

Fellowship

In the Church of God tradition ... most of the “Old Timers” that have attended 30 or 40 or 50 Feast of Tabernacles KNOW ... Mrs. Armstrong’s favourite scripture ...

Psa 133:1 Behold, how good & how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity!

On the NT Passover evening - the night when Jesus was betrayed - we read together a verse where Jesus give us **all** a NEW commandment ... Was Jesus **really** serious?!? Did we listen?!?

Joh 13:34-35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

In today’s message we will talk about **Fellowship** in... *the Church that Jesus built* - It is through **Fellowship**, that the Church teaches Jesus’ “modern day” disciples to have love for one another.

The Greek word in the NT translated “**Fellowship**” is ...

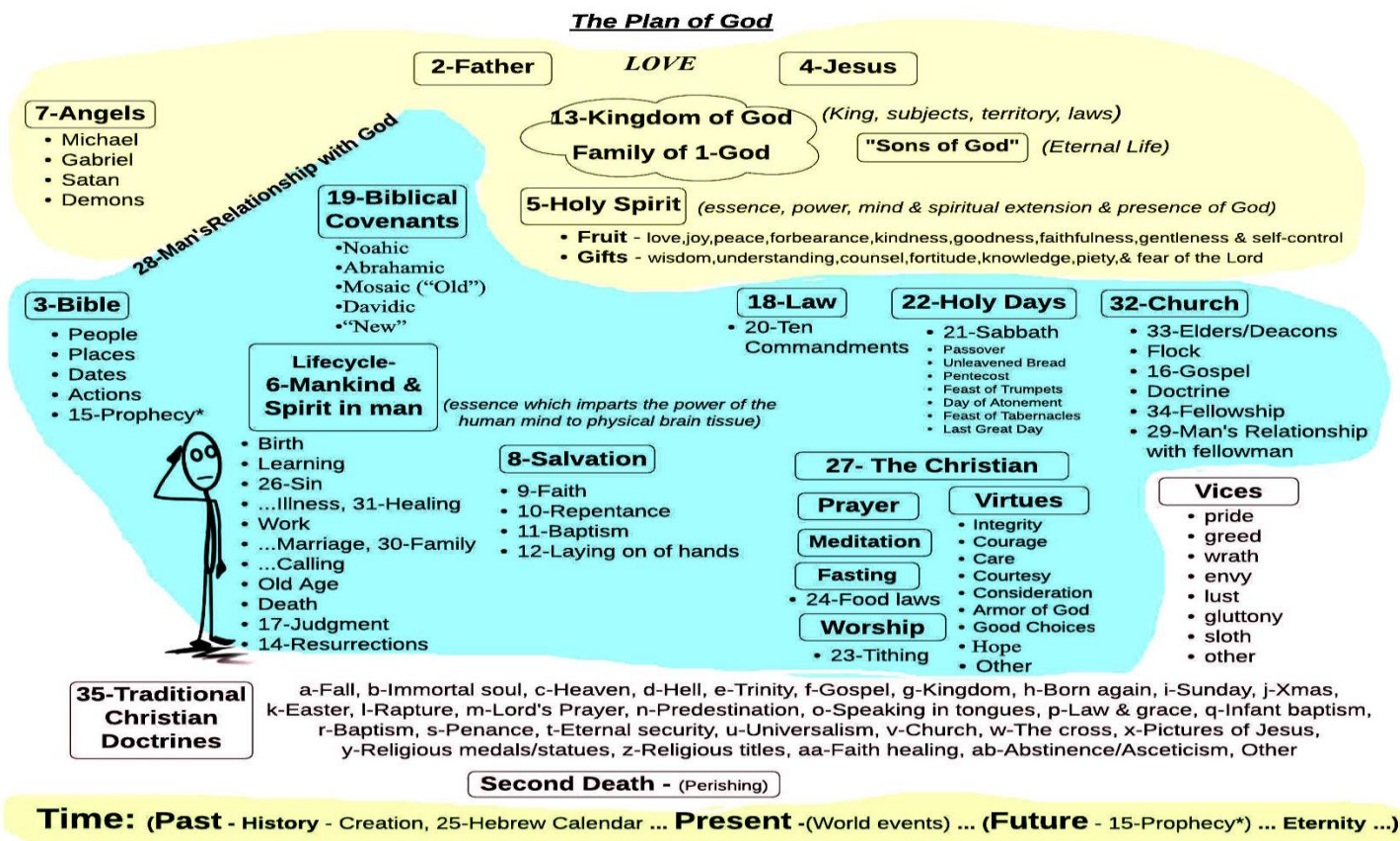
G2842 - **koinōnia** = sharing, participation, partnership, communion, joint involvement

“**Fellowship**” is found in the NT about 20 times ... usually used positively... but sometimes in warnings ... **1Cor 10:20** ...I do not want you to have **Fellowship** with demons.

