The Communion

No. 1
Breaking The Bread

★

By
F. H. Stringham

A Servant of Jesus Christ

PREAMBLE

"I would have you know how greatly I strive for you and for them at Leodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, that their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, that they may know the mystery of God, even Christ, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. This I say that no one may delude you with persuasiveness of speech."-Apostle Paul. (Col. 2:1-4.)

There is not a little confusion among brethren over the communion. Both as to the breaking of the bread and the use of the cup. This article has to do with the bread.

Most brethren believe that after giving thanks the bread should simply be broken—and once is enough. However, there are some who believe and teach that the bread must be broken into as many pieces as disciples present. Still others believe and teach that the bread must not be broken at all, except as each communicant breaks off a small bit for himself or herself.

Each group is making its own theory a test of fellowship, though there is no plain statement in the New Testament for either of these contentions. These and many other things are just "disputes of words" and reasonings of men. If "the Lord knoweth the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain" (I Cor. 3:18-20) how about the rest of us?

Christ's way is plain, very plain; so plain that the prophet said "the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein."—Isa. 35:8.

Let us not forget Matt. 15:13, "Every plant which my Heavenly Father planted not shall be rooted up." Also II Tim. 3:16, 17. "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be **complete,** furnished **completely** unto **every** good work." Also II Pet. 1:3—"His divine power hath granted (A.V.—"given") unto us **all things** that pertain unto life and godliness **thru the knowledge of him that called us.**"

From these and other texts we must conclude that every detail of Christian living and worship is revealed to us by God in His Word—the Bible. In other words, the Bible is the **complete** revelation of the will of God toward man. And in the matter of Christian conduct in private life and in public worship all has been clearly revealed in the New Testament.

We are stormed with the Greek, is this, that, or something else the correct translation? Scholars will give us several slight variations in word-

ing the translation, then we pick out the one that seems to suit us best and publish abroad that Prof. so and so of such and such university says the meaning of this or that Greek word is xxx, etc.

From all this "disputes of words" it would appear that one must be a university graduate in order to know what God wishes us to do in order to be saved and get to Heaven, or that we must hire a preacher who is thus educated to tell us what the Bible means. That is exactly what the hierarchy of Rome teaches, but it is not what the prophet of Jehovah teaches, "the wayfaring men, yea fools shall not err therein." Yes, God's way is made so plain that anyone who is able to read at all can know what He would have us do in order to be pleasing to Him.

However, in order to meet this I have asked and received from three leading Pacific coast universities (U. of Washington, U. of California, and Stanford U.), information as to the Greek word translated "brake" (or "broke") in Matt. 26:26; Luke 22:19 and I Cor. 11:24. All have definitely agreed that "the Greek says only 'broke it' (or 'brake it')."

Let us consider these theories.

First, "The Bread Must Be Broken Into at Least as Many Pieces as There Are Disciples Present, Before It Is Passed."

There is not a statement in the N. T. to show that the Lord broke the bread in as many pieces as there were disciples present. Jesus "**brake**" the bread, but not one word to indicate how many pieces he broke it into. "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things that are written; that no one of you be puffed up for the one against the other"—I Cor. 4:6. "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God"—II John 9.

"That no one of you be puffed up .... one against the other."

"If any man .... consenteth not to sound words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ

. . . . he is puffed up, knowing nothing, but doting about questionings and disputes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, wranglings of men."—I Tim. 6:3-5.

To insist that the bread must be broken into as many, or more, pieces as there are disciples present is going "beyond the things that are written" and justly comes under the criticism of I Cor. 4:6, I Tim. 6:3-5, and II Jno. 9-11.

When we go to profane history to prove our contentions in regard to Christian worship, as some do, we reject the all-sufficiency of the Gospel of Christ.

The Bible definitely teaches that after Jesus had blessed the bread He brake it. How many pieces He broke it into is not stated. It is possible that the bread was not even broken in two, but simply broken as His own body was broken.

What Christ requires of His followers is plainly written in His Word, we need not guess nor reason from our own wisdom "and disputes of words," "for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."—I Cor. 3:19.

We of the "Churches of Christ" plead for unity of all Christians in one body. We preach that if all professing Christians do exactly what the Bible says, no more, no less, we certainly will be one body in Christ. That is right. (See Jno. 17:20, 21.) Then some add one thing not mentioned in the Bible and another adds something else not mentioned in the Bible, and so on. Some say the loaf must be broken into as many pieces as there are disciples present; others maintain that the loaf must not be broken at all except as each disciple breaks off a bit for himself; and neither one of these doctrines is to be found in the Bible. PURE PRESUMPTION.

In Deut. 18:18-20 God told Moses "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken unto My words which he shall speak in My Name I will require it of him.

"But the prophet that shall speak a word PRESUMPTUOUSLY in my name which I have not commanded him to speak .... that same prophet shall die."

Peter said that prophet like unto Moses was Jesus Christ. (Acts 3:20-23.)

Jesus said "In vain do they worship Me teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men." "Every plant which my heavenly father planted not shall be rooted up."—Matt. 15:9, 13.

It is about time we started practicing what we preach. Don't you think so?

"Neither for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word, that they all may be one; even as thou, father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that thou didst send me."—Jno. 17:20, 21.

"So then let us follow after things that make for peace."—Romans 14:19, Prov. 9:8, 9.

When I can accept this doctrine of breaking the bread into as many pieces as communicants I think I'll be ready for individual cups also.

