

“Taking Fellowship Seriously with Hospitality” [**\[1\]](#)

Main Idea: Hospitality is a tangible expression of fellowship. In order for God-honoring hospitality to occur, we must grasp three basic truths the Bible teaches us regarding fellowship.

- I. Hospitality occurs when we grasp that fellowship is a noun.
 - A. In Christ, we have fellowship with God (1 Cor 1:9; 2 Pet 1:3-4).
 - B. In Christ, we have fellowship with one another.
 1. Jesus prayed for it (John 17:11, 20-21).
 2. Jesus’ death accomplished it (Eph 2:11-22).
 3. The Holy Spirit’s baptism made it a reality (1 Cor 12:12-13).
- II. Hospitality occurs when we grasp that fellowship is supposed to be a verb.
 - A. Fellowship involves *sharing* (Acts 2:42, 44).
 - B. Fellowship involves sharing *something* (1 John 1:1-4).
 - C. Fellowship involves sharing something with *someone* (Rom 12:4-5, 13).
 1. We are to be devoted to one another (Rom 12:10a).
 2. We are to honor one another (Rom 12:10b).
 3. We are to offer hospitality to one another (Rom. 12:13; 1 Pet. 4:9).
 4. We are to live in harmony with one another (Rom 12:16).
 5. We are to love one another (Rom 13:8).
- III. Hospitality occurs when we grasp that fellowship is supposed to be an adjective.
 - A. We should be known as being generous people (1 Tim. 6:17-18).
 - B. We should be known as being jealous people (2 Cor. 11:2).
 1. It’s why we must deal with sins against the doctrine of the church (1 Tim 6:3-5).
 2. It’s why we must deal with sins against the purity of the church (1 Cor 5:1ff.).
 3. It’s why we must deal with sins against the unity of the church (Rom 16:17-18).

Inventory Time: Ask yourself these questions...

1. Do you belong to the fellowship?
2. Are your actions showing that fellowship is important to you?
3. What do you plan to do this week to apply what you have learned?

I’ve got two questions for you as we begin. One, what is *southern hospitality*? And two, does southern Ohio qualify as *southern*? Seriously, what is it, and do we have it? I did a little research and ran across this explanation on Wikipedia:

Southern hospitality is a phrase used in American English to describe the stereotype (albeit a positive one) that residents of the Southern United States are particularly warm and welcoming to visitors to their homes, or to the South in general.

Some characteristics of southern hospitality were described as early as 1835, when Jacob Abbott [in *New England, and Her Institutions*] attributed the poor quality of taverns in the south to the lack of need for them, given the willingness of southerners to provide for strangers. Abbott writes: “The hospitality of southerners is so profuse, that taverns are but poorly supported. A traveller, with the garb and the manners of a gentleman, finds a welcome at every door. A stranger is riding on horseback through Virginia or Carolina. It is noon. He sees a plantation, surrounded with trees, a little distance from the road. Without hesitation he rides to the door. The gentleman of the house sees his approach and is ready upon the steps.”

Abbot further describes how the best stores of the house are at the disposal of visitors. Furthermore, says Abbott: “Conversation flows cheerily, for the southern gentleman has a particular tact in making a guest happy. After dinner you are urged to pass the afternoon and night, and if you are a gentleman in manners and information, your host will be in reality highly gratified by your so doing. Such is the character of southern hospitality.”^[2]

If that's what southern hospitality is, does that describe *us*? My own opinion is that in the present day we have narrowed the sphere considerably in what we call southern hospitality. For many of us, southern hospitality means that we invite our family members over to the house, and perhaps a few close friends once in awhile. When was the last time you invited an unknown "traveling gentleman" (to use Abbot's words) into your home?

So *southern hospitality*? I'll let you discuss that over lunch today. But a more important question would be, "Are we people who are known for *biblical* hospitality?" The fact is, southern hospitality is cultural, but biblical hospitality is commanded, as we saw last week in part one of our series, "*There's No Place Like Home*."

Romans 12:13 "Share with God's people who are in need. Practice **hospitality**."

1 Peter 4:9 "Offer **hospitality** to one another without grumbling."

Hebrews 13:2 "Do not forget to **entertain strangers** [Greek, *philoxenia*, same word translated 'hospitality' in Rom 12:13], for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it."

