

FELLOWSHIP IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

Objective

To understand the meaning of fellowship with other believers and how the lack of fellowship hurts us spiritually

References

Holy Scripture

“Why Christians Need Fellowship” Dale A Robbins, Victorious Publications, Grass Valley, CA; 1990.

Scriptural Verse

“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.” Philippians 2:1-2

Lesson Guidelines

1. The believers in a church make up the body of Christ.

- Through Holy Communion – 1 Cor 10:17
- Baptism – we put on Christ 1 Cor 12:13

2. What is fellowship in the Body of Christ?

- The Greek word for fellowship is “Koinonia” – “to share in common” or “common sharing of the grace and blessing of God”.
- The perfect example of fellowship is the early church in Acts 4:32.
- Their fellowship and sharing resulted in a strong unity of faith and belief amongst the people which is the ultimate goal of fellowship.

3. Koinonia involves the following:

1. The sharing of material possessions.
2. The breaking of bread together.
3. Sharing in sorrow and joy – 1 Corinthians 12:26.
4. The edification of one another – building each other in the faith and knowledge of God through the use of our God-given gifts. Each gift is different but all work together beautifully to strengthen the body - Eph 4: 11-16.
5. Loving one another - involves forgiving one another when a brother sins against another.

Koinonia is more than just going to church, having Holy Communion and grabbing a bite to eat. Koinonia is a sense of caring and sharing that we have towards the other believers. It is full of humility and a willingness to serve. It is devoid of the need to show off clothes, wealth, cars, and even spiritual level to other believers.

4. The spiritual significance of Koinonia

1. Without it we are severed from the body and the life blood which is Christ Himself, this ultimately leads to death as we no longer receive the forgiveness of sins - 1 John 1:7, 1 John 3:14.
2. When I carry a grudge against my brother and am unable to forgive him, my worship becomes unacceptable before God - Matthew 5:23-24.
3. We do not really love God if we can't love one another. Some claim that all they need is a relationship with God and that they don't need anyone else, this is self-deception - 1 John 4:20.
4. We develop the fruit of the Holy Spirit – by dealing with those who are less spiritually mature we develop virtues such as patience, love, etc. We also learn from and are edified by those who are more spiritually mature.
5. Correction of our beliefs and thoughts about God – we all tend to develop our own thoughts about God and we have our own interpretations of the Holy Bible which must be validated and verified by others, to make sure we are on the right track.

Conclusion

The purpose of fellowship in the Body of Christ is to achieve a unity in the faith and knowledge of God. Koinonia is the sharing of material possessions, sorrows, and joys. It is also the edification of other believers. If we don't partake of this fellowship we forfeit the forgiveness of our sins, we deceive ourselves, we do not outgrow our sinful habits nor do we develop the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Discussion Points/Activities

1. What are some barriers to fellowship?
2. How can we overcome them?