



Lesson Title: The Power of Fellowship

With our 28th Pastors and Church Anniversary just a few weeks away, we feel the excitement building because we know the blessing that Harvest has been to us. We may not be where we want to be but we are so glad that we are not where we used to be! That is because of the local church.

This week we will talk more about one of the blessings of the local church. There is a power that is present in the local church that we missed during the pandemic. We were getting the Word and we were getting the worship but there was a big piece still missing and we all felt it! Somebody say “fellowship!” There is a power in fellowship and the enemy knows it. There is power in unity and when we come together in one Name, there is a spiritual blessing that we garner that we can’t get any other way. Let’s talk about the Power of Fellowship!

God never intended for His people to be separate. God never intended anyone to be separate. In the very beginning, God said, “It is not good for man to be alone.” That has not changed. It is even more important for the followers of Jesus Christ to come together. Terms such as “family,” “together” and “fellowship” are all important concepts in the New Testament.

Though the pandemic is real, and people have concerns about safety, I believe that our enemy has also stepped in to promote the separation and make efforts to keep the family of God separate. He is trying to lull us into believing that we can grow strong while staying separate. He is the father of lies and he tries to exploit situations as he has throughout time. We as the church need to come together and use the blessing of fellowship to strengthen ourselves for victory in every facet of our life.

What is Christian Fellowship and Why is it so important?

God empowers us when we come together. Fellowship is an important part of our faith and strength in God. So, we make a point to intentionally assemble knowing that, first of all, God commands it (Hebrews 10:25) and

second, godly community makes us stronger, provides encouragement and perpetually reminds us that we are not alone.

The Christian life is not always easy. The world is full of temptations and pressure to do wrong. If we try to “go it alone” we will likely fall. If we hang out with the wrong crowd our fall into sin is even more likely. In Proverbs 13:20 we learn, “He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.” Peer pressure is very strong! “Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.” (1 Corinthians 15:33).

As humans, we are weakened by our trials and situations. We need to be strengthened spiritually every day. He uses our brothers and sisters in Christ to strengthen us and help us to follow Him. The word we use for the relationship we have with other believers is “fellowship”. First generation Christians “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42). This verse shows the foundation of a healthy Christian life. Self is excluded. Dedication to actually attending the apostles’ teaching of God’s Word was primary to being able to experience the next blessing, fellowship. Intimacy of relationships in Church life grows out of members mutually sitting under the teaching of God’s Word with humble attitudes. This is foundational to authentic fellowship in the body of Christ. Hearing the same Word starts fellowship.

Fellowship is the relationship that we have with one another as Christians. It is based on the relationship we have with Jesus Christ. When you and I became Christians three relationships changed: Jesus became our Savior; God became our Father; and the church became our family.

Fellowship gives us a platform to grow with our family in Christ as we share in essential “facetime”. We worship corporately, pray together as well as laugh and share experiences with one another. This concept is set up and ordained by God (Hebrews 10) that we might be strengthened. Fellowship in the truest sense of the word, goes so much deeper than this. It’s a shared life, a common purpose, a unified goal. It’s when believers put aside themselves and their differences, and work toward what truly matters: growing in Christ and furthering the kingdom of God.

Understanding Biblical Fellowship

Paul says in 1 Corinthians 1:9-10, “God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

Paul wants us as believers to understand that fellowship is when believers put aside themselves and their differences, and work toward what truly matters: growing in Christ and furthering the kingdom of God. When we gather, physically, Christ promised that His presence would be there. “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (Matthew 18:20)

God has given us the gift of fellowship to encourage us in our walk with God and to build lasting relationships on this Christian journey.

Believers should help each other by encouraging one another.

Encouragement doesn't only mean saying, “good job!” when another believer does well. It means to push each other on to do right and grow.

Ecclesiastes tells us that “*two are better than one*” (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12). Two have a better return for their labor. They help each other when one is weak. They can overcome together what they cannot overcome apart.

Believers should help each other by serving with our gifts. Romans 12:4-5 says, “*For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.*” The body of Christ, the church, is made up of people from all kinds of backgrounds, ages, cultures, etc., but each has a specific function. We are to use our talents and abilities with all of our heart to help others and work together towards the common goal of glorifying God and doing His will here on earth. (Romans 12:3-13)

Ephesians 4:11-16 tells us that God has assigned some leaders with special gifts in the church to “*...prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature.*” There should not be a division of workers and listeners in God's family. Rather,

everyone is supposed to use his God-given gift to serve others and build up the entire body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).

Every believer has something to offer, and it is vital for healthy fellowship.

Three Benefits of Fellowship

1. Fellowship Makes Us Stronger

Jesus says in Matthew 18:19-20, “Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

No matter where we are in our faith, fellowship provides us with strength. Being around other believers gives us the chance to learn and grow in our faith. When we deal with a hard-hearted world, it can become easy to fall into that hard-heartedness and question our beliefs. It’s always good to spend some time in fellowship so that we remember that God makes us strong.

2. Fellowship Reminds Us We’re Not Alone

Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 12:21, “The eye can never say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you.’ The head can’t say to the feet, ‘I don’t need you.’”

Coming together with other believers in worship and conversation helps to remind us that we are not alone in this world. There are believers everywhere. It’s amazing that no matter where you are in the world when you meet another believer, it’s like you suddenly feel at home. Whether you are on TDY (a military temporary duty assignment) or away at college, fellowship is so important. God wants us to come together so that we always know we are not alone. Fellowship allows us to build lasting relationships so we’re never by ourselves in the world.

3. Fellowship Helps Us Grow

Coming together is a great way for each of us to grow in our faith. Iron sharpens iron. Reading our Bibles and praying are great ways to get closer to God, and we also learn from seeing each other live out our faith! We learn how to persevere through trials, how to

overcome adversity through the power of Jesus Christ, how faithful church attendance blesses our lives and more.

Closing Thoughts

The power of fellowship is impactful. At Harvest Life Church it is undeniable that the fellowship here is seen in our growth and maturity as we carry out the work of the Lord and build up His people. Don't forsake the assembling of ourselves together. There is strength in unity and together we can accomplish great things. Let's allow the power of fellowship to strengthen us as we continue to be a church on fire!

Homework Assignment:

1. **True or False.** God never intended for His people to be separate.
2. **True or False.** Fellowship is an important part of our faith and strength in God.
3. Godly community does what when we make a point to intentionally assemble?

_____ , _____
_____ and perpetually reminds us that _____
_____ .

4. **True or False.** The world is filled with temptations and if we try to fight them alone, we will likely fall.
5. **Fill in the blank.** In Proverbs 13:20, “He that walketh with wise men shall be _____: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.”
6. Write out 1 Corinthians 15:33:

7. When you and I became Christians, what three relationships changed?
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____

8. **Fill in the blanks.** 1 Corinthians 1:9-10

God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the _____ of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all _____ the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same _____ and in the same _____.

9. **Fill in the blank.** God has given us the gift of fellowship to

_____ us in our walk with God and to build lasting relationships on this Christian journey.

10. Name one of the benefits of fellowship.

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____