Eph 5:11 & have no **Fellowship** with the unfruitful works of darkness ...

2Cor 6:14 For what **Fellowship** has righteousness with lawlessness? (or) light with darkness?

We’ll explore things today that *foster Fellowship* -- &that can *destroy Fellowship*



The most insightful verse on Fellowship??

1 John 1:3 That which we have seen & heard we declare to you, that you also may have **Fellowship with us**; & truly our **Fellowship** is with the Father & with His Son Jesus Christ

- Shared relationship with God
- Shared life among believers
- Participation in truth, light, and Christ

Key aspects of Fellowship

1. Fellowship with God

1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, by whom you were called into the **Fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord**.

- **Fellowship** starts vertically before it becomes horizontal

2. Fellowship in the Spirit

2Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, & the love of God, & the **communion (NLT - Fellowship) of the Holy Spirit** be with you all.

- **Fellowship** is spiritual unity produced by the **Spirit**, not just social connection

3. Fellowship in the Gospel Mission

Philip 1:5 ...for your **Fellowship in the gospel** from the first day until now

- Paul's prayer ...Shared purpose: advancing the gospel together

4. Fellowship in Christ's Sufferings

Philip 3:10 that I may know Him & the power of His resurrection, & the **Fellowship of His sufferings**, being conformed to His death

- **Fellowship** includes **shared sacrifice**, not just blessing

5. Fellowship in Giving

2 Corinthians 8:4 imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift & the **Fellowship of the ministering to the saints**.

- Giving = participation in the needs of others.



Best Scriptural Examples of Fellowship

1. The Early Church Model

Acts 2:42,44-45 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and **Fellowship**, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Now all who believed were together, & had all things in common & sold their possessions & goods, & divided them among all, as anyone had need

- Shared truth
- Shared meals
- Shared resources
- Shared spiritual life

2. Walking in the Light Together

1 John 1:7 But **if** we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have **Fellowship with one another**, & the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

Fellowship is rooted in:

- Truth
- Holiness
- Transparency



3. Partnership Between Believers

Philemon 1:4-6 I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers, hearing of your love & faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus & toward all the saints, that the **sharing of your faith may become effective** by the acknowledgment of every good thing which is in you in Christ Jesus.

- **Fellowship** is active—not passive

4. Unity in the Body of Christ

1 Cor 12:12 For as the body is one... so also is Christ.

- **Fellowship** = being members of one body, interconnected

5. Practical Care and Support

Marks of the True Christian

Rom 12:9-18 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; **distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality**. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

- **Fellowship** shows up in **real-life care**, not just words.

Qualities of True Biblical Fellowship - defining traits, each anchored in Scripture:

1. Truth-Centered

Act 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the **apostles' doctrine & Fellowship**, in the breaking of bread (*meals together*), & in prayers.

- grounded in doctrine ... Not just socializing; built on truth

2. Light & Holiness

Joh 1:7 This man (*John*) came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe

- Sin breaks **Fellowship**; walking in light sustains it.

3. Christ-Centered

1Jn 1:3 that which we have seen & heard we declare to you, that you also may have **Fellowship** with us; & truly our **Fellowship** is with the Father & with His Son Jesus Christ

- The focus is Christ—not personalities or preferences.

4. Love-Driven

John 13:34–35 By this all will know that you are My disciples...

- Love is the visible evidence of **Fellowship**.

5. Shared Sacrifice

Php 3:10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, & the **Fellowship** of His sufferings, being conformed to His death

- **Fellowship** includes suffering, not just blessing

6. Generosity & Giving

2Co 8:3-5 (*churches of Macedonia suffered poverty ... yet...*) For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, & beyond their ability, they were freely willing, imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift & the **Fellowship of the ministering to the saints**. & not only as we had hoped, but they first gave themselves to the Lord, & then to us by the will of God.