In correspondence with Bro. N. E. Kellems on this subject, he stated in his first letter: "I simply say what the Book says, that he broke the one loaf, he took and blessed, into twelve pieces."

But in his last letter he says "I draw the inference from that text (Matt. 26:26).

Webster gives "surmise" and "guess" as synonymous with "inference." Also defines "presume—To take upon one's self beforehand; especially, to do without authority; to venture. To take for granted; INFER; suppose." So their position is founded upon a presumption, surmise, guess. Building on the sand (Matt. 7:26, 27). We better build on the rock (Matt. 7:24, 25).

DO NOT BREAK THE LOAF

Now there is a somewhat larger group of honest brethren who are teaching and practicing that the bread must not be broken at all except as each disciple breaks off a small bit for

himself or herself.

I have given considerable study to this doctrine and will give some results of that study.

Brother J. D. Phillips of Munday, Texas, has given us a tract entitled "New Testament Words Translated 'Break'." I have carefully studied this tract and have done some investigating along this line. Brother Phillips has labored to show that instead of the A.V. or American Standard translation "broke it" (or "brake it") the Greek word in Matt. 26:26, Mk. 14:22, Luke 22:18, and I Cor. 11:24 ought to be translated "broke it off."

I have already given the translation as stated by the Greek scholars of three leading universities of the Pacific Coast states. I will also give here the rendering in the Emphatic Diaglott, a word for word translation by Benjamin Wilson. Matt. 26:26 "and having blessed, broke, and did give to the disciples"; and so elsewhere.

After reading Brother Phillips' tract I wrote him the following letter:

Chico, California, July 31, 1946.

My Dear Brother Phillips:

Have just read your leaflet "New Testament Words Translated 'Break'."

May I ask one question, Brother Phillips? Can the average citizen of our country, having only a common school education, knowing only the American language, possessing only a copy of the King James or American Standard version of the Bible, reading, believing and obeying its teaching be saved from sin here and in Heaven hereafter?

Brother Phillips replied— "Yes, if anyone will obey the gospel as presented in either or both the King James or the American Standard Version of the Bible—or any other version known to me—he will be saved, if he lives up to its teaching. Nothing I have ever said would, if fairly interpreted, imply that I believe otherwise."

Then why confuse the average man or woman

by use of all this Greek? But since my brethren have resorted to this sort of thing I must do all I can to dispel whatever confusion may have been caused.

BROTHER WATERS' TRACT

In order to learn more about this New Doctrine of leaving the loaf unbroken, I wrote on July 21, 1946, to Brother Homer L. King (editor of a paper called "**Old Paths Advocate**," and published monthly at Lebanon, Mo.) and requested further information. Brother King sent me a copy of a tract by Brother Ervin Waters on the subject, "The Communion," stating that he (Bro. King) endorsed the tract fully.

I wish to note some of Brother Waters' arguments in favor of the unbroken loaf. On P. 14 "not a bone of the Paschal lamb was broken and not a bone in Christ's body was broken. And the one body, the church, is to have no 'schism' in it. Then WHY do brethren inject into this picture that which despoils it?"

They DON'T. We care not for the lamb; the communion is to be in remembrance of Christ. We break the bread before passing it because that is what Jesus did and commanded us to do. "He took bread and when he had given thanks, he brake it and gave to them, saying This is my body which is given for you: **this do** in remembrance of me"—Luke 22:19. I Cor. 11:24. The King James Version reads "this is my body which is **broken for you**." Not **by** you. Christ gave us His broken body on the cross: He gave His disciples a broken loaf at the supper (a broken body, a broken loaf).

P. 15, Brother Waters quotes from Acts 2:42 "And **they** continued steadfastly ... **in breaking bread**." Then states that "they (every one of them) broke bread." Then admits that "breaking bread" in Acts 2:42 means the "whole communion." He says "the figure of speech used is a synecdoche in which a part is put for the whole"; quoting from Webster, but failing to give the illustration from Webster, and goes on to say "But the part mentioned must be true or

else the whole implied is not true. The illustration used by Webster "as 50 sails for 50 ships." According to Brother Waters, each of those ships can have only one sail. NONSENSE! Acts 2:42 simply tells us that the Jerusalem church "continued steadfastly" to observe the Lord's Supper. His reasoning in regard to Acts 20:7 has the same weakness. He quotes I Cor. 10:16—"The bread which we break." And asks "who is this 'we' that 'breaks'?" Then quotes from verse 17 "For we being many are ... one body for we are all partakers of that one bread," and adds 'the 'we' that break are 'many.' not just one." But Paul said "we are all **partakers**" not breakers. That same verse 16 also says "the cup of blessing which **we** bless." Did each disciple present offer a prayer asking God to bless the cup? I doubt if Brother Waters would use the same reasoning here.

Pages 19 and 20, Brother Waters quotes Jno. 13:18 and applies it to the communion. Jesus was there quoting from Ps. 41. As Brother Waters correctly states, this was at the house of Simon, two days before the passover. Jno. 13:18 reads in part, "He that eateth my bread lifted up his heel against me." The A.V. reads "He that eateth bread with me." But how did Brother Waters learn that Jesus was applying this prophecy to the communion? Same way he "proved" many things, same way he arrived at his numerous "irresistible conclusions"; learned it from Brother Waters' fertile imagination. Judas had been with Jesus 31/2 years. He ate the bread that Christ increased for the 5000 (Matt. 14:13-21) and the 4000 (Matt. 15:32-39) and it appears that Jesus supplied the twelve all the time. So Judas had been eating Jesus' bread, or eating bread with him, for 31/2 years. Jesus "trusted" him to carry the bag. (Jno. 12:6.)

