



# Church of Christ

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## Heart to Heart...

We throw words around so freely, I'm not sure we understand the true meaning of them many times. "*Fellowship*" is one of those words. We speak of extending *fellowship* to someone! We talk of withdrawing *fellowship*! We talk of *fellowship* in the most unconventional ways. We have meals together and call it *fellowship*. People visit before services and we say its *fellowship*. It might do us good to take a look again at what true *fellowship* is and means.

The Greek word is *koinonia*. It literally means "communion, participation by sharing in common." Here are some Scriptures in how it is used: "Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ?" (I Cor. 10:16) "In view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now." (Phil. 1:5) "For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem." (Rom. 15:26)

To *fellowship* with someone is to contribute, share, and participate in a relationship with them. It's not about eating, or talking, or playing in activities with another, but actively participating in their life. The Biblical term is not about social activities or socializing, but sharing together in the things of God. *Fellowship* is what strengthens and renews because we are actively involved in the same things. *Fellowship* is what encourages us in our faith. We talk of withdrawing *fellowship* from someone because they are actively involved in evil and unrepentant (I Cor. 5). You can't withdraw from one who you don't share or participate with. To withdraw from someone is to impact them to repentance but if there is no *fellowship* to begin with, the guilty one has no sense of loss. They can't miss something they never shared in common!

We need to have a much better understanding of *fellowship* in God's terms. The body of Christ, the church, is actively sharing in Christ and His benefits. We share in His blood, which cleanses us from sin. We share His sacrifice in common every first day of the week in the Supper. That's the motivation in our life. Our *fellowship* is based on our common sharing with Christ and His life. To encourage each other in the things of God, to join hearts encouraging one another's faith in His Word and sharing in His life together, that's *fellowship*. To help one another in contributing in the needs of others, that's *fellowship*. To pray together and study together is sharing in the same thing, that's *fellowship*. To have a cup of coffee and socialize or discuss the latest news items, is not *fellowship*. To build the body of Christ around social activities and entertainment is not *fellowship* and will never build the body of Christ into the spiritual body God would want. That's what produces cliques and destroys spiritual advancement. Think about it!!!

Brent