- True **Fellowship** shares materially

7. Unity of Spirit

Eph 4:3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace

- Unity must be maintained intentionally. (See CgiCanada Vision 2030!)

8. Mutual Edification

Heb 10:24-25 & let us consider one another in order to stir up love & good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, & so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

- **Fellowship** builds people up spiritually



9. Participation (Not Spectatorship)

Php 1:5 for your **Fellowship in the gospel** from the first day until now

- Everyone contributes—no passive observers.

10. Joy and Spiritual Life

1Jn 1:4 & these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

- True **Fellowship** produces spiritual joy.



Vision 2025-2030 ...

CgiCanada – Mission - *To preach the good news of the Kingdom to all peoples, primarily within Canada, as a witness and a warning; and to nurture and prepare disciples to reign with Jesus Christ.*

CgiCanada – Vision - *By 2030, we will have a reputation for being a healthy Church of God organization - with a ministry that is respected and easy to approach due to our servant leadership culture and our ability to effectively proclaim and teach the Word of God.*

CgiCanada – Core Values –

“Iforesee” (IAC)

- ❑ *Integrity* – Rom 12:9; Jos 24:14
- ❑ *Courage* – Prov 28:1
- ❑ *Care* – Eph 4:32
- ❑ *Courtesy* – Gal 5:13-14
- ❑ *Consideration* – Heb 10:24

Values to Light Your Way

Accuracy	Compassion	Friendship	Loyalty
Achievement	Courage	Happiness	Passion
Adventure	Creativity	Harmony	Power
Authenticity	Discipline	Health	Security
Balance	Excellence	Humor	Stability
Bravery	Ethics	Integrity	Time
Collaboration	Faith	Justice	Transformation
Connection	Freedom	Learning	Wealth

CgiCanada – 5 yr Objective 1 – To help God’s people:

- a. Walk worthy of our vocation;
- b. Maintain humility while forbearing one another in charity;
- c. Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;
- d. Discover, develop & use their gifts towards being active members of the body of Christ

“Eph. 4.1-3 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

CgiCanada – 5 yr Objective 2 - To have an evangelism program

- a. That is robust and uncompromising in its Biblical content and ability to address current affairs; and
- b. That leverages technology and word of mouth.

External Forces acting against us

Political Winds

Government Legislation
Societal Changes
Negative Economic Factors
Political Schisms
Fake news
Influence of Socialism
Environmental Movement
Continuing growth of the conflict between Nationalism / Globalism
Identity Politics (Reverse Racism)
Global Instability & terrorism danger
Censorship of online speech
Sudden and unexpected crisis management from government (e.g., pandemic, civil unrest)

Moral Redefinition

Demonization of Christianity
Education and Indoctrination
Exaltation of Islam and Transgenderism
Normalization of sexual immorality and murder
Increasing syncretism – all religions are equal

Social Unrest

Erosion of respect through easy access to knowledge
Growing confusion
Continuing growth of violent social unrest and erosion of civility
Loss of trust and increase in suspicion over authority figures
Open borders and changing demographics
Addictions and mental disorders

Internal Challenges that may obstruct us

Division

Political schisms seeping into the Church
A divided ministry
 Not understanding church is a family
 Distance between scattered brethren
 Little regard for the need to gather and fellowship
 Holding onto our youth
 Lack of understanding of the impact of social media/Internet in the lives of our youth

Disrespect

Disrespect for the ministry
 Connected audiences that fact check/challenge our statements in real time
 Lack of effectiveness in counselling
 Lack of recognition of the ministry as a source of counselling
 Lack of recognition of the importance of the sanctity of marriage
 Mental illness
 Maintaining privacy

Growing Weakness

Lack of closure re funerals/death
 Lack of support in the operations of the congregations
 Dedication & devotion of membership
 Fatigue – expressed in how we can accept teachings
 Aging congregations
 Cycle of diminishing revival in succeeding generations
 Small ministry & small budget
 Economic challenges within the church
 To be relevant & remain rooted

Our Six Critical Success Factors

1. Personal Health

- Personal Health Maintenance
 - Diet
 - Weight Management
 - Sleep
 - Exercise
 - Stress Management
 - Supplements

2. Healthy Congregations

- Healthy Congregations
 - Speaking to the issues of Family, Marriage, Conflict Resolution
 - Strong and Healthy families in our congregations
 - Encourage active engagement by, and mutual respect for, all members
 - Discourage gossip and disrespect of Christ's body

