

# The Biblical Understanding of Fellowship

Read this article online here:

<http://creationliberty.com/articles/fellowship.php>

There's also free full teaching MP3's available at <http://creationliberty.com/audio.php>

Author: Christopher J. E. Johnson

Updated: May 1, 2021

Let's look at a general definition of the term 'fellowship' to gain some clarity:

fellowship (n): companionship; society; consort; mutual association of persons on equal and friendly terms; familiar intercourse; association; partnership; communion; intimate familiarity

(See 'fellowship', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved Dec 17, 2020, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

Many churchgoers are likely familiar with this verse:

*And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. -Hebrews 10:24-25*

Of course, it is true that those who are born again in Christ should assemble together, but it should be noted that false preachers also assemble together with their congregations, and they have often taught this verse because it benefits their popularity and paycheck. In the religious sense, there are many people who assemble together in church buildings around the world, but do not have fellowship together because that is something entirely different.

*And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly [consistently, without wavering] in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. -Acts 2:40-42*

There are a surprising number of Christians who believe that fellowship is just a simple choice, and essentially, it is, because Jesus Christ gives us liberty to make choices. However, we ought not to use that liberty for our own selfish ends, and we need to remember that the brethren of the early church set an example for us because, from the very beginning, they were very serious about fellowship with the church, and did so on a regular basis.

*For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. -Galatians 5:13*

The early church used their liberty to love and serve one another, and they understood very quickly how important fellowship was, especially when they lived in a society that much more harshly persecuted Christians than what many lukewarm Americans have experienced. They not only understood how important it was for themselves, but also for others, which should be the most important focus of all who are disciples of Christ.

*If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife [struggling for superiority over others] or vainglory [pointlessly uplift oneself]; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. -Philippians 2:1-4*

Thus, fellowship is not only important for Christians in ways we will learn in this teaching, but it is also a charitable act that focuses on helping others in their time of need, and being of service to them when we are able. All things we Christians have in this world are given to us by Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit, but fellowship with the brethren is the physical manifestation of the love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, and other fruits of the spirit, by which we can be edified to one another.

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*  
-Galatians 5:22-23

*Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.*  
-2 Corinthians 8:4

There was a time in my life after I was saved in which I spent most of my time alone because I did not want to be around others, but not only was this an error from the commandments of Scripture above, the main problem is that I was only thinking of myself and how I felt. This is not about following a commandment as much as it about charity, and we will learn more about the Scripture on that in this teaching.

I will add that when I was a new Christian, I did not see much of a kinship with the churchgoers in the church buildings I attended because I did not see much intimate doctrinal conversation within them, and so I kept my distance because I was unmotivated to have lukewarm conversations with people who seemed uninterested and/or lacked understanding of God's Word. However, that being said, I was also lazy, not wanting to get up and go anywhere, nor did I consider that the church has many members for a very good reason:

*How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.*  
-1 Corinthians 14:26

The members of the Body of Christ have been given gifts, callings, and understanding from God that is specific for them. Whether it is something large or something small, everyone has something to contribute to the edification of the church as a whole, and therefore, fellowship is not only beneficial to us individually, but it is also a matter of giving unto one another in charity.

In other words, we do receive certain things from the church when we fellowship, which is good for our souls, however, our mindset ought to be what we can give to others in fellowship, rather than what we will receive. When the whole church does this, it results in all members receiving more than they ever would have by only thinking of themselves.

In the general sense, fellowship is intimate friendship and familiarity between two or more people, and when it concerns the children of God (i.e. those who have been born again in the Lord Jesus Christ), we are not meant to have fellowship with the world. In other words, those who have not been regenerated by the Holy Ghost are not supposed to be our closest, intimate friends.

*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*  
-1 John 1:1-3

If we have that personal, intimate friendship with Christ, then why would we desire personal, intimate friendship with the world? Of course, when a new Christian is saved, they will have personal, intimate friends who are of the world, but as they begin to preach the doctrine and philosophy (i.e. way of thinking) of Christ, they will start to lose those friends because the world wants nothing to do with the understanding of Scripture.

*Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.*

*-1 Corinthians 1:6-9*

Please do not misunderstand, this does not mean that we cannot or should not talk with those who are lost, or as Jesus Christ put it, those who are sick. Obviously, we need to converse with our neighbors if we are to help them in their time of need.

