

The Lord's Supper Memorials

Some people argue about the acts of worship to be performed on the First Day of The Week. Some want traditions from the old testament, while others want something new. But the gospel of Christ lists only five: The Lord's Supper, Singing, Praying, Preaching, and Giving. Paul mentions all of these in 1 Corinthians: Lord's Supper (11:17-34), Singing (14:15), Praying (14:13-17), Preaching (1:17, 23), Giving (16:1-2). Of the five, only one is commanded as a memorial. After the Passover Feast but before His arrest, Jesus gave instructions for a feast to honor His death. *"And when He had taken some bread and given thanks, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me'"* (Luke 22:19). This feast of remembrance is most often referred to as "breaking bread" in the New Testament.

The term "breaking bread" is used anytime a loaf is broken, torn apart, for any purpose. Therefore we find this applied to the serving of bread at a meal or the meal itself. The term is used twice in Acts 2 as the new church began to assemble and worship together. We read of their worship activities and the day-by-day activities and note how the Holy Spirit separates the two in the narrative. (Acts 2:42) *"They were continually **devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer,**"* tells of their worship. (Acts 2:46) *"**Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,**"* tells of their daily activities. Verse 42 is an assembly of worship, while verse 46 is a separation into their different houses.

Therefore, as we read the various passages about breaking bread or breaking of bread, we must determine if it is during a time of worship or just an opportunity to eat an everyday meal. Paul taught the Corinthians that The Lord's Supper was not, nor was it a part of, an everyday meal, eaten to satisfy hunger and sustain the physical body. *"What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing?"* (1 Corinthians 11:20-22).

There is an almost fluid way in which scripture moves from the routine to the special. Jesus did that in His parables and metaphors. He instituted The Lord's Supper toward the end of the last Passover feast. During that familiar meal, He presented His new memorial. *"While they were eating, He took some bread, and after a blessing He broke it, and gave it to them, and said, 'Take it; this is My body'"* (Mark 14:22). He had taken bread and broken it at meals before this time and again later in two disciples' house (Luke 24:29-30). During the last Passover meal, however, it was different. Separating it from the Passover by His actions and speech, He gave specific instructions which did not fit in with the Passover or the Feast of Unleavened Bread. This was new. This was special. This was not about the saving of the firstborn but of the sacrifice that can save everyone.

Paul called this memorial "one bread" and pointed out that it makes all disciples, that take part in the bread, part of the body of Christ. *"Is not **the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread"*** (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). There is not one scripture that places the bread of this remembrance feast as part of the Passover meal or a typical breakfast, lunch, supper, or snack. It is

a separate memorial to the body and blood of Christ. It reminds us of Emanuel, God with us, who took on a physical body, so the blood in that body could be the price for our sins.

Paul emphasized the words of Christ this way. *"I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, 'This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.' In the same way He took the cup also after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes"* (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

Do this – in remembrance of Me. That is a command to remember, to memorialize Christ. Disciples are to remember that He came in the flesh as the prophet, priest, and King (1 Timothy 3:16).

As often as – every time you do it. Every time the body of Christ meets at the appropriate time the memorial is to be shared.

Until He comes – We are to remember until He returns for us (John 14:2-3; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

Do we observe the same Lord's Supper in the same way and on the same day as the New Testament church did?