

Fellowship Part I

“5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (1 John 1:5-7 KJV)

Fellowship: It means spiritual communion, joint partnership, joint sharing and mutual partaking. When people are coming together it means there is something between them that bind them together. For example if we notice people in the world we will find them grouping together in accord to their professions. Like we find engineers together in a group, teachers coming together in a group, nurses they come under another group and so on. In the world you find people coming together with a certain common interest or benefit. But in the context of the church we can find the people coming together of different nationalities, backgrounds, languages, and also you find people of different socio-economic status and of different professions and businesses. So what is the common thing between us? And what are the bonds that link us together, and how we as Christians can have fellowship together?

1. We are children of the same God: “12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John 1:12-13 KJV) As the Lord had given us birth by His Holy Spirit and adopted us to be His children we need to obey His commands and live according to His Word. We need to live as children of light, “8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: 9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)” (Ephesians 5:8-9 KJV) If a Christian will do and practice evil we cannot consider him among the children of God and we cannot have a Christian fellowship with him. As Jesus said to some of them; you are not the children of God but of the devil, “44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” (John 8: 44 KJV)

2. We have been bought with the same prize: “19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 KJV) We have fellowship together because Jesus had purchased us and had paid the prize for our sins; Jesus died on the cross, was buried and rose from the dead on the third day to give eternal life to everyone who believe in Him and follow His steps in their lives. For such a prize that Jesus paid for our sins on the cross He wants us to honor God in our lives and with our bodies. In our fellowship with fellow Christians we observe that there should not be any hint of sexual immorality, “16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.” (1 Corinthians 6:16 KJV) So how

about having boy friend, girl friend, and those with divorce and remarriage which is adultery? They are in sexual immorality and so we need to teach them to give up such relationship to be free from the sin of sexual immorality so we can have fellowship with them. Also we should wear decent clothes and not allow our body parts to be exposed. As well as to purify our hearts and minds from evil lustful thoughts knowing that Jesus had said, “27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. 29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.” (Matthew 5:27-29 KJV)

3. We are the members of one body: “30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.” (Ephesians 5:30 KJV) Our Lord Jesus Christ is the head of the church, which is His body. “18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.” (Colossians 1:18 KJV) We have fellowship together because we are members of the body of Christ. Therefore our fellowship should strengthen and edify the church.

4. We are guided by the same Holy Spirit: “13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.” (John 16:13 KJV) Our fellowship is ordained and overseen by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of the truth that will direct us to do the things that God wants us to do. As believers we should be guided by the Holy Spirit, “14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” (Romans 8:14 KJV) To the contrary to the Holy Spirit that brings us together as children of God, there are evil spirits of the power of darkness, demons and Satan that lead us astray. We need to be careful about them; “1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;” (1 Timothy 4:1-2 KJV) Our fellowship should not be interrupted or interfered by evil spirits. This will happen if there is sin in the body of Christ; in this way the evil spirits will find foot holds to interfere. Our fellowship is a fellowship of holiness where God lives in the mid of His holy people.

5. We are living by the same faith: “7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)” (2 Corinthians 5:7 KJV) We are people who ought to trust God and we show that true faith in Him by obeying His Word. We live our lives depending on God and we don't be afraid or discouraged on looking on events around us. We depend on God who promised us to be with us always to the very end of the age.

6. We are serving the same Master, the Lord Jesus Christ: “8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.” (Matthew 23:8 KJV) In Christ we are brothers and sisters, and the bond of fellowship between us is that we are serving one Master, the Lord Jesus Christ. But serving the Lord should be in accord to the Word of God and the rules of Christ, “5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.” (2 Timothy 2:5 KJV)

7. We are heir of the same inheritance: “17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” (Romans 8:17 KJV) We who are in Christ Jesus have an inheritance in Heaven as the Word of God would tell us, “4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:4-5 KJV) This will strengthen the fellowship between us as God’s children, and will give us the hope that will enable us to continue to live in holiness for His name’s sake, that one day when Jesus would come we will be with Him in Heaven.

“25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:25 KJV)

The Word of God teaches us to continue to meet one another and to have a fellowship with one another not as a habit in doing it but for a good reason. God wants us to meet and to continue to do that for noble purpose as we can see the day is approaching. What is meant with the word, “*the day approaching*”, is the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus came around 2000 years ago. He died on the cross for our sins. He was buried but rose from the dead on the third day to give eternal life to those who believe in Him and follow His steps in their lives. After Jesus’ resurrection He ascended to Heaven and now He is at the right hand of God the Father, and He will come again to take us we who belongs in Him, to be with Him forever.

Paul in his letter to the church at Thessalonica he wrote about the second coming of Jesus: “13 But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17 KJV) Therefore when we come together as a church we encourage one another with these promises of God; that Jesus will come to take us with Him to Heaven.

