

What is true biblical fellowship essay sample

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INTRODUCTION:

Some times familiar words lose their intended meaning. Such a word is “Fellowship” We use it a lot, but most times not in its biblical meaning. In our day the word is used to describe gathering ranging from coffee and donuts to worship services. Most times it is associated with gathering where there is eating. Now, there is nothing wrong with calling these fellowships. They are important and give us opportunity to be with one another to better get to know our church family. They are design to promote fellowship with each other. What I want to do today is look at the biblical use of the word and its use in Scripture and let it teach us what is true fellowship that God would have us to experience. The word used in Early Church, went far beyond occasional or regular gatherings, even though they met because of their common bond in Christ, and met at the same place and time, for a unified purpose.

We learn in God’s word that fellowship is a HEART issue, something to be felt and expressed, and something very important to be a part of. It should occur apart from any program, schedule, or activity. It is to be a way of life for believers in Jesus Christ to want to be in each other’s company, to share things together and to help and support each other both physically and spiritually. If one of the members hurt we share that burden. Lets look at what fellowship meant to the early church.

It is recorded in the New Testament to set an example for us today. I. THE FIVE ACTIVITIES OF THE BEGINNING CHURCH. ACTS 2: 44-47 A. Three thousand souls were saved on the day of Pentecost. Within a few days 5000

more (Acts 4: 4) believed. 1. The early church was born in a hostile society. The Jews had crucified Jesus less than two months earlier. It was not popular or healthy to be a believer. 2. Yet, these believers had to be close due their uniqueness as believers in Christ Jesus. The church (the assembling of believers) was the source of strength. They had at this time only the Old Testament and they were all Jews. B. Five things as recorded here kept them together, and strengthen them. 1. They continuing together in one accord.

2. They preached and taught the Gospel exhorting people to believe. V40, 43

3.

They had fellowship together. v44-45

4. They practices the ordnances, baptism and the Lord's Supper. 5. They Prayed.

C. Let us examine each activity.

II. ALL THAT BELIEVED WERE TOGETHER. V44

A. It means they met together. Part of their strength was in that they came together. The simple act of meeting together bonded them together and was a source of personal support. Because of their faith in Christ they were alienated from Jewish society. They were not only shunned, but in danger for their very lives. Thus the local church became their " support group." The Bible says they " all" came together. It appears twice in Acts 2: 44, and once in 45. Later in Hebrews 10: 19-25 when the Jewish believers were waning in their faith and faithfulness to their assemblies God tells them: Hebrews 10: 19-25 " Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the

blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." The Lord combines church attendance with holding fast the profession of one's faith. Further assembling together was for the purpose of exhort one another...which means to lift up and encourage. B. A church is a body of believers. A body is a unit.

1 Corinthians 12: 12, " For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ." 1. 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31, the point is that the church is a unit, a body, with no part being more important than another part, meaning every part is vital and important to the whole. V25 That there should be no schism (division) in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 2. Every person is important in a church.

In V27-28 Paul explains that Gods gives the gifts as it pleases Him. V18 Each person has a gift, an ability to do a job in the church that needs doing. Everyone does not have the same gift. Different gifts are given so that all the jobs will be filled. (Over the years in working in four churches as member and

as pastor, when it comes time to elect positions of service many are mentioned and recognized as having the ability, yet they do not regularly attend. Their talents are wasted, their God given gift is not used as God would have it) C. They had all things in common. They saw themselves as a body with a common bond. 1. Acts 4: 32, says “ they were of the same heart and soul.

2. Acts 1: 14, States they prayed and continued together in “ one accord”. Note again the word “ all”. D. I believe today that the reason it is so hard to get everyone to regularly attend church is because Christians are too much involved in worldly things. Notice that I said “ too much.” The first priority in our lives must be Jesus Christ if we are to live a happy and fruitful life. Colossians 1: 18 says that Christ is to have the preeminence in all things. Putting Him first everything else falls into it proper place. Matthew 6: 33 “ But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

I am not talking about success as the world sees it, but as God does. I am talking about reward in heaven, because we lived our lives in faith, trusting the Lord. In the cover of my Bible there is a poem I copied many years ago which expresses the point very well. “ He is no fool he gives up what he cannot keep, to gain that which he cannot lose, Only one life, which soon with past, only what’s done for Christ will last.” The problem is that many professing Christians know the words and the meaning of these passages... but can’t seem to believe them. If they believed them they would practice

them. Many will let anything interfere with their faithfulness to the Lord. III.

THE BIBLE WAS TAUGHT AND BELIEVED BY ALL.

A. V42 States “ they continued in stedfastly,” (they devoted themselves) to the apostles’ doctrine.” 1. They all believed the Bible the same.

2. They devoted themselves to doctrine and fellowship.

3. The Bible is the foundation of fellowship. The truth of the Gospel of the New Testament. 4. Paul told the Ephesians not to have fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness. Eph 5: 5 5. Ephesians 4: 14-16, tells believers, “ Being no more tossed about by every wind of doctrine. Firmly established in the pure teachings of the Bible.” ILLUS: It is one thing to know the Bible.... it is quite another to live it. It is like a friend of mine who pastored a church that had a history of trouble and a long line of pastors who never stayed very long. A older woman had donated the land to the church and she basically ran things. They sought her approval on all they did in spite of the fact she never came to church. My friend ran into a problem and the woman had taken an unbiblical position. The pastor went to her and from the Bible read the many passages that instructed in the matter. If was sure he had convinced her because it was so clear in God’s word.

