



The New Testament Church

The Fellowship of the Church

I. FELLOWSHIP DEFINED

A. In Parts

1. The word fellowship is made up of two parts.
 - a. Fellow
 - b. Ship
2. Defining each part of the word will help us define the word as a whole.
3. The word *fellow* is found in various forms in the word of God.
 - a. It is found in its singular form twenty-eight times (Genesis 19:9; Exodus 2:13; Judges 7:13, 14, 22; 1 Samuel 14:20; 1 Samuel 21:15; 1 Samuel 25:21; 1 Samuel 29:4; 2 Samuel 2:16; 1 Kings 22:27; 2 Kings 9:11; 2 Chronicles 18:26; Ecclesiastes 4:10; Isaiah 34:14; Jonah 1:7; Zechariah 13:7; Matthew 12:24; Matthew 26:61, 71; Luke 22:59; Luke 23:2; John 9:29; Acts 18:13; Acts 22:22; Acts 24:5).
 - b. It is found in its plural form thirteen times (Judges 11:37; Judges 18:25; 2 Samuel 6:20; Psalm 45:7; Isaiah 44:11; Ezekiel 37:19; Daniel 2:13, 18; Daniel 7:20; Zechariah 3:8; Matthew 11:16; Acts 17:5; Hebrews 1:9).
 - c. It is found as part of a compound word 44 times
 - (1) Fellowship—seventeen times (Leviticus 6:2; Psalm 94:20; Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Corinthians 10:20; 2 Corinthians 6:14; 2 Corinthians 8:4; Galatians 2:9; Ephesians 3:9; Ephesians 5:11; Philippians 1:5; Philippians 2:1; Philippians 3:10; 1 John 1:3, 6, 7)
 - (2) Fellowservant(s)—ten times (Matthew 18:28, 29, 31, 33; Matthew 24:49; Colossians 1:7; Colossians 4:7; Revelation 6:11; Revelation 19:10; Revelation 22:9)
 - (3) Fellowdisciples—one time (John 11:16)
 - (4) Fellowprisoner(s)—three times (Romans 6:7; Colossians 4:10; Philemon 1:23)
 - (5) Workfellow—one time (Romans 16:21)
 - (6) Fellowhelper(s)—two times (2 Corinthians 8:23; 3 John 1:8)
 - (7) Fellowcitizens—one time (Ephesians 2:19)
 - (8) Fellowheirs—one time (Ephesians 3:6)
 - (9) Fellowsoldier—two times (Philippians 2:25; Philemon 1:2)
 - (10) Yokefellow—one time (Philippians 4:3)
 - (11) Fellowlabourer(s)—four times (Philippians 4:3; 1 Thessalonians 3:2; Philemon 1:1, 24)
 - (12) Fellowworkers—one time (Colossians 4:11)



4. The word *ship* is found in various forms throughout the Bible.
 - a. The word *ship* in scripture deals with a sailing vessel.
 - b. However, the word used as an ending to a compound word seems to denote something much different.
 - (1) Butlership (Genesis 40:21)
 - (2) Workmanship (Exodus 31:3, 5; Exodus 35:31; 2 Kings 16:10; 1 Chronicles 28:21; Ezekiel 28:13; Ephesians 2:10)
 - (3) Suretiship (Proverbs 11:15)
 - (4) Friendship (Proverbs 22:24; James 4:4)
 - (5) Lordship (Mark 10:42; Luke 22:25)
 - (6) Stewardship (Luke 16:2, 3, 4)
 - (7) Apostleship (Acts 1:25; Romans 1:5; 1 Corinthians 9:2; Galatians 2:8)
 - (8) Fellowship (Leviticus 6:2; Psalm 94:20; Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Corinthians 10:20; 2 Corinthians 6:14; 2 Corinthians 8:4; Galatians 2:9; Ephesians 3:9; Ephesians 5:11; Philippians 1:5; Philippians 2:1; Philippians 3:10; 1 John 1:3, 6, 7)
 - c. The Online Etymology Dictionary defines it as the state, or condition of being.