*And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.*

*-Matthew 9:10-13*

Of course, the Pharisees already knew that sinners were in need of repentance (i.e. godly sorrow of sin). When Jesus told them, "go ye and learn what that meaneth," He was not telling them that they did not know that sinners needed repentance, but rather, they were supposed to go and learn that they were in the same desperate need of a savior as much as the publicans and heathen who came to Jesus Christ, and that those Pharisees should have come in the same humility. (Read "[Is Repentance Part of Salvation?](#)" here at creationliberty.com for more details.)

*And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. [i.e. a tax collector, hated by society because they were known for their greed and abuse of citizens] The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.*

*-Luke 18:9-14*

*(Read [Why Millions of Believers on Jesus Are Going to Hell](#) here at creationliberty.com for more details.)*

Therefore, it is vital to the purpose of the whole church's ministry that we speak with the lost sinners of the world, to educate them on the law, that they might hear it, know their sin, and come to Christ in the humility of repentance.

*But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*

*-Galatians 3:23-24*

Christians ought to preach the Word of God to the lost, and we inevitably have tough conversations with family, friends, and neighbors that often end in viciousness and contention against us, but we who are born again in Christ should not be spending our intimate time of friendship with those people. Being friendly with someone, and having intimate friendship with someone, are two *VERY* different things. When we become children of God, He sanctifies us, which means He sets us apart from the world for His holy purposes, and therefore, we ought not to have intimate relationships with darkness, unrighteousness, and devils.

*Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? [i.e. one who denies the truth of Scripture] And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore **come out from among them, and be ye separate**, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*

-2 Corinthians 6:14-18

**concord** (n): agreement between persons; union in opinions, sentiments, views or interests

(See 'concord', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved May 1, 2021, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

Why would we Christians have agreement and concord with those who do not want agreement and concord with Christ? Again, this is not about a commandment, but rather, it is about philosophy and doctrine, meaning that those who truly believe on Jesus Christ would automatically be at odds with the world because they would not be in agreement with their opinions, sentiments (i.e. passions/feelings), and interests.

*But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.*

-1 Corinthians 10:20

*For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.*

-Ephesians 5:8-13

This is why the Holy Spirit commanded us in Scripture not to suffer leaven to come into our intimate fellowship. Leaven is corruption, or rather, false doctrines and philosophies that come from a heart of sin, and so those who do and say things in opposition to our Lord Jesus Christ should be removed from the church; we should not be fellowshiping with them at all.

*Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators: Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world. But now I have written unto you **not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother** [i.e. if any man claims to be a Christian] be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. **Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.***

-1 Corinthians 5:6-13

So if we Christians fellowship with anyone, it should be with other Christians, specifically those who profess the principles of Christ according to proper Biblical doctrine. Although some readers might find this restrictive, once a Christian comes to understand the principles of Christ, fellowship is not a chore; rather, it becomes a natural part of our lives as Christians because, once we gain discernment and turn from a life of sin, we automatically find it disagreeable to fellowship with anyone else, and often times, those who reject that fellowship are hiding because they (more often than not) live according to the world, likely have unconfessed sins.

For example, if someone watches a lot of TV shows, movies, and mainstream news, they tend to take the philosophies (i.e. way of thinking) of the world into their minds on a regular basis because the script writers for those shows, movies, and news (i.e. yes, the mainstream news media has script writers too) have a worldly way of thinking by which they infuse their religious ideals and political opinions into the words the actors speak. Under normal circumstances, the Holy Spirit will eventually convict a born again Christian to get away from those shows and movies because there are so many things said in them that contradict the truth of the Lord Jesus Christ, which makes those of us with the Spirit of God cringe with nausea at the thought of those false doctrines and corrupt philosophies that are leading people into sin, and ultimately, to hell.

*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy [a way of thinking] and vain deceit [useless lies], after the tradition of men, after the rudiments [first teachings] of the world, and not after Christ.*  
-Colossians 2:8

*Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*  
-1 John 2:15

When a man of the world, who watches a lot of TV shows and movies, meets with a man of Christ, who rejects those same TV shows and movies because of his understanding of Scripture, there is a conflict of philosophy, and either the man of the world will be angry and depart, or he will sit in uncomfortable silence when listening to the man of Christ. The point is that when it comes to philosophy and doctrine, opposites do *NOT* attract, and therefore, when two men who claim to be of Christ come together, but there is opposition in one party, there is sin and worldly philosophies separating them in some capacity.