So for followers of Christ, hospitality is essential. But what is it exactly? Biblically understood, *hospitality* is a tangible expression of *fellowship*. They go hand in hand. The former flows out of the latter. So in order for God-honoring hospitality to occur, we must grasp three basic truths the Bible teaches us regarding fellowship.

I. Hospitality occurs when we grasp that fellowship is a noun.

When you survey Bible verses that talk about fellowship, you discover, first of all, that fellowship is something we are. As God's people, we *are* a fellowship. And the reason we *are* a fellowship is because in Christ, we *have* fellowship in two directions.

A. In Christ, we have fellowship with God (1 Cor 1:9; 2 Pet 1:3-4). Paul describes this in 1 Corinthians 1:9, "God, who has called you into *fellowship with his Son* Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful." Note that God initiated this relationship. He *called* us. Note also that the fellowship mentioned here is specifically with the second person of the triune godhead—He called us into *fellowship with His Son*.

Indeed, the Scriptures teach that we have fellowship with all three persons of the Trinity. 1 John 1:3 states that we have fellowship with the Father and with His Son. 2 Corinthians 13:14 indicates we may enjoy fellowship with the Holy Spirit.

Let this sink in. The infinite God of the universe took the initiative so that finite creatures like us could enjoy a relationship with Him! Peter explains this in 2 Peter 1:3-4: "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may *participate* [Greek, *koinonoi*] in the *divine nature* and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."

In Christ, then, we have fellowship with God. The key words, of course, are *in Christ*. If you are not in Christ, you have no access to God. You are under His wrath. To be reconciled to God you must come to know the Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

B. In Christ, we have fellowship with one another. Again, I emphasize that we *have* it. Granted, as we'll see in a moment, we must maintain it, but it is a fact. Those who are in Christ *have* fellowship with one another. I know so because of three divine actions.

1. *Jesus prayed for it (John 17:11, 20-21).* Listen to the request the Lord brought to His Father the night before His crucifixion in John 17:

Verse 11 "I will remain in the world no longer, but they [the disciples] are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—*so that they may be one* as we are one." Jesus prayed for the unity of His disciples, that they would experience the very same oneness that He Himself enjoyed with His Father.

But that's not all. Jesus took His request a step further in verses 20-21, "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message [this request pertains to all future believers, including us], *that all of them may be one*, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me." Jesus prayed that His people would experience oneness. Was His prayer answered? Absolutely. Here's how...

2. *Jesus' death accomplished it (Eph 2:11-22).* Adam's sin in the garden did something terrible to the human race. In a word, it's called *alienation*. Because of sin we enter this world alienated from God and alienated from each other.

But the death of the Last Adam, Jesus the Christ, reversed the curse. At the cross God formed a new humanity, a new people called the church. The apostle Paul explains this in Ephesians 2:

Verses 11-12—“Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (that done in the body by the hands of men)— remember that at that time you were *separate* from Christ, *excluded* from citizenship in Israel and *foreigners* to the covenants of the promise, without hope and *without God* in the world.” Note what we *used to be*: separate, excluded, foreigners, without God. In a word again, *alienated*. But a change occurred.

Verse 13—“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.” Because of Christ’s death on the cross, we who are His people were *brought near*. Near to whom? To God. But that’s not all.

Verse 14—“For he himself is our peace, *who has made the two one* [referring to Jews and Gentiles] and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility.” But why?

Verses 15-16—“...His purpose was to create in himself *one new man out of the two*, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which *he put to death their hostility*.”

Let this sink in. At the cross Christ not only died so you as an individual person could go to heaven. Christ died in order to form a new people, made up of people who were once enemies and cut off from each other. On the cross He put to death the former enmity. On the cross He died to make a new humanity. What’s more, divine action #3...

3. *The Holy Spirit’s baptism made it a reality (1 Cor 12:12-13)*. You say, “Where is this new humanity?” You’re looking at it. It’s the *church*. The church is the *ecclesia*, which means “called out ones.” By means of the cross, the Spirit of God is calling out a people from the world and making them one.

Indeed, what Jesus prayed for in the upper room and accomplished on the cross, the Holy Spirit made a reality when He came to the world on the Day of Pentecost and baptized the church into existence. 1 Corinthians 12:13 explains, “For we were all *baptized by one Spirit into one body*—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.” What did the Spirit form? One body, the church.

