

LIFE WITHIN THE FELLOWSHIP



1. Importance of Fellowship

A. Basis of Fellowship

When we ask Jesus into our lives we have a new relationship with God, and we also have a new relationship with one another. The Bible uses many different pictures or illustrations to help us understand what this is like. One of the pictures that is given is that of the family. Ephesians 2:19

In this verse in Ephesians 2 the Apostle Paul tells us that we are no longer foreigners or strangers to God, but we are members of his family or household. As we think about a family it will help us understand our new relationship with God and one another.

How did you become a member of your family? You were born into it! We can only become children of God if we are born into his family. The Bible calls this being 'born again'. In fact Jesus said that no-one can enter Heaven unless he is born again. John 3:3, 6-7

A person is born again when they are willing to turn away from their old life and receive Jesus as their Saviour. The moment you do this the Holy Spirit comes to live within you, giving you eternal life. You are born again by the Spirit of God. Now you are a child of God and a member of his family. God is your Heavenly Father. John 1:12-13 and Romans 8:15-16.

All those who are truly born again and belong to God's family are now brothers and sisters, through the Lord Jesus Christ. There are members of God's family all over the world, and although we may be from different races and backgrounds, we belong to one another and can have fellowship together. Ephesians 2:18-19

What does the picture of the family teach us about our relationship with one another? In our human families we care for each other and are loyal to one another. We enjoy spending time together because we belong together. It is the same in the family of God. God wants us to love and care for one another. He also wants us to meet together and have fellowship. In fact the Bible says that if we really are God's children, we will love our brothers and sisters and want to have fellowship with them. 1 John 3:14, 4:7, 19-21

B. When to Meet for Fellowship

We have seen that fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ is important, as we are part of one family. When should we meet for fellowship? Let's see what the Word of God tells us.

1. Daily/Often

How often did the early Christians meet together? Look at Acts 2:42, 46. We are told that they met every day for fellowship! This shows us how important fellowship is. We may not be able to meet together that often with our church family, but if our family are believers we can pray and worship together each day. The Word of God urges us not to neglect having fellowship together. Hebrews 3:12-14

2. The Lord's Day/Sunday

The Bible also tells us to set aside one day a week for the Lord. In Genesis 2:1-3 we are told that God made the world in six days and on the seventh he rested. This is God's plan or pattern for men and women. He gives us seven days in a week and we are to set apart one for him.

Later, when God gave the Ten Commandments to the Jewish people, he told them to set apart the Sabbath Day, which is the Saturday. Deuteronomy 5:12-15. This was to be a day of rest dedicated to the Lord, and the people were not to do any work. God said that if they obeyed his commands everything would go well for them. Deuteronomy 5:32-33

We may wonder then, why do Christians meet together on a Sunday? Jesus rose from the dead on a Sunday and on that day he had fellowship with his disciples. John 20:1, 19. So this became the day the Apostles told the early believers to meet together for their worship, and we have continued to do so ever since. 1 Corinthians 16:2

Sadly many Christians don't honour the Lord's Day. God has given us this day for our benefit and blessing. It is a day when we can focus on him and rest from our work. Let's do that!

We are the family of God. Let us love one another as brothers and sisters in Christ, and continue to meet together for fellowship. The Bible urges us to do this, so we are strengthened and encouraged, and will stand strong, even in difficult times.