

We Are Family Members - Stephan Willshaw

So in this short message today,

I would like us to consider the focus of our fellowship. So the overall thrust for today and title for this message is We Are Family Members.

Now God bless you on this His Sabbath day. Now this book I'm holding up here the gospel message is contained within it of what?

The coming kingdom and it's the soon coming kingdom even though it's been over 2,000 years. It's as soon as Really our death So it's 70 or 80 or 90 years in this case kind of where we're all Walking Walking around right now. We're all past midlife. We're in the end of life Let's start too far away, right? There's no time in the grave. I can put it that way This book also witnesses that we've been called into what? This book is a witness that we've been called into the God family, correct? exactly The book tells us that his family consists of called out ones that He has chosen to prepare for the kingdom right now in this physical life. When we go into the grave, the preparation day, the preparation time, it's over. It's all about right here now.

I'm 70, I'm 3 score and 10. There's not much time left. We don't know how much time's left. We pray that we'll live to 100, but it might not work out that way, so we have to make every day count. Rather than the bottom line is what?

We are now seeking this amazing gift of eternal life, and all the while we know this eternal life comes with what?

A great price. It's been paid already, the price of Christ's blood, but it's also a price attached to what we do. We need to what? All repent and fully obey the words of this manual, this book.

So this gospel message witnesses, Really, overall, to two, to DWO, different audiences.

The first one being people with what? Hardened hearts. And those of the other group would be people that have humble and teachable hearts.

Take a look around right now. I see Six of us 73,000 roughly here in Quartha Lakes, and we're even dragging one from the Oshawa area. What's that down there Durham? Durham we drag dragon one from Durham

We're a small we're a small group. We're we are we are the church of this area So we're a small church, right now in the first message We heard that there's a minister or one of the other side with keeping churches that wasn't doing something that was applicable.

I'll hold it up again to this book. So what did this person do?

They want somewhere else where they respected the words of this book.

And That's what it is. Basically, two different types of people. People who are humble and teachable. And then they respond in a very similar manner of what the apostle Peter talked about on that monumental day, that day of Pentecost, that we can read about in Acts the Second Chakra. I'm gonna quote the scripture from there as we read into Acts two. to come to Acts 2 verse 37 and when they heard this they were caught to the heart. Acts 2 37 and Peter and said to Peter

and the rest of the apostles that were there, men and brethren what shall we do? Wanted to know what they were going to do now after what they were experiencing there in acts the second chapter. Don't turn there, but go to 1 Corinthians 1 chapter. We're going to check it out. We're going to pick this story up a little further along. 1 Corinthians 1, I'm going to read verse 3, then I'm going to jump down to verse 9 and 10. So turn there. 1 Corinthians 1, "Receiving the Holy Spirit, brothers and sisters, sets us apart from the rest of the world around us.

We are to be gotten, we're not born again, we are to be gotten children of God at this point in time right now. We're still waiting to be born again into the kingdom. When we turn into spirit, we give the spirit body, that's when the born again experience takes place. You can read about that in 1 Corinthians 15. This Holy Spirit is what unites us and makes us different and makes us family with the Godhead God places his spirit we're going to 1 Corinthians 1 God places his spirit to be a part of his family in order to have a relationship not only with them but with each other

right with the Godhead and with each other 1 Corinthians 1 let's verse or chapter or verse three sorry first Corinthians one verse three and I quote grace and peace be to you from who father God the father and the Lord Jesus Christ do you see a triune God there do you see three people there I do not see that right verse nine God is faithful by whom you were called into the fellowship of who of his son Jesus Christ our Lord Verse 10 now I exhort you brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ that you speak all Speak it says the same thing and that there be no Divisions among you rather that you be knit together in the same mind and in the same judgment God tells us that we are to interact with our brothers and sisters in Christ, with a heart that seeks disunity. Are you kidding?

Disunity? No, exactly the opposite, unity. And He likens to us to a body, each of us of course having different skills and gifts, but we all work together towards one common mission. To keep what?