Please do not misunderstand, I am not arguing that a Christian is going to hell if they watch a movie or TV show, nor am I saying that every disagreement is because of sin, nor am I saying that every Christian that has not fellowshiped is a false convert. The context of this teaching is about the philosophy of Christian fellowship, which is about spending intimate time of familiarity with one another, and **when that cannot come about naturally, most often, there is sin in someone's life that is affecting their ability to stand in confidence with the brethren.**

For example, there is no logical reason that a born again Christian could spend their intimate time of familiarity with an atheist. Knowing the atheist is a fool, has purposed in his heart to push God's mercy away, and even mocks the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, how could we lower our guard and relax around such a man to practice intimate fellowship with one who hates our beloved Savior and Master?

*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good.*  
-Psalm 14:1

*And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*  
-Romans 1:28-32

And yet, I have witnessed people who claim to be of Christ hold on to their worldly family, friends, and neighbors because they do not want to be hated of men for the sake of Christ. They withhold the truth from them, refusing to point out their sin and give them the law of God, so those worldly people will think well of them, instead of doing what is necessary to present them with the truth of God's Word.

*Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.*  
-Luke 6:26

Jesus did *NOT* tell us that we would be loved by all men, and that friends, parents, brethren, and kinfolks would be warm and friendly with us, and that we would all hold hands in world peace.

*And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.*  
-Luke 21:16-17

For those who have spoken the truth of Christ to others, and have suffered the persecution and tribulation Jesus Christ promised we would suffer for His sake, fellowship with the brethren is a welcome thing; it is not a grievous event to fellowship together, but rather, it becomes something we long for because it is a bit of respite from the persecution and affliction we suffer daily from the mouths and hands of the world. However, for those who still remain in their sin, the world loves them, they love the world, they will continue among the world, and that is what makes it awkward for them to fellowship with the church.

*Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?*  
-James 4:4-5

That is, the spirit of a corrupt man who has not been regenerated by the Holy Ghost will lust to the envies of the flesh. The spirit of a man who has been born again in Christ will hate the wickedness of the flesh, and will be convicted in his spirit to war against those lusts, but when one does not war against them, it makes him very uncomfortable to fellowship with those who do, and vice versa.

*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*  
-Galatians 5:16-17

Division is a natural result of spiritual sanctification. It is something that Jesus stated specifically that He came to bring to this world, that even those who have the closest relationships known to man, like that of a parent and child, would be divided for the sake of the truth of Scripture, and for the saving of their souls.

*Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.*  
-Luke 12:51-53

Therefore, if we walk in the light of Christ, as we are intended to do, the natural result is to sanctify ourselves from the world and be in fellowship with one another:

*That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

-1 John 1:3-7

Suppose you were arrested by a dictatorial government for believing and preaching the truth of Christ, and you were locked away in a prison cell without knowing how long you were going to be there, nor were you allowed any contact with anyone from the outside world. The thing you would most long for is fellowship with brethren who believe and preach the same things you do, to experience that understanding, kindness, charity, and prayer, that your burden in this life would be lifted a little.

I believe that if hard times of persecution and tribulation against Christians arose in the United States, we would see a lot more Christians care a lot more deeply for assembly together in fellowship. In my experience, most church buildings either act like apathetic (indifferent) country clubs with lukewarm cultural standards to appease the masses, or they emphasize assembly and fellowship in a heavy-handed manner, demanding compliance from members, and in both situations, they are almost always done to increase attendance and income.

*The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*

-1 Peter 5:1-3

Fellowship should be done liberally in charity, not by force or threat, and if one has the Holy Spirit within them, they will be naturally drawn to those who are humble, exhibiting the fruits of the Spirit that we read earlier in Galatians 5, and I will quote again:

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

-Galatians 5:22-23

These types of people are who the Spirit of God will lead us to, that we would befriend them. Because our modern society (mainly through social media) has degraded the value of the word 'friend', it is important for Christians to gain an understanding of the Biblical meaning of the word:

*friend* (n): one who is attached to another by affection; one who entertains for another sentiments of esteem, respect and affection, which lead him to desire his company, and to seek to promote his happiness and prosperity; an attendant; a companion; a favorer; a favorite

(See 'friend', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved Dec 22, 2020, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

Our modern society tends to use the word 'friend' very loosely, without any thought to its meaning; however, despite this, many people are aware of what are called "fair weather" friends, meaning people who seem to be a friend when everything is going great, and then when hard times comes, their so-called "friends" disappear. In many cases, the "friends" that people have are not friends at all because friendship is a two-way street, meaning that both parties must be involved, otherwise, one person is manipulatively using and abusing the charity of another person.

