

Christians among One Another

New Testament Fellowship

Home-group Lessons

Part 1

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The Big Picture

Lesson 1: Christians have a special bond among one another

Whether or not it is felt, Christians have a special bond with one another. The degree to which you understand that special bond will show in the degree in which you exploit that special bond in your love for one another and for God.

From the following passages, identify the objective basis for this special bond that Christians have among one another.

Romans 15:5-7

1 Corinthians 1:9

1 Corinthians 10:16

2 Corinthians 6:14

Philippians 1:5

Philippians 2:1 and 2 Corinthians 13:14

Philippians 3:10

1 John 1:3

1 John 1:6-7

In your own words, how would you summarise the basis of the special bond that Christians have among one another

Lesson 2: Christians have "fellowship"

The list of verses below are all the New Testament uses of the word for "fellowship". This word is translated different ways in different contexts. See if you can identify the "fellowship" word in each of these verses in your English Bible, and take note of the different ways to describe Christian fellowship with God and with one another.

Acts 2:42

Romans 15:26

1 Corinthians 1:9

1 Corinthians 10:16

2 Corinthians 6:14

2 Corinthians 8:4

2 Corinthians 9:13

2 Corinthians 13:14

Galatians 2:9

Philippians 1:5

Philippians 2:1

Philippians 3:10

Philemon 1:6

Hebrews 13:16

1 John 1:3

1 John 1:6

1 John 1:7

From the above, compile a list of synonyms that can be used "fellowship".

How does "fellowship" compare to "friendship" and "socialising"?

Lesson 3: Christians can either neglect it or benefit from it

The following verses are in the context of Christian fellowship, and the instructions given expose the possible heart issues at play when we neglect Christian fellowship. Identify the different possible hindrances to one-another fellowship.

Philippians 2:2-3

Romans 12:9-11

Hebrews 10:24-25

Proverb 18:1 is of particular relevance to NT Christian fellowship too. What does it imply might be a serious hindrance to practising true fellowship?

In the context of Christian fellowship (Philippians 1:7-9), we find the *results* of fellowship that we will experienced as we practise true Christian fellowship. What are the benefits, or outcomes, of true Christian fellowship according to Philippians 1:10-11?

Part 2

The Specific Commandments

All the commandments in the New Testament that mention "one another" are, to us as Christians in the Church, what the Ten Commandments were to the believers in the Old Testament. These "one another" commandments give us the perfect picture of what Christian fellowship looks like in practise.

The following lessons are various categories of these "one another" commandments for Christians.

Lesson 4: Be humble when you have the opportunity to be proud

According to 1 Peter 5:5, what does the age-difference between various believers require for fellowship to exist between Christians?

What is the main problem in Galatians 5:26, and what are the results? What are normally the excuses we give when we offend another believer or when we think we should be the ones in charge?

According to Ephesians 5:21, what is the real motivator for "submitting to one another"? What does this mutual submission look like at our gatherings with one another?

Mark 9:34 is technically a "one another" passage, although not in the context that we are looking at the "one anothers", but it gives a rather vivid example of why being humble is so important. What was the result of a lack of humility among the disciples, and how does this verse tie in to Ephesians 5:21?

Lesson 5: Rather be wronged by another than wrong another

What are the prohibitions in the following verses that will keep fellowship with one another in spite of strong differences and disagreements? Identify from each verse's context, what kind of differences and disagreements are in view each time.

1 Corinthians 6:7

Romans 14:13

Galatians 5:13

James 5:9

According to Galatians 5:15, what is always the outcome of insisting on our rights and preferences instead of setting them aside for the sake of one another?

PS: For the sake of a completed view on when to unite in spite of differences and when to divide because of differences, what are the only three issues that *require* an obvious break in fellowship between Christians?

Romans 16:17

1 Corinthians 5:11-13

Titus 3:10-11

Lesson 6: Unite with those you don't like

Romans 15:5-7 -is a prayer from a pastor for harmony among the Christians. What are the two things that we require a God-quality of to get along well with one another?

Who are the ones in Romans 12:16 that should be the first group of Christians for each of us to unite with?

Who is the one in 1 Thessalonians 5:15 that you should unite with? How are you to create unity with such a one?

Mark 9:50 is Jesus' teaching to the disciples after various forms of disagreement and disunity (read from verse 33). Removing the imagery of salt, what is the virtue that Jesus is commanding for them to be at peace with one another?

