

# Fellowship: Optional luxury or Vital necessity?

## (I John 1:1-4)

Main Point: *Fellowship with other believers is necessary for our growth, maturity and enjoyment of the Lord*

### I. Priority of Fellowship

**Quote from Theologian J.I. Packer** - “We should not think of our fellowship with other Christians as a spiritual luxury, an optional addition to the exercises of private devotion. Fellowship is one of the great words of the New Testament. It denotes something that is vital to a Christian’s spiritual health and is central to the churches true life. It is of first importance therefore that we should be clear in our minds as to what Christian fellowship really is. For it will always be the case that the church will flourish and Christians will be strong only when there is fellowship. For the people of God to recover the true meaning of fellowship is a crying need at the present time.”

### II. Purposes of Fellowship

1. Witness/Evangelism
2. Support
3. Protection
4. Companionship
5. Ultimately though, for our greater enjoyment of God and transformation into Christ-likeness.

### III. The Practice of Fellowship (Ideas)

1. Go through a book of the bible together or another good book that will help you in your spiritual growth. Meet and talk about what the Lord is showing you through this.
2. Begin to write down each day the most important truth you gleaned from your bible reading or devotional time and how it applies to you. Then get together and review this
3. Take notes during the Sunday messages and get together to review and help each other apply God’s word.
4. Memorize scripture and keep each other accountable by asking the other to recite their verses.

5. Be willing to be open and honest about your struggles and sin. James 5:16 (ESV)  
Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. This aspect of fellowship can be threatening and fearful for some, but don't let your pride stand in the way. God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.
6. Accountability – biblical fellowship involves more than just sharing biblical truths and confessing sin. It should also involve a mutual accountability.

### Application questions:

1. Would my life be characterized as being devoted to fellowship? If not what steps can I take by God's grace that would help me to change in this area?
2. As I evaluate my relationships, what is it that those relationships are centered upon? Hobbies? Sports? Job? etc.? or.....God? How can I make God more of the focus?
3. Would others come away from time spent with you and feel they have been pointed to God and encouraged? Why or why not? Is there someone who can give you honest feedback in this area?
4. Our fellowship and contribution to others will only be as deep as our fellowship with God. Am I regularly encountering God through His word, prayer and worship? In what ways can I grow in this area? Who can I talk to about this and ask for accountability to help me grow?
5. How does being in fellowship with Christ help you when you are feeling like a failure on the first 4 questions ?:) (Remember the Gospel!)

## Our Ten Values



John 15:4-5