B. As a Whole

1. More than breaking of bread (Acts 2:42)
2. Involves being yoked together (2 Corinthians 6:14)
3. Has a connection to work (2 Corinthians 8:4; Galatians 2:9)
4. Is founded in doctrine (Philippians 1:5)
5. Has to do with being in agreement (1 John 1:7; 2 Corinthians 6:16)
6. “The “fellowship of believers” is a busy-ness in which believers work together as partners “in the gospel,” doing so for (and with) their Saviour (Philippians 1:3-7).” An excerpt from an article entitled *Fellowship with Him* written by Brother Daryl Coats.

II. FOUNDATIONS FOR FELLOWSHIP

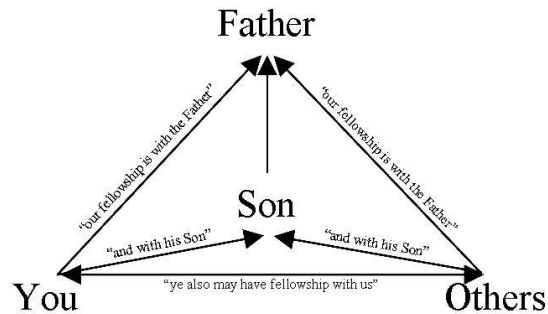
- A. Fellowship in Doctrine (Philippians 1:5)
- B. Fellowship in Service (2 Corinthians 8:4; Galatians 2:9)

III. BASICS OF FELLOWSHIP

- A. Fellowship Is Internal (1 John 1:3)
 1. Believer to believer
 - a. Within the larger body of Christ (Galatians 2:9)
 - b. Within the local body (Romans 15:5-6)
 2. Believer to Christ
 - a. Fellowship with the Father
 - b. Fellowship with the Son



3. Pyramid of fellowship



Fellowship Pyramid

1 John 1:3

B. Attacks Are Internal

1. If fellowship is internal, it makes sense that fellowship can only be destroyed internally.
2. Consider Acts 20:28-30
3. The first attack begins with people from the outside, but those people first have to penetrate the body of believers. Therefore, we see that both of these attacks on fellowship ultimately occur from the inside.

C. Formula of Fellowship

1. Begins with the new birth
2. Continues with doctrine
3. Works by unity in heart and service
4. New Birth + Doctrine + Unity = Fellowship

IV. FELLOWSHIP IN DOCTRINE

A. Fellowship Requires a Foundation

1. There must be some grounds of fellowship between two people or a body of believers.
2. No foundation allows no fellowship.

B. The Foundation Must Be Common

1. If two people have two different foundations, no grounds of fellowship exists.
2. For scriptural fellowship the foundation ought to be:
 - a. The Lord Jesus Christ
 - b. His word



C. The Foundation Must be Solid

1. It must be sound.
2. It must be pure.
3. It must be unchanging.

V. FELLOWSHIP IN SERVICE

A. Must Involve a Common Purpose

1. Different purposes will ultimately lead to divides in fellowship.
 - a. One may have a goal of reaching the lost.
 - b. One may have a goal of training the saved.
 - c. One may have a goal of having controlled standards.
 - d. Eventually, there will be a divide in fellowship.
2. The common biblical purpose for all we do is to bring glory to God.
 - a. God cares for His glory.
 - (1) All glory belongs to Him (Galatians 1:5; Ephesians 3:21; Philippians 4:20; 1 Timothy 1:17; 2 Timothy 4:18; 1 Peter 5:11; 2 Peter 3:18; Jude 1:25; Revelation 1:6).
 - (2) He does not share it (Isaiah 42:8).
 - b. All things are for Him.
 - (1) They were created for Him (Colossians 1:16).
 - (2) They were created for His pleasure (Revelation 4:11).
 - c. His glory is our purpose.
 - (1) Our works should bring glory to God (Matthew 5:16).
 - (2) Our troubles should bring glory to God (John 11:4; John 21:19).
 - (3) Our bodies should bring glory to God (1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Corinthians 10:31).
 - (4) Our spirits should bring glory to God (1 Corinthians 6:20).

B. Must Involve Common Methods

1. Minor variations will often be tolerated, but major variations in methods will cause division in fellowship.
2. To some degree this is exemplified in the split of Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41).