If you would summarise the verses in this lesson in one short command, what would you say?

Lesson 7: Bear with one another

Look up an English definition for the word "bear" and write down a helpful definition for our responsibility to "bear with one another".

Look up Ephesians 4:2-3. Identify the other virtues in verse 2 that we need to work on to better "bear with one another", and note the outcome of us doing so in verse 3.

Colossians 3:12-14 is very similar to the Ephesians passage. What is the additional Christian activity mentioned in verse 13 that enables us to continually bear with one another even if we offend one another?

Galatians 6:2 uses the word "bear" a little differently. What does it require of us in our fellowship as Christians with one another?

Lesson 8: Be extra gracious when offended

Complementing our understanding of "bearing with one another" is "forgive one another". Revisit the following verses from the previous lesson, and identify the other excessively gracious character traits that we need in order to forgive one another.

Colossians 3:12-13

Ephesians 4:31-32

Look also at 1 Corinthians 12:25. How should our heart to one another change when we disagree so strongly with another?

According to the above verses, what is the example of forgiveness that we need to imitate among one another?

How does the parable Jesus told in Matthew 18:21-35 help us understand the full significance of this command to "forgive one another as God has forgiven you"?

Look at what Jesus and the apostles said in Luke 17:3-6. What is necessary for us to be able to show such excessive grace to those who offend us, and how does Jesus' answer address that need?

Booklet tip: Joel James, *Forgiving Like God Forgives* (PDF available for free on shepherdsguild.co.za)

Lesson 9: Have spiritual conversations

According to the following verses, what should never characterise our conversations with one another. What is the motivation for the prohibition in each of the following verses?

Colossians 3:9

James 4:11

Ephesians 4:25

What do the following verses require of us when we chat to one another?

1 Thessalonians 4:18

1 Thessalonians 5:11

What should we start filling our own minds with so we will be better at having good spiritual conversations with one another?

Colossians 3:16

Ephesians 5:19

What in Romans 15:14 will make us much more confident in having more spiritual conversations with one another?

What does Hebrews 3:13 and James 5:16 say should form part of our conversations with one another?

Lesson 10: Make Church better (Part 1)

There are many special forms of God-us fellowship and one-another fellowship that are part of remembering the cross of Christ and the next coming of Christ in the Lord's Supper. Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 and use the following questions to draw out the principles of one-another fellowship.

17-19 What is not good for fellowship?

20-22 What were some of the differences in the Corinthians church, and what were the sins that came to light because of it.

27-32 says much about the importance of judging sin in the body, but the main command that begins verse 28 is the key to purity in fellowship with one another. What is it?

33-34 What was the practical advise given to the saints in Corinth regarding the Lord's Supper and what does it teach us about the fellowship that we have with one another during the Lord's Supper?

Read Hebrews 10:19-25 and identify the key Christian realities that will produce a strong and pure fellowship with one another.

Lesson 11: Make Church better (Part 2)

In our pride, sin, and immaturity we often break the fellowship-relationship that we have with others in the church. How does 2 Corinthians 13:11 help us back into full fellowship with one another?

What practical advise does 1 John 1:7 give us to have better fellowship with one another?

Showing hospitality is the act of taking what you have been given and using it for another's benefit. 1 Peter 4:9-10 broadens that principle to all spiritual gifts. In what ways will you be "serving one another" in application of these verses?

The following verses are have a "one another" command in common. What is it, and what is the significance of it?

Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Peter 5:14

Lesson 12: Obey the love commandment (Part 1)

What common "one another" commandment is given to Christians in the following verses?

1 John 3:11

1 John 3:23

1 Thessalonians 4:9

2 John 5

John 15:17

Remember that the famous love chapter (1 Corinthians 13) is in the context of serving one another at church. Scan through the chapter, and write down all the words and concepts that help us better understand the commandment to "love one another".

Lesson 13: Obey the love commandment (Part 2)

What, according to the following verses, ought to motivate us to better one-another love?

1 John 4:11

1 John 4:7

What, according to the following verses, will happen if we love one another better?

1 John 4:12

John 13:35

1 Peter 4:8

How, according to the following verses, should we improve our love for one another?

1 Peter 1:22

John 13:34; 15:12

Romans 12:10

Use the following verses, and write out a short prayer about the love for one another in your church.

1 Thessalonians 3:12 and 2 Thessalonians 1:3