The body of Christ alive. We are what the body of Christ? Serving God the Father and Jesus Christ and each other We do not have to see eye -to -eye on every particular issue in our relationships to live in unity but We do have to be humble enough not to let divisions grow amongst us.

We must not let these differences cause divisions. You know what? It's gonna take a great deal of humility and grace on each part of every one of us. We must remember, though different, being different is not necessarily wrong. Our differences are actually beautiful in some cases. That's why the world is so different. Do all the mountains look exactly the same? No.

Do all the oceans contain the same fish? Absolutely not.

So I love that Paul tells us to share share the same mind, share the same judgment. In other words, when it comes down to it, remember, we are always on the same exact team. Right? We must be willing, brothers and sisters, to move past these differences and stay focused on our shared goals.

No minor dispute as we're sacrificing The love we are called to is to have this love for each other

every relationship At least The ones that are good, what do they involve they involve time they involve edification

By way of communication In effect, relationships are formed through what? Fellowship. Talking and sharing back and forth with each other.

If you haven't got that, you don't have a whole lot. I listen to these two ladies go back and forth all week long. It's a beautiful thing. And they tell me that they hate talking on the phone. I beg to differ, brothers.

That's not my notes by the way.

No, all kidding aside though, those who are with God are called into what?

The fellowship of the Spirit as it guides us. Right.

Philippians 1 this time, let's have a look there. Another letter of Paul, Philippians 1, we're going to pick it up in verse 27 there he

says Paul says there that Christ is a model of humility and service and he is exhorting these brethren at Philippi that is Paul exhorting the brethren at Philippi not to be at odds with each other Philippians 1 27 but to stand fast and be of the same mind. Here we go, Philippians 1 verse 27,

"Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come

or I'm absent. I may hear of your affairs that you stand fast in what?

All these different spirits, all these different ideas? No! One spirit with one mind striding together for the faith of this gospel message.

It's in this book chapter 2 verses 1 and 2.

Therefore, he continues Therefore, if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, in any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like -minded,

having the same love, being of one accord and Being of one mind end of quote

Let's have a look at another one Let's just time go to the apostle John big John this time I've got John 71 That's not correct. It's got to be John 17.

Yes John 17 Versus 20 and 21 this time turn there please if you would with me and the power of God, not quoting it, here's a run -up to it, the power of God, His Holy Spirit, brings about certain fellowship, where all people, regardless of the differing personalities, are of one mind and one accord with God, the Father, and Jesus Christ. Let's see that. I Jesus Christ, quote from John 17 verse 20, I Jesus Christ, do not pray for these alone but also for those who will believe in me through their word that they may be one as you father are in me and I in you that they may also be one in us that the world may believe that you sent me.

It's a witness of oneness. aloh, a fellowship of the Spirit,

exists among those of us who are in the conversion process because the Spirit of God, the Father, and Jesus Christ should be, or at least should be strived to be, the same in all. This means those who have the Holy Spirit love God the Father and Jesus Christ And all who love them will also love the other members of the body of

Christ. It comes with the territory. It cannot be any other way.

The Holy Spirit is common. It's a common thread among the brethren that binds us together just as God and Christ two are one.

They're not divided. And if we have the Holy Spirit coursing through us we should not be divided either. This fellowship is unique and special because only a few have the blessing, talking about six of us here today, have the blessing and are able to experience it. The primary reason to have a Holy Spirit is to have fellowship first and foremost with God the Father and Jesus Christ and there be gotten children beginning right now right through and including Eternity, that's something special brethren these days Think about this down my next comment these days spend Much of these people spend much of their Sabbaths.

I see it. I've experienced it over the years They spend much of their Sabbaths and Holy Days without any fellowship.

