

Meanings of Fellowship, Pt. 3
Selected Scriptures, 2017-01-15A, #49

Introduction: One of our goals for this year is to consciously and consistently feed our faith and the faith of others by practicing the four continuing activities of the early church recorded in Acts 2:42 which are (1) Bible study – meditation, memorization, and application, (2) Fellowship, (3) Communion, and (4) Prayers...

In our last two studies, we focused on the meanings of fellowship. The Greek noun that is most often translated fellowship is *koinōnia* (κοινωνία).

There are five keywords in relation to the meanings of fellowship: (1) Sharing, (2) Partnership, (3) Common, (4) Communion, and (5) Participation. We have examined the first two words: Sharing and Partnership. Today we will refocus on the remaining three: Common, Communion, and Participation.

- I. Fellowship Means Having in Common (Acts 2:42-47).**
 - A. “Common” in verse 44 translates the Greek adjective *koinos* (κοινός), which occurs 12 times in the Greek New Testament and is translated “common” 7 times by the AV (Acts 2:44; 4:32; 10:14, 28; 11:8; Titus 1:4; Jude 1:3).**
 - B. Some have used verses 44 and 45 to teach that the early church practiced communism.**
 - 1. The verbs “had,” “sold,” and “parted” in verses 44 and 45 are translations of imperfect tense Greek verbs, which means “continuous action in the past.”**
 - a. “Had” translates the basic verb *ἔχω* (*echō*).**
 - b. “Sold” translates the basic verb *πῖπράσκω* (*pipraskō*).**
 - c. “Parted” translates the basic verb *διαμερίζομαι* (*diamerizomai*).**
 - 2. “Had,” “sold,” and “parted” are not translations of aorist tense Greek verbs, which would mean a once-for-all action...**
 - C. One of the requirements for fellowship is having something in common...**
 - D. Some of the things believers in Christ have in common:**
 - 1. Believers in Christ have a personal relationship with the Triune God (John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5; 17:3).**
 - 2. Believers in Christ have the same heavenly Father (Matthew 6:9; 1 John 1:3; 3:1)...**
 - 3. Believers in Christ have the same Savior, Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 1:9; cf. Acts 4:12; Ephesians 5:23; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 4:10; 2 Timothy 1:10; Titus 2:13)...**
 - 4. Believers in Christ are indwelt by the same Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9; cf. Philippians 2:1; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Thessalonians 4:8; 2 Timothy 1:14).**
 - 5. Believers in Christ have been saved by the same grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9).**

- a. Paul mentions “the common faith” (Titus 1:4).
 - b. Jude mentions “the common salvation” (Jude 1:3).
6. Believers in Christ have eternal life through Jesus Christ (John 5:24; 10:27-28; 1 John 1:1-7).
 7. Believers in Christ have been redeemed (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14).
 8. Believers in Christ have forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14; cf. Psalm 103:12; Hebrews 10:17).
 9. Believers in Christ have peace with God through Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1).
 10. Believers in Christ have been baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13; cf. Romans 12:5; Ephesians 4:16; Colossians 1:18, 24).
 - a. The body is one of the many metaphors of the church in the New Testament (Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4; Colossians 1).
 - b. Most of the metaphors of the church involve groups rather than individuals:
 - 1) Body (Romans 12:5; 1 Corinthians 6:15; 12:12, 13, 18, 20, 27; Ephesians 4:12, 16; Colossians 2:19),
 - 2) Building (1 Corinthians 3:9-15; 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:21; 1 Peter 2:5),
 - 3) Flock (John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28-30; 1 Peter 5:1-3).
 11. Believers in Christ have been robed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ and therefore declared righteous by God the father (2 Corinthians 5:21).
 12. Believers in Christ have been reconciled to God (Romans 5:10).
 13. Believers in Christ have been delivered from the wrath of God (Romans 5:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:10).
 14. Believers in Christ have the same three enemies:
 - a. The World (1 John 2:15-17),
 - b. The Flesh (Galatians 5:17),
 - c. The Devil (1 Peter 5:8; cf. Ephesians 6:12).
- II. Fellowship Means Communion (1 Corinthians 10:16):**
- A. *Koinōnia* (κοινωνία) is translated “communion” four times by the AV (1 Corinthians 10:16; 2 Corinthians 6:14; 13:14).
 - B. Other names for Communion also Holy Communion (1 Corinthians 10:16).
 1. The Lord’s Table (1 Corinthians 10:21).

2. The Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:20).
3. The Eucharist (1 Corinthians 11:24).
 - a. "When He had given thanks" translates one Greek verb – *eucharistēsas* (εὐχαριστήσας).
 - b. The basic verb is *eucharisteō* (εὐχαριστέω).
 - c. "Eucharist" is from the Greek verb *eucharisteō* (εὐχαριστέω) which means, "to give thanks, to be thankful."
4. The Breaking of Bread (Acts 2:42; 20:7).

III. Fellowship Means Participation:

- A. "Partakers" in 1 Corinthians 10:18 and "fellowship" in 1 Corinthians 10:20 are both translations of the Greek adjective *koinōnos* (κοινωνός), which is also used as a noun.
- B. The Holman Christian Standard Bible translates *koinōnos* "participation."
 1. Fellowship means participation in something with someone.
 2. "Participation" can be both negative and positive.
 3. We are commanded not to participate in evil (1 Corinthians 10:20-21):
 - a. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent without not" (Proverbs 1:10).
 - b. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them" (Ephesians 5:11).
 - c. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship has righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion has light with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6:14).
 - 1) "Fellowship" here translates the Greek noun μετοχή (*metochē*) which means "sharing, participation."
 - 2) "Communion" here translates the Greek noun κοινωνία (*koinōnia*) which also means participation.
 - d. We tend to become like those with whom we spend time:
 - 1) "The one who walks with the wise will become wise, but a companion of fools will suffer harm" (Proverbs 13:20, Holman Christian Standard Bible).
 - 2) "Do not be deceived: Bad company corrupts good morals" (1 Corinthians 15:33, New American Standard Bible).
 4. We are commanded to participate in glorifying God (Romans 15:6; 1 Peter 4:11).

5. **We are commanded to participate in encouraging and in building up one another (Romans 14:19; 15:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:11).**
 - a. **We are commanded to assemble to encourage one another (Hebrews 3:13; 10:23-25).**
 - b. **Ways to encourage and build up one another:**
 - 1) **With speech (Ephesians 4:29);**
 - 2) **With the Word of God (Acts 20:32);**
 - 3) **With spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 14:12, 26b; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Peter 4:10);**
 - 4) **With love (1 Corinthians 8:1);**
 - 5) **With prayer (Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 1:9-14; James 5:16).**
 - c. **Edification was a goal of Paul for the church and for himself (1 Corinthians 10:23; 2 Corinthians 10:8; 12:19; 13:10; Ephesians 4:16; cf. Jude 1:20).**
 - d. **We are commanded to participate in practicing the one another commands:**
 - 1) **Love one another (John 13:34-35; 15:12, 17).**
 - 2) **Forgive one another (Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13).**
 - 3) **Be kind to one another (Ephesians 4:32).**
 - 4) **Pray for one another (James 5:16).**
 - 5) **Bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2).**
- C. Paul mentions participation in the sufferings of Christ in Philippians 3:10; cf. Philippians 1:29; Matthew 5:11-12; Romans 8:18.**

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