to examine themselves quietly before God. While they are doing that, keep the momentum going by having the pia-

nist or organist play a hymn.

Q: Is it a requirement to come to the front for the bread and cup?

A: We do not have rigid rules, but the leading of the Holy Spirit. However, it would be good to come to the front to receive the bread and the cup. If we pass the bread and the cup around, someone may have the bread and the cup come before him before he has a chance to examine himself or to have done so thoroughly. He would feel compelled to take the bread and the cup immediately. We often remind brothers and sisters that we must examine ourselves and deal with sins thoroughly before we take the bread and the cup lest we eat and drink judgment to ourselves, and suffer loss. So we need to give them enough time to examine themselves. This is why we ask brothers and sisters to come to the front for the bread and cup on Mount Zion. But we may consider passing the bread and the cup around when the congregation is too big.

After the bread and the cup are blessed, we will have some time to examine ourselves. We do not have to sing right away but just let the hymn being played. We can sing it together after everyone has finished examining himself. So, those who lead the service must be flexible. You will find different circumstances in each different local church. May we learn from all our experiences.

Q: Coming to the front is a more respectful way to receive the bread and the cup. It gives you a different feeling. There was a person who did not fear God at all. He would take the bread and the cup when it was passed to him. But after we have changed our way of taking the bread and the cup by going to the front, he would leave the service without taking the bread and the cup.

A: Yes, each local church is different. If brothers and sisters hold grudges against each other so bad that they cannot stand each other's existence, they will have to deal with their sins thoroughly, before partaking the bread and the cup. If not, they will suffer loss instead

of gaining profit. The bread is a testimony of unity. Therefore, such disharmony is a humiliation to the testimony of unity and will defile the body of Christ. Taking the bread and the cup in such condition is equivalent to bearing a false testimony, which is a great sin against God.

On the other hand, we must also let brothers and sisters know that the bread and the cup are the salvation God has worked out for us; it is for us to enjoy. So, being weak does not disqualify us from taking the bread and the cup. If that were the case, no one would be qualified to partake of the Lord's bread and cup. If God kept a record of sins, who could stand? Someone may say, "I examined and confessed myself before I took the bread last week, but after my confession I failed again. Now, I have to confess the same sin again. Am I not cheating the Lord?" If someone fails because of the weakness of his flesh, God will not blame him. The whole purpose of breaking the bread is to display the Lord's death and His salvation; and this salvation is prepared for the weak. So, we have every right to enjoy it. As long as we are willing to examine ourselves before we partake, then we are considered worthy.

There are two extreme cases. Some people come forward to take the bread and the cup without bothering to examine themselves. Others do not come at all, even after they have examined themselves. The latter fail to understand the Lord's salvation. The bread and cup is here as the evidence that the Lord has already died for us, His blood has been shed for us, and that His body and blood have been separated for us. He has borne all the curses that should have come upon us because of our sins. He has taken the cup of curses. What we see here is the cup of blessings. The salvation is vividly displayed before us, we only have to examine ourselves, deal with our sins, and enjoy it. Therefore, it is wrong to not examine ourselves, but it is equally wrong to not enjoy the Lord's salvation after self-examination.

The cup is not for the strong, but for the holy. And how are we

made holy? By the blood, water and Holy Spirit of the Lord Jesus; not by our own works. If we can explain to the brothers and sisters, point by point, the significance and the richness of bread-breaking, they will surely be edified through the bread-breaking service. They will enjoy the fullness of the Lord's salvation.

The devil has another trick. He will tell people: "You don't have to examine yourselves since you are not even going to take the bread and the cup this time." So some people choose not to take the bread and the cup simply because they refuse to examine themselves. This is the same as people who choose not to receive water baptism to formally become Christians because after their baptism they can no longer lie and walk according to their own heart desire. Without the baptism, they think that they are not formal Christians and they can continue to live freely without being bothered by a guilty conscience. But a person of faith would rather accept the Lord, receive the baptism, and continue to stand on the baptised position to deal with sins by the Lord's grace.

The Israelites became weak again after they crossed the Red Sea. Despite being weak, they still moved forward. Therefore, brothers and sisters, you should not refuse to examine yourselves and partake the bread and the cup simply because you keep falling back to your weaknesses. If you constantly give up the opportunity to receive the Lord's salvation, you will end up having to bear your own sins, living a life of debauchery. We need to be aware that running away from the bread and the cup does not spare us from God's judgment.

- Q: Some elders blessed the bread and the cup with an inappropriate prayer. Can we train non-elder and non-deacon brothers to do the blessing?
- A: If the elders make inappropriate prayers when they blessed the bread and the cup, the co-workers should speak the truth to them in love. For the time being, it is better for the male co-workers to bless the

bread and the cup. If we plan to train more successors, we need to explain it to the elders and deacons lest we hurt their feelings. Let them understand the situation so they will not feel that the co-workers are brushing them aside and replacing them with others.

