

Into The Fellowship; 1 Corinthians 1:9

- I. Together
 - a. We often think of fellowship as being together
 - b. We have a “Fellowship Hall” where we gather to share meals with each other
 - c. We often think of our gathering in each other’s homes as fellowshiping with one another
 - d. Close association involving mutual interests and sharing, *association, communion, fellowship, close relationship*¹
- II. Mutual Interests
 - a. Acts 2:42 (ESV); And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the **fellowship**, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.
 - b. What brings us together?
 - c. Ephesians 4:1–6 (ESV); ¹ I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
 - d. We are of like mind
 - i. We share hope in the resurrection of Jesus
 - ii. We share faith in Jesus as the Christ, God as His father, and the Spirit dwelling in us
 - iii. We share in the reenactment of Jesus death, burial, and resurrection (immersion)
 - iv. We share in the called out, universal Body of Christ, the Church, with Jesus as its head
 - e. These are the mutual interests that keep us together
 - f. Ephesians 4 describes the unity of the Spirit (verse 3)
 - i. If we can agree on the next 3 verses then we share these mutual interests
 - ii. I really dislike the term “test of fellowship” that we have used in the past
 - iii. I like what God calls it, the “unity of the Spirit”
 - iv. If we can be unified in the Spirit – one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God – then we share these mutual interests
 - g. Fellowship is sharing mutual interests
- III. Sharing
 - a. There are several ways this Greek word ‘fellowship’ is used when it comes to sharing
 - b. To share what you have with others
 - i. Hebrews 13:16 (ESV); Do not neglect to do good and to **share** what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.
 - ii. There are people in need in our very community that we can help

¹ William Arndt et al., [*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 552.

- iii. God expects us to use what he has given us to help others – time, talents, effort, resources, etc.
 - iv. We have to be a people who are zealous for good works (Titus 2:14)
 - v. God created us for good works, to be workers in His Kingdom (Ephesians 2:10)
- c. To share our faith with others
- i. Philemon 5–6 (ESV); ⁵ because I hear of your love and of the faith that you have toward the Lord Jesus and for all the saints, ⁶ and I pray that the **sharing** of your faith may become effective for the full knowledge of every good thing that is in us for the sake of Christ.
 - ii. Paul commends Philemon for his love, faith, and sharing of his faith
 - iii. We are entrusted with the Gospel – we share, participate, fellowship in the Gospel for the sole reason of sharing it with others
 - iv. 1 Thessalonians 2:4 (ESV); but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.
 - v. 2 Timothy 2:2 (ESV); and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.
- d. To Share in the sufferings of Jesus
- i. Philippians 3:10 (ESV); that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may **share** his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,
 - ii. We participate, share, fellowship in the Gospel when we suffer with Jesus
 - iii. Suffering with Jesus is an essential part of our Christianity
 - iv. Romans 8:17 (ESV); and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.
 - v. 1 Corinthians 10:15–16 (ESV); ¹⁵ I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say. ¹⁶ The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a **participation** in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a **participation** in the body of Christ?
- e. Fellowship is sharing what we have, our faith, and in Jesus’ suffering
- IV. Close Relationship
- a. There are a lot of English words to describe relationships, and we use them to determine the kind of relationship we have
 - b. Acquaintance, friend, close friend, very close friend, best friend, best friend forever, husband, wife, aunt, uncle, kin, etc.
 - c. We often don’t think of the word ‘fellowship’ at all when we are thinking about or discussing relationships
 - d. Here is the second part of the definition of the Greek word fellowship
 - e. Hence a favorite expression for the marital relationship as the most intimate between human beings²

² Ibid

- f. 1 John 1:5–7 (ESV); ⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.
 - g. Here is where I think we can do much better as the body of Christ
 - h. We are afraid to create these close relationships
 - i. Rejection, betrayal, trust
 - ii. These all become issues for us – we are afraid of these things so we don't get close
 - iii. We see each other on Sunday morning, put on our masks, greet each other, then go home
 - iv. God created the marriage relationship in the image of our relationship with Christ (Ephesians 5:32) – the church is the bride of Christ
 - v. Fellowship is a close, intimate relationship with one another
 - vi. The phrase “love one another” is used 14 times in our New Testament
 - vii. The two greatest commands are to love God and each other (your neighbor)
 - viii. We must get past the barriers that keep us from creating close intimate relationships with each other – we are in fellowship with each other!
 - i. We are in fellowship with one another and with Christ
- V. Fellowship
- a. This is not being together in one place
 - b. This is sharing mutual interests, faith in Jesus Christ
 - c. This is sharing what we have (even ourselves), sharing our faith, sharing in Christ's sufferings
 - d. This is a close intimate relationship with one another and with Christ