Page 21, Brother Waters states "Scriptural testimony establishes the fact that Christ par- But took of the communion at its institution." he has failed to cite such "scriptural testimony." WHY? Because it's not in the Book.

Page 19—Now we come to the one big, central

and most important argument of all: "THE TIME OF THE DRINKING." If it can be established that Jesus drank the fruit of the vine in instituting the communion, it can be properly assumed that he ate the bread. If he ate the bread when he "blessed and brake it" he broke it only that he might eat a portion of it. This is the position of Brother Waters and those worshiping as he does.

Let us examine their argument on this, it all centers in one word—**Henceforth**. Matt. 26:27-29 -"He took a cup and gave thanks and gave to them, saying Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many unto remission of sins, but I say unto you I shall not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my father's kingdom." Mark 14:23-25—"And he took a cup and when he had given thanks he gave to them and they all drank of it. And he said unto them this is my blood of the covenant which is poured out for many. Verily I say unto you I shall no more drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the Kingdom of God." Brother Waters defines henceforth "from this very moment on." And then says "The irresistible conclusion (a favorite expression of his—F.H.S.) is that Christ drank after he gave thanks and before he gave the cup to them."

There it is, folks. But how did Brother Waters and others learn that henceforth proves that Jesus drank the fruit of the vine just at that moment. Mark says "I shall no more drink." We would probably say from now on. But does either one of these expressions prove that the thing referred to had taken place immediately before the statement? Just like it proves that Jesus ate figs from the tree (Matt. 21:18, 19) or that there were figs on the tree when Jesus came to it.

It is a fact well known to Bible students that the writers of the first four books of the New Testament did not always record events in their chronological order. For example, Matthew says

"He took a cup and gave thanks and gave to them saying Drink ye all of it for this is my blood of the covenant."—Matt. 26:27.

Mark says-"He took a cup and when he had given thanks he gave to them and they all drank of it. And he said unto them this is my blood of the covenant."—Mk. 14:23.

Note that Matthew says "drink" (future tense) "for this is my blood of the covenant." While Mark says "they all drank of it" (past tense) then "he said unto them this is my blood of the covenant." It matters little in what order the facts are placed just so the facts are made known. Here again we might call attention to Paul's instructions to Timothy (I Tim. 6:3-5) "doting about questionings and disputes of words." Matthew puts **henceforth** after he had given thanks for the cup. Does this prove that he had drunk of the cup after he had given thanks for it? NO! It proves only that he will not drink of it after he made the statement. Luke uses the word henceforth and puts it **before** Jesus started the institution of the Lord's Supper. Was one of these men wrong? By no means! They were both right. "But Mark agrees with Matthew" some say. Right! and he agrees with Luke also. When there seems to be a disagreement in statements of the Bible, the disagreement is in your head, not in the Bible. Those three men were all inspired by the Holy Spirit. The thing could not have taken place **after** the "**henceforth**," but could have taken place hours, days, or even years **before** the "**henceforth**." Hence Jesus must have drunk the fruit of the vine referred to before he even started to institute the Lord's Supper. I believe he drank during the Passover feast.

Let us examine a few texts using the word henceforth.

Matt. 21:18, 19—"Now in the morning as he returned to the city he hungered and seeing a fig tree by the wayside he came to it and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and he saith unto it Let there be no fruit from thee henceforward forever." Was there fruit on that tree im-

mediately before Jesus made this statement? No! Not since the last crop anyway, possibly never.

Paul had been a Christian for 32 years when he wrote Timothy (2 Tim. 4:8) "**Henceforth** there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." Is it true that this great apostle had no hope of eternal salvation thru all those 32 years of preaching, sacrifice and suffering? Can you not see the absurdity of their argument? (See also Rev. 14:13.)

There is not one word of evidence that Jesus ate of the bread or drank of the cup in the institution of the Lord's Supper. There is a clear cut statement that he did NOT drink from the cup at that time. (Luke 22:18.)

As an example of Brother Waters' reasoning note his statement on page 23. "Christ's body was not literally broken (Jno. 19:36) but was broken in death." He repeats this statement in the same paragraph.

John 19:36 reads "These things came to pass that the scriptures might be fulfilled **A** bone of him shall not be broken."

Brother Waters seems to think the bones **only** constitute the body of a man. But I Cor. 12:14-26 very definitely teach otherwise. Paul clearly states that the hand and the foot are parts of the body, both were broken on the cross. He also says the eye and the ear are parts of the body and neither have any bones in them. Jesus' side was broken by the spear.

It is claimed that I Cor. 11:24-26 proves that Jesus drank the wine. "He took the cup when he had **supped**," etc .... This is the rendering given in the King James translation. The Emphatic Diaglott, translated from the same manuscripts that the K. J. version was, reads, "in like manner, also, the cup after the **supper**" etc. The American Standard version, translated from much earlier manuscripts and so nearer the original writings of the New Testament says (V. 25) "In like manner also the cup, after **supper**," etc. Goodspeed's translation (v. 25) "He took the cup, too, after **supper**," etc.

