

Acts 2:41-42, 46 (NKJV) ⁴¹ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. ⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴⁶ So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,

I. What is Fellowship?

- A. Strongs Concordance: **Fellowship koinōnía[Greek]**, koy-nohn-ee'-ah; from G2844; partnership, i.e. (literally) participation, or (social) intercourse (communication), or (pecuniary) benefaction (donation or gift):-(to) communicate(-ation), **communion**, (contri-)distribution, **fellowship**.
1. The Greek word for fellowship is the same word translated into communion
 - a) We know that the word 'union' is in communion
 - b) In Acts 1 they continued with one accord, in the beginning of Acts 2 they were with one accord in one place, and as we just read in the end of acts 2 they were in one accord
 - c) One Accord - When a group of people acts single-mindedly, unanimously, in harmony, in unity, and without dissent
- B. Dictionary
1. **FELLOWSHIP**, n. Companionship; mutual association of persons on equal and friendly terms; Partnership; joint interest; Company; a state of being together.
 2. **COMMUNION**, n. Fellowship; intercourse (communication) between two persons or more; interchange of transactions, or offices; a state of giving and receiving; agreement; concord. *We are naturally led to seek communion and fellowship with other.*
- C. Fellowship is when believers come together into the same place and there is an exchange and a common belief and relationship based in Christ.

II. How do we fellowship?

- A. We step out of our 'comfort' zones, and step into others' lives and allow them to step into our lives.
- B. Hebrews 10:24,25 (NKJV) *And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 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.*
- C. As we can see from Acts 2 fellowship is not just chatting with each other at the church building, it goes deeper than that.
- D. How do we practically do this?
 1. A lot of people may not want to invite someone directly to your home, some may.

- a) Maybe start with going out to lunch, or for a meal one evening,
- 2. Have a goal to have people to your home if you are able.
 - a) Maybe you aren't able—like us, who are currently in a small rental, temporarily.
 - b) Question - Will they come to your home if you don't invite them?
 - c) The early church went house to house - (i.e. Zambian culture)
- 3. As the House of Freedom is growing we [especially the Wednesday night crowd] need to be attentive on Sunday to the people who are coming in.
 - a) People are coming here for a reason, they are looking for something, they are looking for God, they are looking for love. Who is going to show Him, God, to them and who is going to show love to them?
 - b) I don't suggest going up to every first time visitor and inviting them to your home, but what about those who have been coming for a couple months, 6 months or maybe even a year.
- 4. Romans 12:10-13 (NKJV) **Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; ¹¹ not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; ¹² rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; ¹³ distributing to the needs of the saints, given to **hospitality**.**
 - a) HOSPITALITY, The act or practice of receiving and entertaining strangers or guests without reward, or with kind and generous liberality.
- E. We had a huge focus on fellowship in Zambia, going to peoples homes, having them to our home, having a meal together.
- F. Sometimes you might have to schedule a month out, or it will take you a couple months to find a day that works for both of you.

III. What are some reasons we don't fellowship more?

- A. We assume others are too busy
- B. We think our home is not nice enough
- C. We think our home is not clean enough (Experiences with visiting homes in Zambia)
- D. We think we can't cook
 - 1. Pick up a Rotisserie Chicken, cook hot dogs, order pizza
 - 2. The Zambians had to chase down the chicken, kill it, clean it, cook it and then we ate when we went to their house.
- E. We personally do not want to be inconvenienced or uncomfortable
 - 1. By leaving the comfort of our own home
 - 2. By the awkwardness of making conversation with someone we don't know well
- F. Mark 4 - cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches, desires of other things - choked - no fruit (all of these 'things' are things—not people. Jesus called us to focus on people)

- G. We do not realize our own value in Christ, the power of the gifts that He has given us, and how much people need us.

IV. What is the result of fellowship?

- A. There is an exchange that happens in fellowship
1. We each have a well of life springing up. I encourage you and you encourage me.
 - a) The needs of others are discovered when fellowship occurs and then there are prayers given, wisdom spoken and needs met by giving of physical possessions. Example - Rob - Bicycle
 - b) Romans 1:11,12 (NKJV) *For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established— ¹² that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.*
- B. Example of Godfrey Simweda and how he acted upon the encouragement to fellowship.
- C. This exchange that happens is also known as love.
1. 2 Peter 1:5-7 (NKJV) *But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, ⁶ to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, ⁷ to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.*
 - a) Kindness - Good will; benevolence; that temper or disposition which delights in **contributing to the happiness of others**
- D. Jesus came to reconcile us to the Father and at the same time to bring us back together and into unity.
1. For the joy set before Him He endured the cross.
- E. Ephesians 2:19-22 (NKJV) *Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*
1. As we come together we create a place for God to show up!
 2. When we come together we create a place for God to be glorified - they will know you are My disciples by your love.
- F. Jesus commanded us to love one another; as He has loved us, that we also love one another.
1. Jesus 'stepped out of his comfort zone'—became a man, put on this flesh, and lived among us so He could be with us
 2. In order for me to love you I have to know you
 - a) How many of you know that you can say 'I love you' all you want to your

- spouse, but if you are not showing love to them they will not believe you?
- b) You are able to love them because you know what makes them feel loved.
 - c) If we are going to fulfill what Jesus commanded us we will have to spend time together and get to know each other

V. Who wants to fellowship?!

- A. Have you ever tried to explain to a kid something exciting you are about to do as a family, but they don't get excited because they don't know what it is?
- B. We have all fellowshiped before but we all tend to forget at times how much life we find and experience in fellowship with one another.
- C. Heather and I have actually been able to get together with a lot of different people at Freedom since we have been back. And, let me tell you...there are awesome people at this Church! - If you aren't hanging out with people, you are missing out!

Closing:

Colossians 3:12-17 (NKJV) *Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. ¹⁴ But above all these things **put on love, which is the bond of perfection.** ¹⁵ And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. 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. ¹⁷ And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*