*A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.*  
-Proverbs 17:17

Of course, some readers may wonder why we are going into the details of friendship when talking about fellowship with the church. I think the definition of the word 'fellow' can answer that concern:

**fellow** (n): a companion; an associate; an equal like another

(See 'fellow', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved Dec 22, 2020, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

At the beginning of the teaching, we read the definition of 'fellowship', which was generally defined as "an association of persons on equal and friendly terms," and so the words 'friend' and 'fellow' share similar definitions depending on the context in which the words are used. Thus, a 'fellowship' and a 'friendship' are not necessarily the same thing, but in the context of the church and the Holy Spirit, a 'fellowship' and a 'friendship' ought to be the same thing.

I certainly understand emotional attachments concerning friendships, as I have had some of those close friendships in my life, but I have never had as many in the world as I have had in the fellowship of the church, and I can boldly say that my friendships in the church are *FAR* stronger than those of the world. This is because we are united under the Holy Spirit, which means we have a connection between us that is stronger than anything this world can bring against us.

*From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?*  
-James 4:1-5

**enmity** (n): the quality of being an enemy; the opposite of friendship; ill will; hatred; unfriendly dispositions; a state of opposition

(See 'enmity', *American Dictionary of the English Language*, Noah Webster, 1828, retrieved Dec 22, 2020, [webstersdictionary1828.com])

Therefore, the people who desire friendships with those who are of the world, meaning that they desire to have friendships with those who have rejected repentance (i.e. grief and godly sorrow of wrongdoing) and faith in Jesus Christ for the remission (i.e. forgiveness) of their sins, are in opposition to God. When someone claims to be a Christian and invites those who are not of Christ into their intimate companionship, they become the enemies of God.

Please do not misunderstand, this does not mean that we are not friendly to the world because we are supposed to do good, even unto our enemies:

*Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.*  
-Matthew 5:43-45



*If thine enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat; and if he be thirsty, give him water to drink: For thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the LORD shall reward thee.*

-Proverbs 25:21-22

*Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

-Romans 12:19-21

However, there are many people who claim to be of Christ and refuse to sanctify themselves (i.e. separate themselves for a holy use unto Christ) from their friendships with the world because they find it to be too much of a sacrifice to make for the Lord Jesus Christ. More often than not, when you see a person who sits back on their own and seems not to have any friendship with anyone in the church, (not all the time, but most of the time) they have friends of the world (because they have to fulfill that lonely desire somehow), and the friendship that they see in the church makes them uncomfortable.

Of course, I am not talking about corrupt church buildings, in which churchgoers make friends with one another because they are of the world while feigning allegiance to Christ, loving traditions rather than truth (Mat 7:13), operating a social club rather than a church. We ought to turn away from such corruption, and seek the truth of the Word of God first and foremost.

*This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*

-2 Timothy 3:1-7

*But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.*

-Matthew 15:13-14

If we take the name of the Lord Jesus Christ upon ourselves by our proclamation that we are born again in Christ, that ought to mean something because we essentially become ambassadors for His Word and His Kingdom. This is what it means when the Bible says that we should not take the name of the Lord our God in vain, in that we ought not to take His holy name upon ourselves in vanity (i.e. just for an outward show of pretense), but with the utmost seriousness.

*Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

-Exodus 20:7

ambassador (n): an authorized messenger or representative

(See 'ambassador', *Random House Dictionary*, 2020, [dictionary.com]; See also *Collins English Dictionary*, 10th Edition, William Collins Sons & Co, 2012)

When an ambassador of a country makes friends with someone, that is very important for the country he represents because that friendship is a message of unity with another country. Therefore, since we are servants and ambassadors for Christ, our friendship/fellowship is very important because it is a message of unity with the people involved, and to have friendships with the world is a betrayal of God's trust in His ambassadors, which then puts them at enmity, or in other words, the ambassador becomes an enemy of Christ.