Their argument is that "supped" means "sipped," that he **sipped** the wine before he passed it to his disciples.

But let us take a look at the K. J. version—What do we find? "After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped." Note that he "took the cup when he HAD supped." He "**had supped**" (past tense) when he took the cup. In other words, he had already supped previous to taking the cup.

So we come right back to our beginning—He took the cup after supper—the passover supper.

Again—My brother, are you prepared to throw the book of Luke and the book of Acts out of the Bible? If your position be true, that is exactly what you will have to do. Luke 22:17, 18 in concluding the account of the passover supper says, "and he received a cup and when he had given thanks he said take this and divide it among yourselves, for I say unto you, I shall not drink **from henceforth** of the fruit of the vine until the Kingdom of God come." Then in v. 19 begins the account of the institution of the Lord's Supper. The thing referred to may have taken place one minute, or many years before the "henceforth," but it could **never** take place, until the time stated, **after** the "henceforth." This is definite and positive proof that Jesus DID NOT drink of the cup in the institution of the communion, and is no contradiction of Matt. 26:29, nor Mark 14:25. Perhaps someone may say Luke did not know the facts, since he was not present at the institution of the supper. That would be to say that Luke was not inspired; and if Luke was not inspired, then the book of Luke and the book of Acts are no part of God's Word and must be thrown out. Are you ready for that, brother?

Their argument is—Jesus drank from the cup, so must also have eaten the bread, and when he "broke" the bread he did so only that he might eat a portion of it.

In order to get a semblance of authority for their false doctrine, Brother Phillips tells us that a correct translation of the Greek word

would say "he broke it off." But there is no more authority for "broke it off" than for "broke it up": "broke it in pieces"; "broke it into bits." The Book says ONLY "broke it." And the record (Luke 22:18) definitely proves that Jesus did not drink of the cup during the institution of the Lord's Supper. Let me repeat, the Lord made His Book, especially the Gospel, so plain that any person who can read at all can understand it. And without any outside influence, will arrive at the same conclusion regarding the communion that millions have in the past—that Jesus broke the bread and gave it to the disciples. When the one at the table breaks the loaf and gives it to the disciples, then breaks and eats just as the rest, that is just as near what the Bible teaches as we can follow. And for one to divide the church on some picture that he sees "vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind" when the plain statement is made that he broke and gave to the disciples, certainly that one is treading on dangerous ground. The Gospel prophet, Isaiah, wrote (Isa. 35:8) "wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein."

The doctrine that an unbroken loaf must be passed to the disciples in the communion service certainly is not speaking where the Bible speaks, nor being silent where the Bible is silent. It is making laws where God has made none. It is going beyond that which is written (I Cor. 4:6) UNADULTERATED PRESUMPTION.

"Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God."—II John 9.

Let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it. I Pet. 3:11.

Let us do all that the Lord plainly teaches and stop there, that we all may be one, as the Father and Son are one. (Jno. 17:11.)

In love of THE TRUTH,

F. H. STRINGHAM,
Chico, California.

The Communion

(No. 2 — The Cup)

By

F. H. Stringham

★

In the beginning I wish to acknowledge, in the production of this. booklet, the valuable assistance of Brethren W. C. Stephens, Vancouver, Washington; N. E. Kellmes, Temple City, California, and C. M. Brockman, Chico, California.

★

All Bible quotations are from the American Standard Version

THE COMMUNION
or
LORD'S SUPPER

★

"If any man speaketh, speaking as it were oracles of God"-I Peter 4:11. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after ther own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth and turn aside unto fables."-II Timothy 4:3, 4.

Members of THE CHURCH since the begin ning of the restoration movement (restoring New Testament Christianity) have properly contended that when or where God has given a command and has given instruction either by precept or example as to manner of executing said command, we, as Christians, must carry out that command in exact accordance with those instructions; if he has given a command and has instructed in part as to manner of execution we must follow his instructions as far as they go and do the rest to the best of our judgment; again, if God has given a command and has given no instructions as to manner of execution, we are at liberty to carry out the command in any manner we may deem appropriate.

Jesus Christ, on the night of his betrayal (I Corinthians 11:23) and immediately following his observance of the Passover Feast with his apostles (Luke 22:14-20) instituted what is known in the New Testament as the "Lord's Supper" (I Corinthians 11:20) and also as a "communion" of the body and blood of the Lord (I Corinthians 10:16). At that time Jesus commanded his disciples "this do"-Luke 22:19 -A command to do as he did; and that it was to be done in remembrance of Him and His death (I Corinthians 11:25, 26).

He has also instructed that this part of our

worship be observed on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). The first day of the week comes every seven days; therefore Christians are to assemble every first day of the week.

Mark says Jesus "took bread and when he had blessed he break it and gave to them and said, "Take ye; this is my body"-Mark 14:22. The Greek word here translated "bread" may be translated "a loaf" and is so stated in the margin. The apostle Paul states (I Cor. 10:17) "We all partake of one bread" (or loaf). Also same text, "one bread, one body." This definitely forbids use of more than one loaf. Many brethren give little head to this instruction, often through carelessness, but some deliberately. However most Christians will readily agree that there ought to be but one loaf. Many, however, are insisting that we ought to use "Individual Cups" at the Lord's Supper.