So in one sense, fellowship is a fact. We who know Christ are already one. In God’s eyes we are knit together as one body, a union symbolized in the Communion service. It’s also why we extend the right hand of fellowship (Gal 2:9).

Answer this. Can Christians experience true fellowship with non-Christians? The answer is no. Why not? The basis for fellowship is the atonement of Christ and the baptism of the Spirit. No text makes this point clearer than 2 Corinthians 6:14, “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what *fellowship* can light have with darkness?”

Young people, take note. Here is why the Bible forbids you as a believer to marry a non-believer. The Lord knows you will never experience true oneness with another person unless you have Him in common.

Here’s the first truth regarding fellowship that we must grasp if true hospitality is to occur. Fellowship is a *noun*. Now the second...

II. Hospitality occurs when we grasp that fellowship is supposed to be a verb.

In other words, it’s something we do. We *fellowship* together.

Frankly, the activity of fellowship is often quite misunderstood in the church. We tend to equate fellowship with getting together and eating and socializing. Nothing wrong with that, but is that the sum of the activity that we find God’s people engaged in when they’re fellowshiping in the Bible? No. Biblically defined, the activity of fellowship involves three components.^[3]

A. Fellowship involves *sharing* (Acts 2:42, 44). That’s what the Greek term means, in essence, “to share” or “to have in common with.” Concerning the early church Acts 2:42 says, “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and *to the fellowship*, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

The verb is *koinoneo*, “to share in.” The noun is *koinonia*.^[4] The root term *koinos* means “common” (in the sense of “common ownership”). *Koine* Greek refers to the language spoken by the people in Jesus’ day (the Greek language was common to all). The term *koinonos* refers to a “partner” (as in Luke 5:10 where James and John are referred to as “Simon’s partners”).^[5]

Titus 1:4 speaks of a “common faith,” Jude 3 of a “common salvation,” and Acts 2:44 (and 4:32) indicates the early disciples lived a “common life,” stating, “All the believers were together and had everything in common.”

Note two characteristics of the believers in Acts 2:44. They *were together*—they spent time together; they lived life together; they weren’t lone ranger Christians, they were connected. And they *had everything in common*—they pooled their resources; they didn’t live with a “what’s mine is mine” mentality, but a “what’s mine is available to you if you need it” mentality, realizing it all belonged to the Lord anyway.

Hebrews 13:16 exhorts us, “And do not forget to do good and to *share with others*, for with such sacrifices God is

pleased.” Fellowship is sharing. That’s the first component.

B. Fellowship involves sharing something (1 John 1:1-4). What is it we share? We see the answer in 1 John 1:1-4: “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have *fellowship with us*. And *our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ*. We write this to make our joy complete.”

Don’t miss this. There’s a content to fellowship. John says that what we share is what he as an apostle had seen and heard, that is, the person and work of Christ.

Granted, we share other things as believers. For instance, according to Philippians 4:14-15 we share our troubles and even our resources.^[6] But we share these things because fundamentally *we share Christ*.

Let me be specific. You must share more than a coffee pot and a box of donuts to constitute genuine fellowship. Fellowship involves sharing the Lord Jesus Christ. I’ll share a concern. I’m concerned about churchgoers who seldom talk about Christ. Before and after worship services they talk about work, last night’s ballgame, and everything else (so I know they know how to talk), but these words are absent, “Let’s talk about the Lord and what He is doing in our lives.”

C. Fellowship involves sharing something with someone (Rom 12:4-5, 13). God never intended church merely to be a place we *go*. It’s who we *are*. If you view church simply as a building that offers services—like a grocery store—you misunderstand God’s intent for the church.

The church isn’t a place. It’s a people, a *fellowship* of people. My favorite definition of fellowship is “two fellows in a ship.” We’re in this together. We are connected.

Romans 12:4-5 “Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and *each member belongs to all the others*.”

I am not my own. I need you and you need me. That’s why Romans 12:13 emphasizes, “Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”

You can have the potential for fellowship and still not experience fellowship. That’s because fellowship is a *verb* as well as a noun. Yes, we have fellowship (the noun) because in Christ we are in a relationship with one another. But we live out what we have. We must choose to fellowship with each other (the verb).

