

Fellowship

Introduction

1 John 1:5-10

1. Fellowship is sharing things in common with others.
 - A. In the New Testament, fellowship has a distinctly spiritual meaning. Fellowship can either be positive or negative.
2. This morning we want to gain a better understanding of this word “fellowship” and how Christians ought to have “fellowship.”
 - A. We’re going to discuss fellowship in the positive, that which is fellowship with the Father, Son, Holy Spirit and other believers.
 - B. We’re also going to discuss fellowship in the negative, that which is fellowship with the wicked.
3. We need to further understand that the Bible word “fellowship” is a relationship, not a social function.
 - A. **Defined:** “A community of interest, activity, feeling, or experience; the state of being a fellow or associate; a company of equals or friends”

Fellowship with God and Christ

1. **The reason we have fellowship with God, in the sense of sharing things in common with Him, is that He has raised our status through the death and resurrection of Jesus.**

Ephesians 2:4-7

2. **What believers share in common with God is a relationship as well as God's own holy character.**

1 Peter 1:15 but as He who called you is holy, you also **be holy in all your conduct,**

3. **When we are determined to live our life for Christ, then we will want to ensure that our fellowship is with Christ as Christ had fellowship with His Father.**

John 17:21-23

- A. **In John 15 we can read and gain a better understanding of positive fellowship with God and Christ.**

John 15:1-8

4. By reading God's Word we learn about the kind of fellowship we should have based not only on the Father and Son relationship, but what God has instructed for us.

A. John wrote:

1 John 1:3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

B. Therefore, those who have fellowship with Christ should enjoy fellowship with other believers.

1) This fellowship ought to illustrate the very nature of God Himself (1 John 1:5-7 – Scripture Reading).

Ephesians 5:1-2 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

C. Fellowship with Christ can only be attained by walking in the light. "By DOING what Christ has instructed for us to do."

1) Those that walk according to the Spirit are not condemned (1 John 2:6; 2 John 9).

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

Fellowship with the Righteous

1. If we are striving to live as Christ wants us to, then we will make sure that we are having “fellowship” with like believers.

A. God’s Word is plain concerning this. It does not take a scholar to understand that our “fellowship” is where our heart is!

1) David wrote:

Psalms 119:63 I am a companion of all who fear You, and of those who keep Your precepts.

2) We also can learn from these Words of the Bible:

Amos 3:3 Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?

Philippians 2:1-2 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, **if any fellowship of the Spirit**, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, **having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.**

Fellowship with the Wicked

1. **Negatively, believers should not have fellowship with unbelievers. This means they should not share in unbelievers' lifestyles.**
 - A. **This does not mean, however, that believers should have nothing to do with unbelievers. The Bible plainly teaches that believers are obligated to share the gospel with unbelievers.**

Matthew 28:16-20
1 Corinthians 9:16-17
2. **God has always been displeased with those that claim to be a believer, mixing with unbelievers because they aren't striving to do His will. Either we're for Him or we're against Him - it can't be both.**

Matthew 12:30 "He who is not with me is against me."
3. **We can learn from the Old Testament that God taught man that in ALL things that we do, if we are not doing what is pleasing to God first, then we are not in fellowship with Him.**
 - A. **Let's look at some Old Testament instructions:**

Exodus 34:13-16

4. One way that God's children can be led away is through a marriage relationship. Over and over in the Old Testament God made it very clear that His children were NOT to have anything to do with "foreign" marriages!

A. Why? Because 1) God's child would usually be led away from the Lord and 2) the foreign mate would be set on worshiping their own god, doing their own thing. God would not be important to them.

1) Has anything really changed today? Think about it seriously. Look at what God instructed.

Deuteronomy 7:2-4

Joshua 23:12-13 Or else, if indeed you do go back, and cling to the remnant of these nations-- these that remain among you-- and make marriages with them, and go in to them and they to you, know for certain that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations from before you. But they shall be snares and traps to you, and scourges on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

B. In the New Testament we read over and over that we are to have fellowship in the Lord. Mixed marriages hurt the Lord's church, and God's child. Notice:

2 Corinthians 6:14-18

Ephesians 5:6-11

1 Cor 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."

2 Peter 3:17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;

Conclusion

1. **These Bible Truths are certain:**
 - A. **If we walk in the light, doing those things that Christ would approve of, then we have fellowship with Him.**
 - B. **If self-will takes over and our first thoughts are of our self and not the Lord, then we are not in fellowship with Him.**
 - C. **In all manner of our life, in every decision that we make, we must ask: **Am I doing what is best for my soul?****
2. **That is why we should never want to be “unequally yoked” with unbelievers. **Heaven must be our first priority.** If it is not - then we don't have and never will have fellowship with the Lord!**