There was a slogan much used by the early preachers of the restoration movement-"Where the Bible speaks we speak; where the Bible is silent we are silent." Another has put. it-"What God unfolds we gladly teach; what God withholds we dare not preach." As long as Christians adhered to this principle all was well, but ere long, men, just men, began to find weak spots (?) in God's plan, so started out to patch up the plan of Salvation as revealed by the God of Heaven, hence many things are being added or changed to suit the ideas of men. FOR SHAME!

Four times the institution of the Lord's Supper is recorded in the New Testament (Mathew 26: 26-28; Mark 14: 22-24; Luke 22:19-20; I Corinthians 11:23-29) and at least twice referred to (I Corinthians 10:16, 21). In these scriptures "cup" (singular number) is used eleven times, but "cups" (plural number) is never one time used in all the Bible in connection with the Lord's Supper. Why did God repeat so many times "cup"? Why so much emphasis on one cup? Could it be that He, looking down through 1900 years saw that men would presume to profane this very sacred part of Christian wor-

ship? No doubt about it. John tells us that God "Knows all things"-I John 3:20.

God has warned us over and over again to avoid the doctrines and commandments of men. We are told to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good"-I Thessalonians 5:21. "Proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord"-Ephesians 5:10. "Believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world"-John 4:1.

By what are we to prove what we are taught? Jesus says "Search the scriptures"-John 5:39. The inspired historian tells us that the people of Berea were noble because they examined the scriptures daily whether the things Paul was preaching were so (Acts 17:11). Today some brethren consider it sinful to question what the preacher (prophet) says. But God tells us that they are noble who prove by His Word what is taught before accepting it, even though the teacher be our apostle.

Jesus once asked some Jews, "The Baptism of 'John, was it from Heaven or of men? Answer me!" -- Mark 11:30. I am asking some people, The Individual cup doctrine ,is it from Heaven or of men? Answer me! These people know where it is from, they know it is of men. Jesus again said "Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for their doctrines the precepts of men" -- Matthew 15: 7-9. Then added (verse 13) "every plant which my heavenly father planted not shall be rooted up," and in verse 14, "Let them alone: they are blind guides." Paul told Titus (Titus 1:13, 14) "Reprove them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men who turn away from the truth."

Moses, quoting God in reference to the coming of Christ, said "Jehovah said unto me, they have well said that which they have spoken.

I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee: and I will put my words in his mouth and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall not harken unto my words which he shall speak in my name I wil require it of him. But the prophet that shall speak a word presumptuously in my name which I have not commanded him to speak . . . that same prophet shall die."-Deut. 18: 17-20.

The apostle Paul says that by the inspired scripture the man of God is "complete, furnished completely unto every good work."-II Timothy 3:16, 17. The Word of God does not furnish "Individual Communion Cups", hence "Individual Communion Cups" cannot be a good work: if not a good work ,they must be an evil work. It is evident these Individual Cup people do not believe Paul, and since Paul wrote by Revelation of Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:11. 12) they do not believe Christ.

We read in II Peter 1:3-"His divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain to life and Godliness through the knowledge of Him that called us by His own glory and virtue." Jesus Christ called us, the knowledge of him in the New Testament. All that pertains to life (spiritual life) and Godliness is to be found in the New Testament. The Individual Cups not being there do not pertain to "life and Godliness"; they must pertain to death (spiritual death) and devilishness. All the discontent, discord, wrangling, strife, hatred and division resulting from their use proves, if proof be needed, that they do pertain to death and devilishness. The Devil certainly struck upon a good plan to divide the forces of Christ, ruin men's souls and bring them into his hell when he gave them "Individual Communion Cups." Solomon said "This only have I found, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions."-Eccl. 7:29.

Any congregation using "Individual Commun-

ion Cups" is going beyond the teaching of Christ. "Now these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes; that in us ye might learn not to go beyond the things which are written." – I Corinthians 4:6. "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ hath not God."-II John 9. To be without God is to be without hope (Eph. 2:12).

"My righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrink back my soul hath no pleasure in him."-Hebrew 10:38. "Faith comes by hearing the word of God." Romans 10:17. No word of God for what we do-no faith. "What is not of Faith is sin."-Romans 14:23. "Without Faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto Him." -Hebrew 11:6. But some may ask, "What is sin?" God answers, "Sin is lawlessness" - I John 3:4. What is lawlessness? A state of being without law. Where is the law for "Individual Communion Cups" ? ? ?

W. G. Roberts, a well-known preacher and one of the best debaters among the Churches of Christ a few years ago made this statement, "The introduction of Individual Communion Cups causes division and offenses (Romans 16: 17, 18) which are wrong. It is a stumbling block which should not be placed in the way of the weak, say nothing about the many strong brethren who object."

All agree that the common cup is the safe way; why travel the road we are not sure about? The questionable road, the road that may never get us to the gates of the City of God, the City of Happiness, the place of no sorrow, no disappointments, no tears, the place where Jesus has gone to prepare a home for us. (Rev. 21: 1-7; John 14:1-3).