VI. FELLOWSHIP BROKEN AND RESTORED

A. Types of Offense

1. Private
 - a. The offense
 - (1) A matter of sin that has not been made known to the body.
 - (2) It is a personal issue involving one person or a small number of people.



- b. The correction (Matthew 18:15-17)
 - (1) Go and tell the person the fault alone (Matthew 18:15).
 - (2) Deal with the person with one or two others (Matthew 18:16).
 - (3) Bring it before the church (Matthew 18:17).
 - (4) Break fellowship (Matthew 18:18).
- 2. Public
 - a. The offense
 - (1) A matter of sin that has been made known publicly.
 - (2) A matter of sin that was committed publicly.
 - (3) A matter of sin that affects the body.
 - b. The correction
 - (1) Attempt to correct the problem.
 - a) With the individual or group
 - b) With appropriate steps of resolution proclaimed publicly
 - (2) Removal—If the individual or group will not correct the wrong, they must be removed.

B. Reasons for Discipline

- 1. As provided to the church at Rome (Romans 16:17)
 - a. Divisions contrary to the doctrines of Paul
 - b. Offences contrary to the doctrines of Paul
- 2. As provided to the church at Corinth (1 Corinthians 5:1-13)
 - a. Fornication (1 Corinthians 5:1-10)
 - b. Covetousness (1 Corinthians 5:11)
 - c. Idolatry (1 Corinthians 5:11)
 - d. Railing (1 Corinthians 5:11)
 - e. Drunkenness (1 Corinthians 5:11)
 - f. Extortion (1 Corinthians 5:11)
- 3. As provided to the Galatians (Galatians 1:6-9)
- 4. As provided to the Thessalonians
 - a. Unruliness (1 Thessalonians 5:14)
 - b. Busybodies (2 Thessalonians 3:6-15)
- 5. As provided to Timothy (1 Timothy 6:1-5)
- 6. As provided to Titus—heresy (Titus 3:9-11)

C. Means of Discipline

- 1. Correction
 - a. Rebuke them that sin (1 Timothy 5:20)
 - b. Rebuke with sharpness (Titus 1:13)
 - c. Rebuke with love (Revelation 3:19)
- 2. Removal (1 Corinthians 5:4-7, 13; Titus 3:10-11)

D. Purpose of Discipline

- 1. Instruction



- a. The root of the word *discipline* is disciple, which means to teach.
 - b. Discipline instructs not only the offender, but also those that witness the discipline.
2. Restoration (Galatians 6:1)
 - a. By those that are spiritual
 - (1) The spiritual man is mad at sin (Hosea 9:7).
 - (2) The spiritual man will be established (Romans 1:11).
 - (3) The spiritual man will have life and peace (Romans 8:6).
 - (4) The spiritual man judgeth all things (1 Corinthians 2:15).
 - (5) The spiritual man acknowledges the Bible as the commandments of God (1 Corinthians 14:37).
 - (6) The spiritual man restores (Galatians 6:1).
 - b. In the spirit of meekness
 - c. Considering himself

E. Preventative Maintenance

1. Church discipline is never pleasant for a body of believers or an individual.
2. Screenings should take place before someone unites with a body of believers.
 - a. Salvation testimony
 - b. Statement of faith agreement
 - c. By-law agreement
3. Careful promotions from within
 - a. Discipline of leadership is more detrimental to a body of believers than discipline of a regular member.
 - b. Take steps to carefully promote to positions of leadership.
4. Continuous Bible preaching
 - a. Teaching sound doctrine
 - b. Exposing false doctrine
 - c. Warning of wolves

F. Historical Accounts

1. Hezekiah Smith, a Baptist pastor from the late 1700s and early 1800s, spent a typical Sunday in the following manner, according to his journal, "I preached at Cashaway from 1 Corinthians 5:7. I hope the sermon was much blessed. I excommunicated John Jamerson the same day, and after divine service, married Malachi Newbury and Ann Rowel, then went home with Mr. Kimbrow and spent the evening very agreeably." Taken from *The Life, Ministry, and Journals of Hezekiah Smith* page 25.
2. "During the pastorate of Dr. B. L. Stanfill (1895-1900) many members were added by baptism and by letter. On the other hand, many were excluded on various charges, such as non-attendance, profanity, adultery, drunkenness, covenant breaking, dancing, and other charges." Taken from *The History of Fairview Baptist Church of Corryton, TN*.