Think about this. Some might go to services on the Sabbath, but there's a but. But do they truly have true

What happens at Sabbath services? Well, we come in

We listen to a sermon we sing a few songs have some small talk Everybody leaves guess when you see them next thing guess when you hear them the next time I'm not talking about us Next Sabbath and the same thing takes place I'm calling a spade a spade Am I putting anybody down? I'm putting myself down if I do it if I do it I'm talking about myself we

need to change everybody needs to change where is the fellowship the question would be asked fellowship what does that require time and communication with each other right

So what I'm about to say now might come across like some kind of a heresy Fellowship beyond the weekly Sabbaths and holy days Could be considered more or could be considered maybe more important than actually listen to a sermon or a Bible study Could be more important Don't can't be But think about what I'm going to tell you here. Anybody, anyone in this room can listen to a message during the week and get the exact same result out of listening to that message, even if it's done on its own,

right? Same effect.

Fellowship and the Spirit on the other hand requires what? Interaction with God and His people through that Holy Spirit He's given us. The Sabbath and holy days are for many the only time that they're able to set aside to be with the other brethren. Why not take advantage of it?

I dare say there were quite a few that do not take advantage of it and If they don't take advantage of it on those days, when? When is it going to take place? During the week when all the family demands and everyday life is coursing by?

Hey, that's something to say that all overlooked the priority of fellowship. I'm not saying that. We can get caught in that belly of the whale quite easily unless we wake up to the understanding. And what, as Larry said, repent. All we can do is ask God to forgive us and repent.

Now there are many who are unable to fellowship for logistical reasons and for health reasons. A lot of people like that. So even though they have a deep longing for fellowship, they can't get it. How do I know that? Why am I out there telling you that? They've told me. I experienced it. We've all been to our weekly online Bible studies and we see this taking place, people are just, I was going to use the word dying, but no, they just want fellowship so badly. They don't have it. Maybe it's because they're very elderly.

Might be one of the reasons. This is had logistical reasons, right? Health reasons. And Bible studies are proof in the pudding. People are really out there desiring what we have here. It's a special thing. It's a great irony.

Let's go to Hebrews 10. Hebrews the 10th chapter. It's a great irony that fellowship is lost in the typical organized church setting because it is a gathering where one might expect to be objective. However, fellowship can sometimes also be lost. Hebrews 10. Fellowship sometimes can be lost in the rigid formality of rules and regulations. Also, it can be lost in the emotionless prescribed songs, prayers, and all these rules have come too. I call it the yellow pencil syndrome. You heard me say that before.

Also, it can be lost in the emotionless prescribed I'm just putting in the time for a couple hours and going to church can happen. I've heard it. I've seen it. I've experienced it. Brother, let not this steal the true joy of being in the presence of God the Father and Jesus Christ and each other on these Sabbath days. Hebrews 10 much gone to scripture verse 24 and 5. I quote,

"Let us be concerned about one another and be stirring up one another unto love and good works." No, it says good works. This is exactly the opposite. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, even as some are accustomed to do, but rather encouraging one another. Phone calls. Are you coming out this week? Yes I am. I'm looking forward to seeing you. Encouraging one another and all the more as you see the day, what's that day? As you see a day approaching the return of Christ. We may not see it. We may be in the grave as we know there's no time. I've talked about that a few minutes earlier. Now since we're in Hebrews 10, go to chapter 12.

A couple pages over. Hebrews 10 verse 12, real key verse here. Hebrews 12 verse 14. My apologies. I'm reading this time out of the faithful version. Hebrews 12 verse 14 says, "Pursue peace with everyone and holiness without which no one will see the Lord."

That's a hallmark scripture.

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Encourage everybody to read through the book of Hebrews several times a year. It's an amazing book. It wasn't for this book. We wouldn't have a whole lot of understanding of anything. It's amazing. The assembling of ourselves together is not limited to Sabbaths and Holy Days only. The fellowship of the Spirit can occur anytime and anywhere. God's people come together. Acts 2, let's have a look there. Fellowship in the Spirit is much more than weekly Sabbath attendance. Notice what happened to those who, Acts 2, notice what happened to those after those who heard Peter's message on this infamous day of Pentecost.