Therefore, our fellowship is not only a charitable act unto the brethren, but it is also a reflection of our service and dedication to the Lord Jesus Christ. And again, fellowship should be something enjoyable because it is coming together with those who have the same Spirit within them, and if fellowship is not something you enjoy, then you should do some self-examination.

*Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?*  
-2 Corinthians 13:5

Please do not misunderstand, fellowship is not just assembling together because even heretics and their followers assemble together, and if they do not come to repentance (i.e. grief and godly sorrow of their sins), they will be fellowshiping in hell together forever.

(Read [Why Millions of Believers on Jesus Are Going to Hell](#) here at creationliberty.com for more details.)

proclaim19 SPEAKERS Learn more at creationliberty.com

GREG LAURIE JOHN MACARTHUR JONI EARECKSON TADA RICK WARREN

DEVON FRANKLIN CHARLES STANLEY MARK RAMSEY ALEX KENDRICK

MIKE LINDELL MARK BURNETT & ROMA DOWNEY KAY WARREN KIRK CAMERON

**FELLOWSHIP**  
Fellowship exists in hell too.

Fellows are companions who communicate with one another (both in words of conversation and in giving of alms), and work together, and thus, if you are just showing up to a preacher's teaching in order to assemble together, that does not necessarily mean you are in fellowship with the church.

*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

-1 John 1:1-7

Furthermore, fellowship in the Spirit of God is to be of one accord and of like-mind together. If someone brings in philosophies of the world that are not of Christ, and preaches those among the church, there should be objections to those offensive doctrines; otherwise, there is not fellowship in the Holy Ghost.

And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.  
-2 Thessalonians 3:14

Therefore, if you have difficulty in fellowship with those who are truly born again in the Lord Jesus Christ, you should judge your own heart. Is there darkness in your life? Is there unconfessed sin that you have not brought to the Lord? Are there people of the world who you refuse to give up for Christ? Are there friends and family that you love more than Christ?

He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.  
-Matthew 10:37-39

Those who have been born again in Christ and are members of His church have lost their lives, meaning that they have sacrificed their family, their friends, and sometimes their homes, to serve Christ and stand up for the truth of His Word to save the souls of sinners.

And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.  
-Matthew 19:29

If you have not sacrificed the same, how can you expect to be friends and fellows with the church? How can you expect to understand what they have gone through? How can you empathize (not sympathize, because empathy is understanding through personal experience) with them enough to be close with one another? How can you align your philosophies together in fellowship when you are still hanging on to the things of this world?

He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.  
-John 12:25-26

As I said before, there is no commandment that you have to start going around pushing people out of your life because, if you are doing that, then you are only doing surface cleaning, and not look at the heart. Those who have been regenerated by the Holy Ghost have been given a love of the truth, and therefore, they will share that love of the truth, but when they do that, those around them will get upset and eventually depart on their own.

And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.  
-2 Thessalonians 2:10

To be in fellowship with the church means that you must first be in good fellowship with Christ, which we are called to be in fellowship with Him first:

God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.  
-1 Corinthians 1:9

The Lord Jesus Christ suffered, and therefore, if we are in fellowship with Him, we will also suffer, having understanding and bonding in that same suffering:

*And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.*

*-Philippians 3:9-11*

Rebuke, instruction, and correction are often things that people hate, but in order to tell them the truth about their sin and the Lord Jesus Christ, we must give them rebuke, instruction, and correction. A true friend would listen and consider the facts of the matter, but a false friend would depart in vicious anger, railing, and backbiting.

*Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul.*

*-Proverbs 22:24-25*

*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.*

*-2 Timothy 3:16-17*

*Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die.*

*-Proverbs 15:10*

If you lack fellowship with the church, then pray that God would open your eyes to what you need to do to be of good service to Him. Ask Him to show you what you need to say and do to be a proper ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ, to show you the sin in your own life that you can clean up, and then, ask Him to help you to be a charitable Christian that serves others in the church.

Based on what I have read in the Word of God, and based on my experiences, I can assure you that if you do those things, fellowship will come naturally. You will experience more love and joy around the members of the church than you have ever known before, and you will find friends who are not just longsuffering, but will last for eternity.

*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*

*-John 10:27-28*