The New Testament Church

The Finances of the Church

I. TITHES AND OFFERINGS

A. Tithes

1. The tithe defined
 - a. The word *tithe* means *tenth* (Leviticus 27:32; Hebrews 7:4 with Hebrews 7:6).
 - b. The tithe was taken from the increase (Genesis 28:22; Deuteronomy 14:22, 28).
 - c. The tithe could be given from:
 - (1) Seed of the land (Leviticus 27:30)
 - (2) Fruit of the tree (Leviticus 27:30)
 - (3) The herd (Leviticus 27:32)
 - (4) The flock (Leviticus 27:32)
 - (5) Etc.
2. The place designated for the tithe (Deuteronomy 12:5-6)
3. The people who received the tithe
 - a. The tithe belonged to the Lord (Leviticus 27:32). Failure to give the tithe was to rob God (Malachi 3:8).
 - b. The tithe was given to the Levites (Numbers 18:24) and the Levites gave a tithe of the tithe to the Lord (Numbers 18:26).
4. The tithe was meant to prove God (Malachi 3:10).
5. The tithe related to dispensations
 - a. Before the law (Genesis 14:20; Genesis 28:22)
 - b. Under the law (Leviticus 27:30)
 - c. After the law (Matthew 23:23)

B. Offerings

1. Offerings were not part of the tithe.
2. Offerings were given in addition to the tithe (2 Chronicles 31:12; Malachi 3:8).

C. Giving in the Church Age

1. In the early church
 - a. None lacked (Acts 4:34). Contrast this thought with the message of 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12 and 1 Timothy 5:8.
 - b. Many sold houses and land (Acts 4:34).
 - c. The price of the transactions was laid at the apostles' feet (Acts 4:34-35).
 - d. Distribution was made to those in need (Acts 4:35).



- e. Examples
 - (1) Barnabas (Acts 4:36-37)
 - (2) Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)
- 2. In the maturity of the church
 - a. With simplicity (Romans 12:8)
 - b. Upon the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:2)
 - c. As God prospered (1 Corinthians 16:2)
 - d. As purposed in the heart (2 Corinthians 9:7)
 - e. Cheerfully (2 Corinthians 9:7)
 - f. According to ability (Acts 11:29)
 - g. Proportionally (2 Corinthians 8:12)
 - h. Note: All things considered, it is obvious God desires for us to give a percentage of our increase. The *tithe* is a good starting place, but should not be the end. In fact, the Pauline epistles show it is crucial not that we just give, but that we do so with the right heart!

II. SUPPORT FOR THE WORK OF GOD

A. Old Testament Seed

- 1. Abraham refused Sodom's gift (Genesis 14:17-24).
 - a. The king of Sodom went out to greet Abraham after he returned from battle (Genesis 14:17).
 - b. The king of Sodom offered to give Abraham the goods (Genesis 14:21).
 - c. Abraham had made a vow to God that he would not accept anything of Sodom (Genesis 14:22-24).
- 2. Elisha refused gifts from Naaman (2 Kings 5:9-19).
 - a. Elisha informed Naaman how to be healed (2 Kings 5:9-14).
 - b. Naaman returned to Elisha's home to give him gifts (2 Kings 5:15).
 - c. Elisha refused the gifts (2 Kings 5:16).
 - d. Elisha rebuked Gehazi for receiving of Naaman (2 Kings 5:25-27).

B. New Testament Principle (3 John 1:7)

- 1. They took nothing of the gentiles.
- 2. Believers were admonished to be fellowhelpers of the truth.

C. Practical Thoughts

- 1. "The work of this Church shall be financed by the tithes and offerings of God's People. This Church will not permit nor condone the raising of funds in any other manner." Taken from *The By-Laws of The Antioch Baptist Church, Knoxville, TN*
- 2. The work of the Lord is to be supported by the giving of God's people.
- 3. If this is the case, much of the money supporting churches today is unscriptural (i.e. fundraisers, government grants, bank loans).