



CONNECT

**FIRST STEPS - LESSON 14: CHRISTIAN
FELLOWSHIP**



Objectives

- New believers to understand the importance of life group and fellowship
- New believers to understand the meaning of the Christian fellowship.

Introduction

Think of fellowship like a cake. You need the flour, sugar, eggs, oil, and more to make a cake. The eggs will never be the flour. None of them make up the cake alone. Yet together, all those ingredients make a delicious cake.

This is what it will look like when we come together in fellowship. None of us is perfect because of sin, yet each of us has a purpose on this earth to show aspects of God to those around us. When we gather, it gives us a glimpse to the glory of God.

What Is Christian Fellowship?

In the New Testament, the Greek word for fellowship is *koinonía*, which signifies having a share in something, or sharing with someone in something, or you could say participation in something or with someone.

Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?

1 Corinthians 10:16

This means that when we drink the cup and eat the bread, we share in the benefits of the slain body and shed blood of Jesus. We have a share in what Jesus' death achieved.

They urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people.

2 Corinthians 8:4

The church in Corinth wanted to have a share in sending financial relief to the poor in Jerusalem.

I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.

Philippians 3:10

In other words, Paul wanted to have a share in the sufferings of Christ. To participate with him in suffering for the gospel. So *koinonía* can be a sharing in the benefits of the death of Jesus, or in the financial relief of the saints, or in the sufferings of Christ.

So when we talk about Christian *koinonía*, it refers to the fellowship or sharing or participation that is unique to our relationship with other believers. It is the shared union, the shared participation that we have together with Christ.

God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:9

Paul was referring to (1) the vertical fellowship that each of us has with Christ because of our union in him and (2) the horizontal fellowship, the sharing together with other believers, the common union we have with Christ and each other. Hence, the Christian fellowship is more than just having a jolly good time in life group or meals together, it is a mutual bond that we have with Christ that puts us in a deep, eternal relationship with one another.

not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Hebrews 10:25

The author of Hebrews instructed us not to give up meeting together. There is power and protection in unity. Several logs burn brightly, but when you put one burning log on a cold floor, the fire is quickly extinguished! Likewise, it is impossible to break a bunch of twigs, but just try breaking one! It does not take much strength!

In the Bible, there are frequent examples of God's people gathering together to fulfil a purpose God gave to their community.

- Moses and the Israelites in an exodus to their Promise Land
- Nehemiah and the Israelites rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem
- Jesus shared the good news with his twelve disciples
- The believers gathered to grow together in the Lord

It is important that we make a commitment to build a bond with other believers in a local church. God's eternal plan of redemption will be fulfilled through the church - which is a community of believers. Thus the church is not a convenient gathering place. Rather, it is God's plan for us to be part of it. While fulfilling God's plan together, other believers will also help us to grow strong in the Lord. We will discuss more on the commitment to the local church in the next lesson.

The Components Of Christian Fellowship

Mentor Chat

1. What do we do when we gather together (i.e. life group and church service)?

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2:42-47

Some of the examples are

- Help one another
- Show concern for one another
- Share what we have
- Encourage one another to grow as Christians / in our walk with God
- Learn from the Bible together
- Pray for and with one another
- Remember what Christ has done for us – Communion
- Praising and worshipping god together
- Have fun together
- Share the Gospel together

Reflection Station

1. What can I do to contribute to my church or life group?

2. Am I open to allow more mature Christians to speak into my life?

It is important that we learn to open up our lives to our leaders (such as our life group leader and spiritual mentor).

Blessings of being accountable for our actions and major decisions:

- We will receive sound advice based on the biblical principles.
- We will avoid making bad decisions that will cause us to fall away from God and His plan for us.
- We will see things from a broader perspective as our leaders can advise us based on their experiences; we also enable them to cover our blind spots.
- We will grow as we allow our leaders to guide us to overcome our character flaws.

As we open up to our leaders, we must also hold fast to the value of submitting to them. Hearing good advice alone is not enough. Instead, we should be willing to put what the Bible says into practice. Only then we will see ourselves growing closer to God. The key is that we obey our leaders as long as their advice is in line with the Bible. We will discuss more thoroughly on coming under the leadership of mentors and leaders in another lesson.

Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.

Hebrews 13:17

Mentor Chat

- 1. Many times, I feel tired after work/ school/ university, therefore, I really do not look forward to church or life group meetings. I only go because I feel obligated. How can I overcome this negative attitude?**

Decide from the very beginning that when we choose to go to life group meetings, we are there to bless others. In this way, we will not focus on our tiredness or burdens. Interestingly, when we choose to give, God will bless us many times over. There have been many testimonies of life group members leaving life group meetings feeling refreshed and encouraged despite going in tired.

Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord

Romans 12:10-11

A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

Proverbs 11:25

Besides, to love is to choose to commit. Loving others is not merely a feeling. Feelings come and go. Mature, true love is a decision that we choose to make and it requires discipline.

2. How can I balance church life with my work/study?

Conclusion

Christian fellowship is an important part of our faith. Coming together to support one another is an experience that allows us to learn, gain strength, and show the world exactly who God is. As believers in Christ, we ought to fellowship with one another as well as partner together to fulfil the Great Commission of Jesus Christ.

You need to be in fellowship of a church...If you separate a live coal from the others, it will soon die out. However, if you put a live coal in with other live coals, it will be a glow that will last for hours.

Billy Graham

The church is not an audience of spectators; we are a fellowship of disciple-makers.

David Platt

Memory Verse

NOT GIVING UP MEETING TOGETHER, AS SOME ARE IN THE HABIT OF DOING, BUT ENCOURAGING ONE ANOTHER- AND ALL THE MORE AS YOU SEE THE DAY APPROACHING.

HEBREWS 10:25



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