We do know that the Individual Cup way is doubtful and a way of division and in following it means that we do not care if our Lord prayer for unity of Christians (John 17) is never answered, it really means that we are actually throwing that prayer back into Jesus' face. Di-

vision is caused when some depart from the written Word of God. When brethren persist in doing something in the work and worship of the church which cannot be supported by New Testament scripture division is certain. 'Thus those responsible for the introduction or carrying on of any such unsupported teaching or practice are guilty of gross disobedience to the Lords commands. "I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that ye all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment."-I Cor. 1:10. "Mark them that are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling contrary to the doctrine which ye learned and turn away from them, for they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly, and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent."-Romans 16: 17,18. "Ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife are ye not carnal and do ye not walk after the manner of men?"-I Cor. 3:3. One of the seven things that Jehovah hates is "he that soweth discord among brethren" -- Prov. 6:16-19

"If a house be divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand." Mark 3:25. "I know that ... grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among yourselves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples. After them." Acts 20:29, 30.

The wolves are among us, they are not sparing the flock, the "House of God": (I Tim. 3:15) is being divided against itself. How long can it stand?

These Individual Cup people are not satisfied with Christ's way of doing things and by their acts, which speak louder than their words, are saying "we don't care what God says, we are going to arrange the work and worship of the church the way we think is best." As though they are wiser than God. Yes, they are actually

saying "we are more enlightened now" (than when the New Testament was written). True, man has learned much in the past 2000 years, but God has learned nothing, for the very simple reason that he knew everything in the beginning; "He needed not that any one should bear witness concerning man, for he himself knew what was in man"-John 2:25. "God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things."-I John 3:20. He gave us a perfect law (James 1:25). Any change, addition or subtraction would make it imperfect and bring condemnation upon any person or group of persons guilty of such action; -"I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel; which is not another gospel; only there are some that trouble you and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. (King James version-"accursed") As we haye said before, so say I again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema. For am I now seeking to please men? if I were still pleasing men I should not be a servant of Christ."-Gal. 1:6-10. The Individual Cup people are very certainly seeking to please men. And they just as certainly are not servants of Christ.

Whether we like it or not, we are going to be judged in the last day by the gospel of Jesus Christ, the written word of the New Testament. Jesus said (John 12:48) "He that rejecteth me and receiveth .not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day." "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ."-Romans 2:16. "So speak ye and so do as men that are to be judged by a law of liberty."-James 2:12 (the "perfect law"-James 1:25)

I may say "I am sincere and honest, I am

doing what I think is right; I think if I worship God in the right spirit, that is all that is necessary." That is a common doctrine among professed Christians everywhere today, even among brethren of the Churches of Christ. "Beloved believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they be of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world."-1 John 4:1. Yes, "by their smooth and fair speech" they are deceiving many innocent people. God will take care of the false prophets, but what about me if I am deceived? Surely God will not condemn me :- or will he? Let us see. "If the blind guide the blind both shall fall into the pit." Matthew 15:14. "They went up over the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about the beloved city and fire came down out of heaven and devoured them and the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone."-Rev. Rev. 20:9,10. Those "deceived" ones are "the innocent," the honest, the sincere who are doing what they think is right, worshiping "in the right spirit" (?) but they were "deceived" by the devil working through false prophets (preachers and teachers) and "fire came down out of Heaven and devoured them."

We read in Romans 15:4 -- "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and through comfort of the scriptures we might have hope." (Read also I Corinthians 10:11.) Let us learn a lesson from an example in the thirteenth chapter of I Kings. The man of God (prophet) from Judah was a good man, an honest, sincere man; he took his life in his hands to do a job that God had assigned him. But when another prophet told him a lie, he believed and obeyed that lie and lost his life as a result. He was one of the innocent who was deceived. Paul said "they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved and for this cause God sendeth them a working of error that they should believe- a lie: that they all might be judged who believed

not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness"-II Thess. 2:10-12.

In I Cor. 10:21 and 11:27 the Apostol Paul, in commenting upon the Lord's Supper speaks of the "cup of the Lord." 'Two Christian men were discussing the Lord's Supper; Bro. T. said, "See that post over there, if you cut it up into a number of pieces where is your post?" There would be no post. And if you divide the cup of the Lord into a number of cups where is the cup of the Lord?

Some Common Excuses

1. "The common cup is unsanitary."

Answer .- This is but an excuse, not a Bible reason, for using Individual cups in the communion service. I have known of many instances of a tray full of glasses having been passed by 15 or 20 people who had drunk of the wine and not one empty glass in the tray, showing that more than one person would be drinking from any of several glasses. Yet no objection made. The common loaf is quite generally used. All participants handle that bread, yet we are informed that there are probably ten times as many germs on the hands as on the lips. A Christian congregation is the cleanest audience in the world, clean as to clothes and wholesome as to bodies and the use of the common cup under such circumstances emphasizes the ideal of Christian purity, while the use of Individual cups contradicts the claim of Christian attainment and implies suspicion on the part of each participant concerning others and is so far lacking in essential refinement. I would indeed have little faith in the Lord Jesus Christ if I could believe that he would command me to do something that would injure my health. For almost 1900 years Christians met for worship and ate of the common loaf and drank of the common cup and all through those centuries the individual cup was unheard of. "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall

lose his life for my sake shall find it;" says Jesus (Matthew 16:25).

I have made many inquiries and am yet to learn of one person having been injured by the use of the common cup in the Lord's Supper.

Brother J. W. McGarvey, one of the greatest Bible scholars since the days of the apostles and often quoted as authority today, was once asked -"I have been a member of the church for 43 years and it has been my good fortune to be acquainted with several of our most learned and influential ministers-A. Campbell among them -and it seems strange to me that they did not find a necessity for the "Individual Cup."