Therefore the following are more purposes for our fellowship and why God wants us to come together more frequently:

A. To share experience and testimonies: “11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” (Revelation 12:11 KJV) A testimony is our experience with God and what the Lord had done for us in our lives. Sharing a testimony it could be a reason to encourage others to pray more and to trust God for a miracle in their lives and to start to serve Him.

B. To share Joy: “15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” (Romans 12:15 KJV) As we hear testimonies of others and see how God blessed them we have the same Joy that they have. Anyone in the family of God who receive a blessing his testimony will be shared with others. Therefore we rejoice with those who rejoice.

C. To mourn with those who mourn: “15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.” (Romans 12:15 KJV) The other purpose for our fellowship is to mourn with those who have troubles and to carry with them the burden of the new sad events that had happened in their lives. We need to show empathy to those who have problems and to give to them a hand of help and aid. “17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” (1 John 3:17 KJV)

D. To warn, to encourage and to help: “14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.” (1 Thessalonians 5:14 KJV) In our fellowship we warn those who are running in a wrong way of life. We rebuke them and we instruct them to correct their path. In our fellowship we encourage those who are timid; those who have fear we encourage them with the Word of God, that the Lord is with them and He had a good plan for them. In our fellowship we help the weak; those who have low faith and they are facing trials in their lives we need to stand beside them and help them to pass their difficult times.

E. To love one another: “34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” (John 13:34-35) God call us to a fellowship of love and to care for one another. We show our love by serving one another in love. “9 But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. 10 And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more;” (1 Thessalonians 4:9-10 KJV)

F. To learn together: “42 And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” (Acts 2:42 KJV) We ought to love the fellowship that is around the Word of God. We need to devote ourselves for studying His Word, to pray together and to have fellowship with the Lord through breaking of the bread and sharing the cup in a worthy manner.

G. To build one another: “11 Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.” (1 Thessalonians 5:11 KJV) The aim of our fellowship is to build one another; we come together not to bite, slander, or devour one another but the goal and purpose is to build one another.

My Dear and Beloved: “7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (1 John 1:7 KJV) Our bond and fellowship with one another depend on our right relationship with God that based on faith and obedience to our Lord and to His Word. Therefore let us live in holiness and avoid all kinds of sins so that the devil and demons will be far away from our fellowship.

Let us continue and persevere to keep the fellowship between one another and the elements that God had ordained for this fellowship. Let us continue to observe the purpose of such fellowship so that God's will shall be fulfilled for if we persevere we will receive the blessings of the true fellowship of believers. Let us pray ...

My Prayer: Father God, I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead on the third day to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word and your teaching to me about fellowship. Thank you Lord for all the rebukes, the corrections and the admonishments we received from you.

Confess now all your sins and renounce them. Confess and renounce your stubbornness and hard headedness, your pride and doing your own will. Renounce all your lies, cheating, your lust and immoralities, your envy and jealousy, your selfishness and your lack of love. Repent of being yoked with the non believers, having many friends, always wasting your times on the Media, News and games, and you are away from the church fellowship. Confess and renounce your lack of reading God's Word and your lack of prayer. Lord I confess and renounce the following sins _____. Lord I confess and renounce the following wrong friendships and relationships _____. Lord I am coming back to you and to your church, Lord forgive me my sins, I repent from them all.

Lord I commit myself to the principles that I learned from this message. Lord I commit myself not to be yoked with friends who do not know God and with non believers. Lord help me to keep my right relationship with you and to remain in your Word, and to have fellowship with my brothers and sisters in Christ. Lord guide me with your Word and help me to be part of the church fellowship and to contribute effectively to it. Lord help me to continue to go through the narrow way and the narrow gate, Lord protect me and provide all my needs to continue to serve you. This is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.

Lord thank you for all my brothers and sisters who repented of their sins and committed their lives to follow you and walk in your ways in order to have fellowship with the members of your family the church. Lord mold them with your Word and give them more fruit of the Spirit so people can see you in their lives and make them good testimonies to others to follow you.

Lord, bless us as a church and bless our fellowship and strengthen the bonds between us according to your Word and your will in our lives. Lord lead us more to love and care for one another and to live in holiness. Lord guide us to admonish those who in sin and correct them perhaps they may repent and come back to you. Lord give us the fruit of the Holy Spirit, love, joy, peace, humility, self-control, patience, perseverance, long-suffering, faith and faithfulness to go on and serve you in a better way reflecting the character of Jesus in our lives in helping our brethren who are in troubles who need our hands, our efforts, our help and our prayers. Lord refill us once again with the Holy Spirit and give us the spiritual gifts that we need in our lives to go on and serve you, to evangelize, making new disciples, training new workers, and to plant new Bible studies and congregations for the church and to reach out new people and new places. Lord prepare us for your coming, that we will go with you when you come. Lord fulfil the

vision of the church, Multiplication in peace with implementing the whole will of God. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us, and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus' name, Amen.

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