

There Is Great Gain in Fellowship

By Randy Chamberlin

One of the many benefits of living the Christian life is fellowship. “Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10). Once added to the body of Christ, we find encouragement and edification among those with whom we share like precious faith.

When we read of the establishment of the church on the day of Pentecost, we learn from that day forward that fellowship was a most beneficial part of the Christian’s way of life. “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and that same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:41-42).

Fellowship means that they continued to share in those matters which were of a common concern or interest. It was mutual participation as they carried out the duties that related to the welfare of the individual members and the church. “They had all things in common,” reads verse 44b. What were some of the things that they held in common? They were those things which they possessed in common or in which all may partake. All Christians share in the hope of heaven for example. We come together each Lord’s day and worship God, give as we have prospered, sing songs of praise, pray together, partake of the Lord’s Supper together and hear a portion of God’s Word (cf. Acts 2:42, 47; Colossians 3:16).

Then, in Acts 2:46, the Bible records another activity of their fellowship. The “breaking of bread” in Acts 2:42 had reference to the Lord’s Supper, but the context of verse 46 indicates that they also had the practice of sharing other meals together on a regular basis: “And they, continuing daily in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.” We certainly are in fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ when we participate in a “covered dish” dinner. Moreover, the bond with our fellow Christians is strengthened by our participation in “Friday Night Sings,” holiday dinners and other gatherings. Therefore, we should take advantage of each and every opportunity to come together with the brethren. After all, where could we be in better company?

Even more so, true fellowship includes our active participation in carrying out the work of the church. There is much work to do in the Lord’s vineyard. All of us have talents that lend themselves to the work of the church. When we are actively engaged in Christ’s work, doing His will and cooperating with others of the household of faith, we are practicing fellowship. Joining together in the support of missionary work, orphanages, spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and visiting the sick and shut-ins are all examples of **fellowship in action**.

Fellowship is not just being together, but it is our partnership with Christ in fulfilling God’s will. “God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord” (1 Corinthians 1:9). The root of fellowship is dependent upon our spiritual unity with Christ. True fellowship is an outward action of an inner relationship with Christ.