3. Staying Relevant

- Staying Relevant (with the Changing Times)
 - Staying above the Party Politics
 - Teaching meat in due season
 - Preaching about current topics evangelically
 - Incorporating current language into our teachings
 - Teaching against both sides of extremes

4. Biblical Fluency

- Biblical competence and fluency in both the ministry and the brethren

5. Leading By Example

- Leading by Example
 - Personally
 - How we interact in the ministry
 - § Encouraging each other to discover, develop and use our gifts
 - § How we publicly interact with each other
 - How we interact with the congregation

6. Communication

- Improving our Communication Skills
 - Speaking skills
 - Interpersonal skills
 - Counselling skills

3. Sinning Through Selfishness / Material Things

Defrauding or Cheating Brethren

- 1 Cor 6:7-8** Why do you not rather accept wrong?...No, you yourselves do wrong & cheat
- Taking advantage of fellow believers is condemned.

Withholding Support / Giving Wrongly

Act 5:1-4 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. & he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

- Hypocrisy in giving ... is treated as lying to God.

4. Hypocrisy & False Spirituality

Honoring God with Lips Only

- Matt 15:8** These people draw near...with their mouth...but their heart is far from Me
- External religion without heart devotion.

Having a Form of Godliness

- 2 Tim 3:5** Having a form of godliness but denying its power
- Outward Christianity without transformation.



5. Causing Others to Stumble

Becoming a Stumbling Block

Romans 14:13 Resolve this, not to put a stumbling block... in our brother's way

- Misusing freedom can damage another's faith.

Leading Little Ones Astray

Matthew 18:6 Whoever causes one of these little ones... to sin, it would be better... a millstone...

- Extremely serious offense in God's eyes.

6. Direct Sin Against God

Grieving the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 4:30 Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God...

- Sin affects your relationship with God personally.

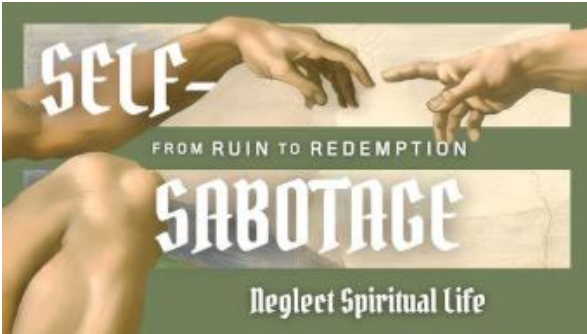
Quenching the Spirit

1 Thess 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit

- Resisting God's work and prompting.

Loving the World

- 1 John 2:15–16** If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him
- Divided loyalty = enmity with God.



Neglecting Salvation

- Heb 2:3** How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?
- Spiritual drift is dangerous

7. Rebellion, Pride, and Disobedience

Resisting Authority / Correction

- Heb 13:17** Obey those who rule over you... for they watch out for your souls
- Rejecting godly leadership harms yourself.

Pride and Self-Exaltation

- James 4:6** God resists the proud...
- Pride puts you in opposition to God

Knowing Good but Not Doing It

- James 4:17** To him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin
- Sin includes **neglect**, not just wrongdoing.

8. Sin in Worship & Communion Context

Taking the Lord's Supper Unworthily

- 1 Cor 11:27–29** He who eats & drinks in an unworthy manner... not discerning the Lord's body
- Disrespect toward Christ and His body (the Church).

In Closing...

Biblical **Fellowship** is not:

- Just attending church
- Casual social interaction
- Surface-level friendliness

It is:

A shared participation in Christ, grounded in truth, expressed in love, lived out through unity, sacrifice, & mutual spiritual growth.



FELLOWSHIP OF THE BRETHREN

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT

Fellowship is the religious interaction of church members among themselves and with God, a spiritual association through the Holy Spirit, which transcends normal social or business relationships. Since this fellowship comes through being part of the body of Christ, it requires that one has repented, been baptized, and, consequently, has received God's Holy Spirit. The fellowship of the brethren builds spiritual strength into both the individual and the Church as a whole. Conversely, the Church may exercise its right to disfellowship one who, by obvious attitude or action, opposes the gospel or causes disruption among the membership.

1 Corinthians 1:9; 2 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 4:1-6; Philippians 2:1; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 John 1:3, 6-7