Brother McGarvey answered, "It is not at all strange; for such a necessity has not yet been discovered. The desire for it has originated in the squeamishness of certain women with weak stomachs, and is supported by a new fad among physicians about bacteria, those little bugs which hang on the lips of people, stick to the Communion Cup, then cling to the lips of the next participant, and thence descend into the stomach of the latter, seize upon his vital organs, and eat away on them till some fatal disease ensues. I don't know how many people have died from this cause since the Lord established this ordinance, but I guess he knew what would be the consequences and he assumed the responsibility. If any of our doctors have treated such cases as are supposed, I have never heard of them; and I am willing to risk the promise, poor as I am, to bury, as long as I live, all the dead who shall die from this cause. All such will die at their post, and they will deserve a decent burial."

Bro. Roberts further stated: "The excuse usually offered is 'it keeps from spreading disease.' Just as well reason that we should have a baptismal robe to keep the candidate from getting wet when baptized, so as to keep him from taking cold, as some 'reason' that it is dangerous to be baptized in cold weather. Or we might reason' that baptism should always be put off

until warm weather on the same grounds that they 'reason' we should have Individual Cups. The single cup is no more apt to spread disease now than it was 100 years ago. But the Lord did not institute a disease spreader when he instituted the Lord's Supper. No one ever contracted disease by being baptized in cold weather, neither has anyone ever contracted disease by sipping from the same communion cup that others have had to their lips. That is the Lord's institution and he will take care of the man or women of faith."

Science has proven that disease germs are taken into the body in the air we breathe and in the food we eat. That being true how much protection is the "Individual Communion Cup"? Anyone should be able to see at a glance that the "health" argument is a scare-crow.

2. "The law forbids the use of the common cup."

Answer: There is not a law in the United States that forbids the use of the common cup in Christian worship. Amendment I of our national constitution reads, "Congress shall make no law respecting or establishing of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." And every state has a similar provision in their constitutions.

3. A large congregation cannot be served with only one cup.

Answer: When a congregation is too large to be served by one cup, it is too large for the proper development of its members. A well-known preacher and editor wrote a few years ago: "When recently corresponding with an elder of a large church which has several hundred members, I dropped the remark about the large number of men they surely had developed there, but he gave me to understand that there were very few men there able to teach the Church in an edifying way." This condition is certain to result from several reasons.

A. It is embarrassing for one to make the

first speech before a large audience. He won't do it.

B. One's turn to speak would not come often enough to enable him to develop himself.

C. The large congregation almost always gets a "pastor" preacher, then sit back to listen to him every Lord's Day and at every other meeting.

D. Members of the large congregation do not become acquainted with each other, where there is lack of acquaintance there is lack of sympathy, where there is lack of sympathy there is lack of co-operation and mutual helpfulness which are essential to the Christian life.

They tell us that the Jerusalem Church was large. Yes, at one time the Jerusalem Church had a membership of probably 10,000, but there is no evidence that they all met at one place. There was not a house in that city that would hold all those people. Besides we have evidence that the Jerusalem Church as well as others met in small groups in different parts of the city. In Acts 12:12 after the angel had released Peter from prison and departed, we read "When he had considered the thing he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together and were praying." And in verse 17 we read again, "But he (Peter) beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace declared unto them how the Lord had brought him forth out of prison. And he said, "tell these things unto James and the brethren." So there were brethren meeting at other places. That the early church met in small groups is further shown by the fact that there were at least three congregations in Rome (Romans 16:5, 14, 15). See also Col. 4:15; I Cor. 16:19; Philemon 2. Romans 16:1 also shows that part of the Corinthian Church met at Cenchreae, a suburb.

The large centralized church cannot accomplish the amount of good among people of the world that several smaller congregations scattered through the community can do.

4. "Luke 22:17 is authority for Individual Communion Cups" ("And he received a cup and when he had given thanks he said take this and divide it among yourselves.")

Answer: This text has no reference whatsoever to the Lord's Supper, but was the drink offering of the Passover Feast (see Numbers 15:1-5) which immediately preceded the institution of the Lord's Supper.

In I Cor. 10:16 Paul says "The Cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ?" Young defines the word communion as "Act of using a thing in common," then the individual cups could not be "a communion of the blood of Christ."

5. "When Jesus said 'cup' he meant the fruit of the vine."

Answer: Then we are to believe that Jesus Christ was so ignorant that he did not know how to express himself, or that he did not know what he was talking about?

But the Bible tells us "the foolishness of God is wiser than men"—I Cor. 1:25 and "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God"—I Cor. 3:19. If the Lord had said He blessed the fruit of the vine we would have a right to use as many cups as we wish, but to maintain the principle of the unity of the body he used the term cup. "They all drank of it." (the cup)—Mark 14:23. Again we read in I Cor. 11:23-28 that Jesus "took the cup." A figure of speech (called synecdoche) in which a part is put for the whole (as "fifty sail" for fifty ships). In this case the cup is put for the cup and its contents. That the Lord blessed the cup as well as its contents is proven by the Greek word *poteerion* translated "cup" in Matthew 26:27; Mark 14:23 and elsewhere. The Lexicographer of The Literary Digest says "he word cup is used literally." To this agree the best Greek scholars in America. (James H. Ropes, Harvard University; Edgar J. Goodspeed, University of Chicago; Harry M. Hubbel, Yale University;

C. A. Savage, University of Minnesota; W. C. McCown, University of California; R. A. Jernberg, University of Southern California; E. E. Stringfellow, Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa, and many others.)

