

Fellowship—Your Lifeline to Jesus

A New Life through Spiritual Birth

Jesus, God the Father and the Holy Spirit are always in perfect love and fellowship with One Another. They are now working through the gospel to draw us out of our sin and self-focus into genuine fellowship with Them. A lovely "side-effect" of our new-found fellowship with God is that we can now enjoy a divinely enabled fellowship with each other. That fellowship with other believers, in turn, enables us to stay in closer fellowship with our God. By intentionally seeking out friends in the Lord who are seeking to grow in Spirit and in truth, we can stay cleansed, refreshed and strengthened.

If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:6-7

Why You Need This Connector

Fellowship will come as a completely "free" gift to you at first. You won't have to do anything but open the package! Other believers will welcome you with glad hearts and open arms. They will naturally and easily share their faith with you, pray for your concerns, encourage you and help you find your way. All of this will be exhilarating and immensely comforting: True Christian fellowship is a powerful antidote against loneliness and intimidation. It should open windows of hope as you gain the vision for the Body of Christ on earth being a true family of God's adopted children—the family you have always yearned to know — a loving, living, breathing expression of Jesus to the world.



Nothing this good goes unchallenged, so pay attention to "Problems to Avoid." You will definitely have to learn the art of "guarding" your heart. A well-guarded Christian heart, however, is not like that of a "worldling" or unbeliever. They guard themselves against being hurt by putting up walls and withdrawing from the risk of intimacy with others. It is different for us, once we have learned Jesus' way of forgiving and releasing pain. We "guard" our hearts by making sure that we are honest, open and transparent in our relationships. We embrace living with flawed, imperfect, potentially wounding humanity—just as He did. We learn to seek out fellowship wherever we can find it!

We can enjoy fellowship with all kinds of people and at all kinds of levels of relationship. Why? How? According to scripture we have fellowship with one another "in the truth" and "in the Spirit." Now that we have been born again by Word and Spirit, we are not only free to worship God in Spirit and in truth, we can find common ground with anyone if the spirit between us is love and we can find some truths to agree upon. This is only hard if you expect perfect love and perfect agreement from everyone you meet! Once you grasp this simple principle you can



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become well-connected to Jesus practically anytime with practically anyone—especially if they are also seeking fellowship with both you and Jesus.

How It Works as a “Safety Net”

Intimacy has been described as “in-to-me-see.” The essence of fellowship is being honest, open and transparent in our relationships, especially with the Body of Christ. Through fellowship we “see into” each other and therefore can foresee problems or have insight to things the other person may be facing. In this way fellowship becomes an avenue for wisdom, guidance, correction and confirmation coming to us from the Lord, keeping us on track in our walk with Him. Friends help us get through the difficult patches in life. For this reason scripture compares fellowship to a cord of three strands, one that is not easily broken. Our fellowship with other believers means that if we are honest with them about what we are going through, we can receive the strong support of their prayers, encouragement and practical assistance.

Although our primary reason for going to church is to meet with the Lord in worship, you would be wise to also take advantage of these opportunities for meeting with your “fellows.” Avoid letting your conversations with other believers stay at the level of small talk you could find anywhere. Seek out those who are willing to talk openly about their life in Christ with all of its struggles, hopes and dreams. This is what makes Christian fellowship outstanding; these will be the ones you will want to grow with. Eventually, you may want to cultivate a very close Christian friend, or set of friends, with the intention of meeting regularly, not just by chance. Good friends are among the Lord’s best gifts to us; our wise, intentional cultivation of friendships is our gift to them.

Problems to Avoid

Be on your guard! There is a thief who will try to steal the greatest of God’s gifts from you. Love is the greatest gift, the one thing that we know we are required to grow (see Your Two Main Purposes). Our hearts should be much bigger by the end of the journey than at the beginning. Fellowship will help you grow love. Even our love for God is put to the test by how we love one another. We learn to love the ones we can see, as evidence that we are also learning to love the One we can’t.

Now here’s the catch: You cannot grow love without trust opening and upholding your heart. Your enemy will do his level best to see that you are wounded by your fellow Christians in order to break your trust and cause you to withdraw from close fellowship. Don’t let that happen! Being hurt and offended is practically unavoidable. Jesus even said that it was “necessary” that offense come.

Your love has to overcome being offended at the ones who hurt you, mistreat you, fail to measure up and even betray your trust. These will be your greatest opportunities to “grow up into Christ” as you learn to forgive everyone from the heart—just as He does. We need both the pleasurable and the painful side of fellowship to keep growing a heart like Jesus. Never quit and you will be certain to get the hang of loving even the seemingly unlovable!



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Keep Growing!

Service Serving others leads us out of ourselves into living more like Jesus does—selflessly. Almost everyone has work that they need to do for their own survival, which, nevertheless, benefits other people (if it is honest work!). Service takes us into the realm where we learn to give ourselves, expecting nothing in return, simply because it is the right and loving thing to do. God always rewards those who follow Jesus in laying down their lives for others.

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For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, [Matters of the Heart](#). Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.



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