Q: There are several elders in a church. Must they take turns to bless the bread and the cup?

A: Not necessarily. In fact, serving by taking turns is the last thing we would do. The ministration in the New Testament Church is of the Spirit, not of the law. The most important thing is not to restrain the work of the Holy Spirit. The one who allows the Spirit to work freely will naturally be the outlet of the Holy Spirit. So it is not necessary to have every elder to bless the bread and the cup, but have those who can let the Holy Spirit work freely.

Q: When we conduct the bread-breaking services, we usually request people who have not returned to the New Testament Church to abstain from partaking of the bread and the cup. Is that appropriate?

A: To request people who have not returned to the New Testament Church to abstain from partaking of the bread and the cup is in accordance with God's standard. We should maintain this standard.

Q: Some brothers and sisters from the denominations came to our service. They were earnest to take the bread and the cup with us although they had yet to understand the truth on apostleship. Should we allow them?

A: What we display is a testimony of the body. If anyone insists on taking the bread and the cup before fulfilling what is required of a member of the body, his partaking of the bread and the cup will not do him any good. It would be better for people like this to abstain from taking the bread and the cup. We are not rejecting them. How we hope we can receive them all into the body! But we do not decide anything according to personal loss and gain. We only

hope that they can truly be established in this body and be blessed by God. We are following the standard of the truth, not excluding anyone. God will surely accept them if they are willing to follow the truth. And when God accepts them, we will certainly do the same.

Q: After the blessing of the bread and the cup, what kind of hymns should we choose to be played while we examine ourselves?

A: We should still focus on the Lord and what He has done for us. Then we can gradually move toward hymns about our love for the Lord.

Q: Do brothers and sisters need to examine themselves and confess their sins publicly?

A: It is not necessary to confess in public if we are coming forward to the Lord's table for the bread and the cup. Brothers and sisters can just examine themselves privately in their seats. After the bread and the cup have been blessed, the one who leads the service may ask the brothers and sisters to examine themselves before they come up to take the bread and the cup. This request will serve as a reminder to those who come out in a hurry, and a warning to those who do not fear God or have not received the full truth.

Q: If we know that a particular brother or sister has committed a certain sin but has refused to admit it and repent, yet they continue to take the bread and the cup, what should we do?

A: We can warn and advise this person. If he still denies it, and insists on partaking of the bread and the cup, it will be his own loss. He will have to bear his own sins before God. That's why it is important for the one who leads the service to remind brothers and sisters, after the bread and the cup have been blessed, to examine themselves or they would be eating and drinking judgment to themselves. This is our reminder out of love. After we warn them, we cannot help if anyone offends the Lord's body on purpose. So we must

first bring them God's words and let the Holy Spirit do the rest.

- Q: If I offend someone, and he knows it, other than confessing my sin before God, do I need to ask him for forgiveness?
- A: We confess our sins and repent before God; but we deal with our sins before people. According to God's standard, we have to do both. Dealing with sins is a big test.

I heard of a true story when I was in the Christian Assembly. An elderly sister in Shandong, China had a vegetable garden, and a rooster from next door would always come to destroy her vegetables and make droppings all over her house. The old sister grew furious. One day, when the rooster came to her house again, she killed it, cooked and ate it. No one knew. Later, the Holy Spirit began to work in her. Each time she closed her eyes to pray, she would see the rooster. She confessed her sin to the Lord, but the Lord said, "This is not enough, because I am not glorified. You must deal with your sin and make compensation." So she bought a big rooster, thinking she could just toss it over the fence. But the Lord said, "That's not enough. You must personally bring the rooster to your neighbor and apologize." She thought, "That's too embarrassing! I can't." But the Lord refused to let her go. So, in the end, she went and told her neighbor the truth, and apologized. She was surprised when the neighbor said, "No problem." She said, "It's no problem with you, but it was a big problem with me! You may not mind, but my Lord does, and He would not let me go!" Through her testimony, the Lord was glorified.

There is a difference between confessing our sins and dealing with our sins. It is easier to confess before the Lord because no one else will see us. Dealing with sins is a much deeper lesson. But if we can deal with them, we will find much grace. Therefore, how wide the range and scope of our sins, how far shall we then deal with our sins accordingly. Often, a particular sin continues to bother us because we refuse, or are too afraid to, deal with it, even though we

have confessed it. That's why we fall back to sin over and over again. I hope that all brothers and sisters will, by the Lord's salvation, come to His feast of love happily with a clean hand and a pure heart. Let us break the bread to remember the Lord and enjoy His abundant grace without any feelings of shame.