



WELCOME TO BIBLE HOUSE OF GRACE

If you think items presented on this site to be in error, please let me know and I will gladly reconsider the content.

Fellowship.

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Learn the Bible at Home

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Fellowship.

FELLOWSHIP BENEFITS THE FOLLOWERS AND THE MINSTER

- **Romans 1:11-12:** For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you ¹²that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine.

Paul longed to see the brothers and sisters at Rome so that he could impart to them some spiritual gift and encourage them in their faith and they in turn could encourage him in his ministry.

ABOVE ALL THINGS PUT ON LOVE

- **Colossians 3:12-17:** Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Every faithful brother and sister in Christ should see themselves as God's chosen and beloved children. This is because God predestined, planned and purposed before time began that He would choose for His own, all whoever from their own free will chose to believe in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ. As children of God every brother and sister should show compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience toward each other. This is because God, because God is love (1 John 4:8) and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him (1 John 4:16). It is love that cements the body of Christ together. This is why Paul says when we offend another or we are offended don't respond in anger and resentment, but always be willing to forgive. Should anyone find it difficult to forgive they should consider Christ on the cross suffering a brutal bloody and cruel death not for himself, but so that we could be saved by faith and God's grace and not by strictly adhering to ceremonial rites and holy days and keeping religious customs and traditions.

Should anyone be in doubt if they are in fellowship according to the will of Christ all they have to do is look inside of themselves and see if peace is dwelling in the heart and if it is not, find out why and then do whatever it takes to fix it. Every brother and sister should always be aware of pride dwelling in the heart since pride will not only stop us from saying sorry or admitting that we are at fault, but will also stop us from attempting to repair a broken relationship is it is the other person that is at fault. Everyone who belongs to Christ is called into one body which means we all belong to the one family and are all brother's and sisters of Christ and of each other by faith.

Just as in any natural family there are always problems even though the family is bonded together in love. Because of the difficulties and problems that do arise Mum and Dad at times have to discipline the children, but this discipline is always done in controlled emotions with love and for the child's best interest. Likewise, the family of God will never be free of its own problems and difficulties (at least not until Christ returns) this is why Paul calls us all to admonish each another with wisdom, humbleness, compassion and kindness. The words:

- Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly.

Does not just mean let all the doctrines and teachings of Christ dwell in your heart, but also means let love forever overflow in your heart, because it is only love that has the power to bind everything together in perfect harmony. The book of Proverbs states:

- Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all offenses (Proverbs 10:12)

Peter wrote:

- Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins (1 Peter 4:8)

Certainly we should allow the word of God and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to dwell richly in our hearts and minds, but if we want to keep our family spiritually healthy we must make it our greatest goal in life to develop the fruits of the Spirit so that whatever we say or do will flow out of love. When love is flowing amongst Christ's family every song we sing together and every hymn will rise up to heaven as a sweet-smelling fragrance before the throne of God

THE RULE OF CHRISTIAN LIFE

It matters not whether we are at church, home with the family, at work or on our own whatever we do or say should be done and said in the name of Jesus, meaning in the good Spirit of Christ and with his compassion and his love. Should anyone still doubt how important it is to love consider the following Scriptures. John said:

- Anyone who does not love does not know God (1 John 4:8).
- We have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love (1 John 4:16).

Life is meant to be shared, God intends for Christians to experience life together, the Bible calls this shared experience fellowship, today, however, the word has lost most of its biblical meaning since fellowship now usually refers to casual conversation, socializing, food, and fun, when a brother or sister is asked the question, "Where do you fellowship?" It means, "Where do you attend church?" While staying after for fellowship usually means wait for refreshments.

Real fellowship is so much more than just showing up at services, it is experiencing life together. It includes unselfish loving, honest, sharing, practical serving, and sacrificial giving and comforting one another. Collectively worshipping the Lord together is a glorious thing, but fellowship with each other only happens in small groups. This is because since once a group becomes larger than about ten people, someone in the group stops participating, usually the quiet or timid person and a few people will dominate the group.

Fellowship requires sacrifice this is because there is inbuilt into our fallen human nature a quiet voice that says, "What's in it for me" the sacrifice is mostly time and effort. Giving our time is showing we value those we are with, because whenever time is given there is a sacrifice because we all only have a limited amount of time available. Albert Einstein said, "What we do for ourselves dies and is gone, but what we do for others remains and is eternal. The Bible states this in the following way, "What we do for ourselves dies and is gone, but what we do for others stores up treasures in heaven and will bring eternal rewards.

All things should be done giving thanks to God the Father
through His Son the Lord Jesus Christ.

SEVEN SNIPPETS OF FELLOWSHIP

1. When conflict is handled correctly people grow closer together.
2. People appreciate frankness more than flattery.
3. The proper dress for fellowship is humility.
4. When we know what people have been through, we will be more understanding.
5. Don't downplay people's doubt, just because we may not fear something doesn't make it an invalid feeling for another person.
6. Instead of thinking about how far a person still has to go, think about how far they have come in spite of their difficulties and hurts.
7. Real fellowship happens when people know it is safe enough to share their doubts and fears without being judged.

EIGHT CHARACTERS OF BIBLICAL FELLOWSHIP

1. Authenticity: sharing our true feelings with each other.
2. Mutuality: encouraging each other.
3. Empathy: supporting each other.
4. Mercy: forgiving each other.
5. Honesty: speaking the truth in love with each other.
6. Humility: admitting our flaws, weaknesses and fears.
7. Courtesy: respecting each other's differences.
8. Confidentiality: not gossiping about each other.

When we look at these two lists it is obvious why genuine fellowship is so rare in the global body of Christ, it means giving up our self-centeredness, but the benefits of brothers and sisters sharing life together in real fellowship far outweigh the costs and it prepares us for eternity.

THE FOLLOWING IS TAKEN FROM A VERY GOOD ARTICLE CONCERNING FELLOWSHIP THAT PASTOR CHIP BROGEN OF THE SCHOOL OF CHRIST WROTE.

Some people think of fellowship as attending a church, a group, a meeting, others think of fellowship as getting together with others to do something. The problem with seeing fellowship this way is that the fellowship only lasts as long as you're around other people. What happens when you stop going to church or stop attending meetings? The fellowship ends and we have to go out looking for it again. John wrote:

- If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another (1 John 1:7)

This means that fellowship is a spiritual state of being, the fellowship of the Lord is not restricted by people, places, things or activities it transcends time and space. This is because family is family, whether you meet with them every day, once a week, seldom, or never. In contrast to this people can meet five times a week with people who aren't walking in the Light and yet never experience true fellowship even though they are hanging out with each other on a regular basis. This type of fellowship Chip calls, "social interaction with spiritual overtones" and observed that

today most people aren't looking for fellowship, but for friendship. Now as Chip stated there is nothing wrong with friendship, but it should never be confused with fellowship. This is because friendship lasts only as long as we are "like-minded" (everyone likes "me" and agrees with "me"). Whereas fellowship in the Lord Jesus Christ lasts so long as we are walking in the Light.

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