

CHURCH WORSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP



The Purpose of Fellowship

On the first day of the week, the believers came together to break bread. *Acts 20:7*
Their fellowship helped them grow stronger in the faith, as they used their gifts and resources to encourage and help each other. They worshiped in spirit and in truth. The fruit of their fellowships was the strengthening of their faith.
During his lifetime, Paul wrote fourteen (14) letters called epistles to the Christians, encouraging them to help one another and use their gifts for every good work that will strengthen each other's faith. He made it clear that faith is essential:

- † It is impossible to please God without faith. (*Hebrews 11:6*)
6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
- † We should walk by faith and not by sight. (*II Corinthians 5:7*)
7 For we walk by faith, not by sight.
- † Faith is our shield against wickedness. (*Ephesians 6:16*)
6 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.
- † Faith is our breastplate against sinfulness. (*I Thessalonians 5:8*)
8 But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

The need for strong faith is the compelling reason that Paul vigorously exhorted the believers not to forsake or miss the assembly meeting. (*Hebrews 10:25*)
25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

The lack of faith weakens our shield against wickedness and sinfulness.
We also learn from the scriptures that the common activities during their fellowships are the following:

- † Breaking bread in communion with Christ, commemorating his death for the

forgiveness of sins. (*Acts 2:47*)

42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' [a]doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

† Singing: teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, with grace in their hearts to the Lord. (*Colossians 3:16*)

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

† Instructing and admonishing one another (*Romans 15:13-14*)

13 Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

† Praying, giving thanks for all things, submitting themselves to one another. (*Ephesians 5:18-21*)

18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, 20 giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another in the fear of [a]God.

† Giving according to purpose in their hearts. (*II Corinthians 9:7*)

7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of [a]necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.



The Fellowship Order

As Paul reminded that every activity in the assembly should be done decently and in order, the early Christians may have organized their fellowship activities to prevent chaos and confusion.

† Let everything be done in properly and in order. (*I Corinthians 14:40*)

40 Let all things be done decently and in order.

We know for sure that there were deacons performing specific tasks, such as helping and feeding the poor.

For the fellowship to function in an organized manner, specific tasks or functions should be assigned to gifted men. Those who can lead, to lead the worship. Those with gifts of preaching should preach. Those who can pray should lead the prayers. Those who can lead the singing to a joyful rhythm should be assigned as song lead-

ers. Others will be assigned to do the collecting of offerings. What is important here is to encourage all Christians to share their gifts.



Praying

Jesus said: the He will do whatever we ask in His name. (*John 14:13*)

- † *13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*
- † We can pray in His name because we obeyed the Gospel in His name (*Acts 2:38*)
38 Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the [a]remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The early Christians prayed in thanksgiving for all things. Prayers were likewise made for a Christian's specific request. Take notice that Paul asked the brethren to pray for him, in many occasions.

- † to fearlessly proclaim the Gospel (*Ephesians 6:19*)
19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,
- † prayer for our leaders (*1 Thessalonians 5:25*)
25 Brethren, pray for us.
- † pray that the Gospel be spread rapidly (*2 Thessalonians 3:1*)
3 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you,
- † pray against wicked and evil men (*2 Thessalonians 3:2*)
2 and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.

The act of requesting a prayer is a manifestation of one's faith that the prayer will be heard by our Lord God with special attention. It also displays a demonstration of humility in acknowledging one's needfulness. *Matthew 18:19-20*

- † *19 “Again[a] I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning any thing that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. 20*

For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

Prayer links man and God through Jesus Christ, and the oldest expression of man's worship of God.

When you pray, address your prayer to the Father. Pray for thankfulness, petitions and forgiveness, and most importantly, pray from your heart. End each prayer “in the name of Jesus Christ”, our intercessor. *Matthew 6:9-13*

† *9 In this manner, therefore, pray:
Our Father in heaven,
Hallowed be Your name.
10 Your kingdom come.
Your will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
11 Give us this day our daily bread.
12 And forgive us our debts,
As we forgive our debtors.
13 And do not lead us into temptation,
But deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*



Singing

Singing is another way of expressing adoration and praise toward God, and of edifying and admonishing one another.

As we were admonished to sing psalms to one another, everyone must sing. Sing songs that edify one another.

† Sing with grace in your hearts.. (*Colossians 3:16*)
16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

† Sing and make melody in your hearts. (*Ephesians 5:19*)
19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,



The Sermon

A sermon is a lesson based on a religious truth from the scriptures of the Bible, elaborately treated with a view to persuasion.

As we mature as Christians, a sermon message should be anticipated with gladness. for they convey admonition, exhortation and encouragement. Furthermore, the sermon equips us with spiritual knowledge that we will one day utilize when we teach others.

In his letter to Timothy, Paul reminded him about how to preach the word, and be prepared in season and out of season; correcting, rebuking, and encouraging with great patience and careful instruction. *2 Timothy 4:1-2*

† *4 I charge you [a]therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead [b]at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and teaching*



The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper was instituted by Jesus Christ himself, when he commanded his disciples to observe this simple act of partaking of the unleavened bread that represents his body, and the fruit of the vine, which represents his blood. (*Matthew 26:26-27*)

† *26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, [a]blessed and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."
27 Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."*

The Lord's supper is celebrated every first day of the week. The early Christians broke bread when they came together in fellowship every first day of the week. *Acts 20:7*

† *7 Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.*

The Lord's Supper is a memorial. We commemorate the death of Jesus on the cross for the following reasons:

- † His death makes the new covenant possible. (*Hebrews 9:16*)
16 For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.
- † His blood was shed for the remission of sins. (*Ephesians 1:7*)
7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

As the Passover was a memorial commemorating the deliverance of Israel from bondage in Egypt, through the blood of the lambs on their door posts; the Lord's Supper is a memorial of our Lord's death, which delivered us from the bondage of sin.

The Lord's Supper is a proclamation. We proclaim our faith in the return of Jesus Christ. We look forward with trust in our hearts that when Jesus comes again, he will gather his own. (*1 Corinthians 11:26*)

- † *26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.*

The Lord's Supper is a communion. We share in the blood of Jesus Christ. His blood continually washes away our sins. As we partake of the bread and the fruit of the vine, we commune with the body of Christ. (*1 Corinthians 10:16*)

- † *16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the [a] communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?*

We have a covenant with God through the blood of Jesus Christ (*1 Corinthians 11:25*)

- † *25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."*



Giving

The early Christians gave regularly, freely, and with simplicity. God does not need our money, for He owns all the riches in this world. He needs nothing from us. He simply commands that in everything that we do, we must do it for His glory. The early Christians did not observe a law on how much one should give. They were commanded to give in accordance with their ability. Observe the following attitudes of a true giver:

- † Give freely (*Matthew 10:8*)
25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."
- † Give with simplicity (*Romans 12:8*)
8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.
- † Give regularly (*1 Corinthians 16:2*)
2 On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.
- † Give cheerfully (*2 Corinthians 9:7*)
7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of [a] necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.
- † Give according to ability (*Acts 11:29*)
29 Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea.

Surely, the Church needs regular giving from its members to fully support its different ministries. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul thankfully praised them for their deep concern over his needs, but most of all, Paul pointed out that their act of benevolence would be credited to their account. *Philippians 4:17*

- † *17 Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. God will reward your faithful giving. Give and it will be given you in good measure, pressed, shaken and running over. (Luke 6:38)*
- † *38 Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.*