However, when he finished she replied, “ I know it says that in the Bible, but I don’t see it that way.” My friend then joined the long list of past pastors and he too left because the congregation would not follow the Bible, but followed the woman. B. 2 Corinthians 6: 14, “ Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?” Often

churches have members who in fact are unbelievers. Some unbelievers are saved by disobedient to the Lord and not faithful to God's word. Others are simply lost and have not the spirit of God in them.

Both can be a real problem. Lots of times they try to force their ideas on the congregation and pastor. It takes a spiritual church to deal with such people and keep the church soundly following the Lord. Often the burden falls on the pastor. He has to take a stand on biblical principles and that puts him at odds with these dissenters. Often it happens some in the church begin to take sides and often will defend an erring church member and stand against the pastor. This will kill a church and destroy its fellowship. And let me say this.... the it is one of the Devil's most effect tools. To get a lost person or a disgruntled person in a church. C. The church is made up of people who all accept the doctrines and teaching of the Bible. The spiritual church, having spiritual members will let the word of God settle any matter...and never do wrong for friendship or for pride.

IV. THEY HAD FELLOWSHIP. V44-45

A. The basis of their unity was Christ and this brought them together. B. The Greek word is "koinonia." It means "communion" fellowship, sharing in common, something widespread, familiar and ordinary. It comes from the word "common" which is the heart meaning of the word. A sister term is "koin o inos", meaning a partnership, an associate. It has as its root the acts of sharing in something. (See 1 Cor. 10: 20) C. One commentator defines it, "the expression of genuine Christianity among the members of God's family" D. What does fellowship Include.

1. Biblical Fellowship has at its heart Love and acceptance: Eph. 3: 17-19

Sharing, something with someone.

Sharing of something with someone.

We accept each other with our faults, problems and failures. Esteem others higher than ourselves. That would solve about 95% of problems that come up. READ Philippians 2: 1-10... The word “esteem” means “to lead before the mind, to suppose, consider, esteem.” In other words we esteem the other person not based on their what they actually do, but we graciously think of them higher than their really may be. We give them the benefit of the doubt. We show them grace and mercy. We extend to the love...and it is not based on whether they desire it, but on the love God has given us. 2. It means that abrasiveness, being insensitive, showing resentment and a judgmental spirit must be replaced with an “agape” love. “Agape” is the Greek word translated in our New Testament “love.”

It is the word used for the love God shows to us in sending Jesus Christ to die for our sins. It is a unselfish love, which seeks the highest good of the other person, getting behind them so as to help them reach God’s goal and will for their lives. 3. Biblical Fellowship is a Family relationship: You become a part of the Family of God on Earth. I hope all of us see ourselves as a family. When we joined this church we joined this family. Our home is in heaven. Thus as strangers here in the world, we are out numbered, and different from the world, being believers, having our sins forgiven and having received eternal life.

It is sad that some in our churches by their lack of devotion to their church show they love the world more. ILLUS: It was like the man who loved baseball who said he was not going to the games any more. He looked around him at a game and there was drinking, profanity, and all kinds of open sin going on all around him. He said what am I doing here.... I agree..... what place has a Christian where such things are going on? 4. Fellowship requires having concern and a spirit of restoration one to the other.

Galatians 6: 1-2 “ Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” a. We are to bear the burdens of one another.

b. Especially of a brother or sister who is in need or has fallen spiritually, or morally. c. It requires prayer, but more it requires fellowship with the person. Fellowship in a common concern for one another. Being gentle with the offended, or person who has the problem. 5. Fellowship requires confession and forgiveness.

James 5: 16 “ Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” In order that confession and forgiveness to be able to be effective, there must be freedom in the church and atmosphere that will allow it. Gossiping, bitterness, back biting, criticizing, hinders the spirit of freedom for forgiveness and confession and will kill the spirit in the church and be like throwing cold water on the freedom to fellowship with each other. So does being judgmental, or condemning, or feeling oneself better than the other person. One also must have the courage to be frank to share a

failure or personal need. We each must recognize our own failures, faults and prejudices. We must as Jesus said, “ Get the beam out of our own eye before we try to get the mote out of someone’s eye.” 6. Fellowship involves encouragement and availability. We seek to serve and help each other.

You cannot do that if you have something against someone else. You cannot do it if you are not faithful to the Lord. Hebrews 10: 23-25 says we are to hold to our faith without wavering. We are to consider how we spur one another on to love and good deeds. We are faithfully meet together, exhorting (building one another up or encouraging one another).

7. Fellowship Involves Informality and Flexibility. Heb. 13: 1-2, 14-16 Let brotherly love control all we do. Do not for get to entertain stranger. It doesn’t mean show them a good time, but means to show love to or hospitality towards others. It means having a freedom in our fellowship, and not let ritual and ceremony rule it. V14-16 We should not let not ritual rule or tradition rule our fellowship, but experiencing our common bond the to God. We should let our fellowship and praise to God be in actual doing the will of God, sharing and helping one another for this is what pleases the Lord. Conclusion:

Fellowship with God, by accepting the Lord Jesus Christ is the being of Fellowship. With God first, and because of that fellowship one with the other. Are you in fellowship with God? Trusting in Christ. Are we in fellowship with one another. Are we forgiving? Are we judgmental or considerate and sensitive to one another’s feelings? Do we see ourselves as a vital part of

this church, EACH ONE OF US, equally important and vital to seeing the work of the Lord done here? Top of FormBottom of Form