Acts 2 verse 42. And this was on the day of Pentecost, of course, a high holy day. And I quote, Acts 2 .42 and verse 40, and with many other words he, talking about Peter, testified and exhorted them saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." Acts Acts 241 now and then those who gladly received this word were baptized and that day Can you imagine this? 3 ,000 souls were added to them 3 ,000 They wouldn't fit in this hotel and they continued steadfastly listen to this here In the apostles doctrine and fellowship and the breaking of bread and prayers. And they continued steadfastly to obeying the teaching of the apostles and fellowship and breaking bread and prayers together. It does not say they came and listened to a sermon on the Sabbath and then went home, unfulfilled or unfilled. They were filled that day for sure. They spent time with each other above all. It was not just Sabbath and Holy Days. Look what else It says in the same chapter, verse 46 and 7 of Acts 2. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, they were at the temple, they had a place to meet. They went to the temple daily and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart. Verse 47, Acts 2, praising God and Having favor with all the people and the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved Do you think they were at loggerheads were another? I don't think so Let's see what big John's got to say about this now First John or no little John I should say first John 1 We're gonna read from 5 to 7 Let's turn there first John 1, the epistle of John, verse 1, "If we pray daily to God, Father Jesus Christ, we should have the same urgency to fellowship directly with each other." Fellowship in the spirit is with God, the Father Jesus Christ, and the brethren.

Verse 5 and I quote this is a message which we have heard from him That's capitalized life Jesus Christ and Declare to you that God is light and in him is No darkness at all If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness We lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son cleanses us from all sin." End of quote.

So fellowship is more than uplifting one another, edifying one another in love. It is also being together with our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. There is nothing more important and more glorious to God the Father and Jesus Christ than the oneness and fellowship among those who have His Holy Spirit.

That's what they're looking for. Romans 15 this time. Paul, let's go to Romans 15.

Romans is not easy to understand at times, but this here is not a difficult scripture. Romans 15, I'll pick it up in verse 5, we'll be down to verse 7, and I quote, "Now be the God of patience and comfort.

Grant you to be what? Like -minded toward one another.

According to Jesus Christ, like him in other words, that you may be with one mind and one mouth glorifying the Lord and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, receive one another, just as Christ also received us.

To what? To bring glory to the Father, to bring glory to God. end of quote.

God the Father and Jesus Christ desire to spend eternity with each of us, and He wants us to be one with them, and one with each other. Eternity will not be spent probably listening to endless sermons, but having the unspeakable joy of this agape love that we talk about so built in to our relationships. That's what it's going to be about.

Let's see Ephesians this time. This is going to be our last scripture for today. Our last scripture we're going to at least turn to. Ephesians 4 verses 1 and 3. The Bible is crucial because It is the basis for a relationship with God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, as well as understanding their purpose. They've called us to be the purpose for all mankind for that reality is really what it is. He wants all people to come into the understanding of the truth. However, in the end, when we're talking about fellowshiping here today, it is fellowship with each other that really matters. And guess what? Today is the proving ground, not tomorrow, not next week, today. We have to live in the presence, and we only get this chance in the flesh to work out our salvation, and we should be doing it with all fear and trembling. Ephesians 4 verses 1 -3,

"As a prisoner of the Lord, I urge you live a life rather worthy of the calling that you have received. Be completely humble and gentle. Be patient. Bearing with one another in love, making every effort to keep the unity of the spirit through what? Through the bond of peace. That's sort of the new international version that seemed to color it up rather nicely. That's what I used it. When Paul wrote these words to the believers of Ephesus he was painting a picture of God's desire for his people to be unified and part of his family just as Christ and he are unified.

We must purpose to live in unity because of Christ's love in us. It might seem impossible sometimes when it comes to relationships, but with God all things are possible. We must keep praying, we must keep trusting, we must keep seeking the unity that God desires of His bigotten children. He cares about our relationships more than we can likely know, and he is able to work everything out according to his purpose. Brother, let's never forget we are family members.