Thousands of words—pages upon pages—have been written, sermons upon sermons have been preached, in an effort to show that Individual Cups in the Communion service is better than the common cup. All this labor and expense could have been spared by just furnishing one little text from the sacred scripture; but therein lies their difficulty — they just haven't been able to find that one little text.

"The Lord knoweth the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain."-I Cor. 3:20.

Now, my friend, I will tell you the reason for this strong desire for "Individual Communion Cups." One said "it is customary." It is fashionable and popular. Pride, or a desire to be "like all the nations (I Samuel 8:2) is what calls for the "Individual Communion Cup;" and pride is sin. The attraction, or looks of the thing is what takes the eye of most of those who wish them used. Pride is the "gentleman" that introduced them and if we are submissive to the "gentleman" in this we may have to submit on other occasions when we would not wish to do so.

Jesus said—"Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for in the same manner did their fathers to the false prophets."—Luke 6:26.

In the second chapter of Col. and third verse we read, "Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." When we assemble together at the Lord's table it does seem that any sincere child of God would be anxious to do the very thing Christ commanded. His uppermost thought should be, "Lord, what wilt thou have us to

do?" Positive commands require the performance, in a certain way, of certain specific acts, not necessarily meritorious in themselves, for some definite end. The merit is not in the act itself but in the obedience to proper authority. As they enjoin specific acts, these acts are essential to obedience of the commands. These acts performed in a certain way is the ordinance; hence there is no obedience without the act or acts commanded. Positive ordinances demand the proper spirit of obedience to the rule of God through Christ in his church and respect for his authority in his own house and at his own table.

"If ye died with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to ordinances after the precepts and doctrines of men? Handle not, nor taste, nor touch (all which things are to perish with the using). Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will—worship ... but are not of any value against the indulgence of the flesh."—Col. 2:20-23.

If you had prepared a feast and had invited a number of guests, some of whom, upon arrival, not liking the way the meal was arranged, proceeded to rearrange it, would you like that? No! you would think those guests very presumptuous—you would not like their attitude. Nor does the Lord like for his guests to presumptuously rearrange his table nor anything else in .his house, the Church. (Duet. 18:20)

If you hired me to work for you and I persisted in doing things differently than you ordered or doing things that you had not ordered I am sure you would discharge me. I greatly fear that many professing Christians are going to hear the Lord of Heaven and Earth say "depart from me." (Mat. 25:41)

Just here let us notice another lesson from the Old Testament. In Lev. 10:1,2 we are told that two priests (Nadab and Abihu) were devoured by fire from before Jehovah, not because they had failed to do something God had com-

manded, but because they had done something which God had not commanded. This is exactly what the Individual Cup people are doing.

In the beginning of the restoration movement the Church was united without Individual Cups. Today the Church is divided with, and because of, Individual Cups. 'Those who have introduced the "Individual Communion Cups' 'are certainly responsible for this division.

All professed followers of Christ agree on the following:

Name "Christian"—Acts 11:26; I Peter 4:16.

They should assemble themselves—Hebrews 10:25.

They should meet upon every First day of the week—Acts 20:7.

That it is right to observe the Lord's Supper and have preaching on the first day of the week —Acts 20:7.

The use of one cup in the Lord's Supper is scriptural and safe—Mark 14:22-24.

Baptism is right—Matthew 28:19.

Baptism by a burial in water is safe—Romans 6:4.

Giving of our money—I Cor. 16:2.

Praying—Acts 12:5.

Singing scriptural songs—Col. 3:16.

To read, exhort and teach the Bible—-I Tim. 4:13.

Helping the needy and living clean lives—James 1:27.

Doing mission work—Mark 16:15, Phil. 4:15, 16

The Church should have elders, deacons and evangelists—I Tim. 3, II Tim. 4:5.

Yes, all agree that these things are right and safe, and that if we observe them faithfully we will reach that home that Jesus has gone to prepare for his people (John 14:1-3). It is when we start doing the things that are not in the Gos-

pel-the doctrines and commandments of men—that division results.

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."—I Sam. 15:22.

There are many brethren who prefer the common cup, who are doubtful as to the scripturalness and safety of using Individual Cups, but "go along" rather than make a disturbance in the congregation. I know a man who, for several years, drank the fruit of the vine from Individual Cups though each time he did so his heart condemned him. "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart."—I John 3:20. Yes, He will condemn us. "To him who accounteth anything to be unclean to him it is unclean"—Rom. 14:4, and in verse 23, "He that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

Are You In Doubt?

The apostle Peter tells us (2 Pet. 1:10) "Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure."

If we do that which the Gospel says to do and which all professing Christians admit is right and safe we will not be condemned; we will certainly make our calling and election sure.

Brother, You Better Be Sure!

Many people come to justify themselves after they have gotten their conscience seared "as with a hot iron," as the moderate drinker will try to justify himself after a time, though he at first felt guilty at drinking a single glass of liquor. The end too often is a drunkard. What will be our end if we continue in the-doubtful way? I fear it will be as in Mat. 7:21-23.

"So then, brethren, stand fast, and hold the

traditions which ye were taught whether by word, or by epistle of ours."-II 'Thess, 2:15.

Please read again that great prayer of our Lord in John 17.

With a fervent prayer and hope that those who read this booklet will strive earnestly to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, I am your Brother,

F. H. STRINGHAM.