Amos 3:3 asks a vital question, “Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?” Perhaps it goes without saying, but you cannot have fellowship *by yourself*. You must have a relationship. Strangers do not fellowship. Enemies certainly do not fellowship. There must be a bond. Fellowship involves sharing something with *someone*.

Which raises the question, “If fellowship is an act, what kind of action does it take?” The answer is found in the “one another” commandments in the New Testament. The one another commands are the fuel that makes the Good-Ship-Fellowship run. There are over forty such commands in the New Testament. I’ll mention five found in Romans.

1. *We are to be devoted to one another (Rom 12:10a)*. “Be devoted [KJV ‘be kindly affectioned’] to one another in brotherly love...”

2. *We are to honor one another (Rom 12:10b)*. Above ourselves, in fact. And one of the tangible ways we can expression our devotion to one another and honor one another, according to Romans 12:13, is this...

3. *We are to offer hospitality to one another (Rom. 12:13; 1 Pet. 4:9)*. We are to invite our brothers and sisters into our homes and share our food with them, and our bed if they need a place to sleep. And Peter says we are to do it “without grumbling.”

4. *We are to live in harmony with one another (Rom 12:16)*. Fellowship takes work because when we make it a priority to spend time together, there will be misunderstandings. We’ll say something we shouldn’t. We’ll inadvertently leave someone off of the guest list. That’s okay. Just humble yourself, ask forgiveness, and learn from the blunder.

I remember the first youth event I organized when I was an Assistant Pastor years ago. We took the teens to a farmhouse, and had food and drink, but *no cups*. We had to use the cup from the milk house! I’ve not forgotten cups since.

5. *We are to love one another (Rom 13:8)*. That’s the fulfillment of the Law, according to Romans 13:8 which says, “Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another...”

And again, that’s just a sampling. If we were to take time to scan the rest of Romans, we would find a host of other one another exhortations, such as...

We are to stop judging one another (Rom 14:13).

We are to do what edifies one another (Rom 14:19).

We are to accept one another (Rom 15:7).

We are to admonish one another (Rom 15:14). And...

We are to greet one another (Rom 16:16).

The point is clear. Fellowship is a noun because it's something we have in Christ. But it's also supposed to be a verb. I say "supposed to be" because it takes obedient effort on our part to experience it. Thirdly...

III. Hospitality occurs when we grasp that fellowship is supposed to be an adjective.

An adjective, as you'll remember from your school days, is a descriptive term that tells us about the noun. We have fellowship (the noun). We're supposed to fellowship with each other (the verb). We are to be known as fellowshipping people (the adjective).

But what does that mean? Allow me to use two other words that help us understand what it means for us to be a *fellowshipping* people.

A. We should be known as being generous people (1 Tim. 6:17-18). Listen to what Paul told Timothy to do in the church in Ephesus in 1 Timothy 6:17-18, "Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and *willing to share.*"

In the Greek, "willing to share" is one word, the adjective *koinonikos*. It's what Christians who have been entrusted by God with resources are to be. They are to be *koinonikos*, willing and ready to share, generous. When they hear there's a need, they don't need arm-twisted to take action. When they hear that their church needs money to do fund ministries—which is the case for us—they're eager to participate.

That's supposed to be our reputation, beloved. We should be known as being generous people. Our God is generous—He gave His Son who gave His life for us. We ought to be generous. When we hear the announcement about the need for a host for a guest missionary, we ought to respond, "May I have the honor of providing that service?" When we see a visitor in church on Sunday morning, we ought to be people who can't wait to get to them after the service to meet them and even invite them to our home for the noon meal or for dessert later in the week.

There's another word that ought to describe us...

B. We should be known as being jealous people (2 Cor. 11:2). Jealous in the sense that Paul was in 2 Corinthians 11:2, "I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him."

Paul was jealous for his brothers and sisters in Christ. He didn't want to see *the fellowship* fragmented, and he was well aware of the destructive agents that could do just that, such as personal sin (1 John 1:6), self-centeredness, and pride (Phil 2:3-4). So can the attitude, "I don't need my church family and I don't care if they need me."

We ought to be *jealous* for the welfare of our church. That's one of the reasons the Lord gave His church instructions concerning church discipline. Fellowship makes church discipline essential, and three expressions of it in particular.

1. *It's why we must deal with sins against the doctrine of the church (1 Tim 6:3-5).* "If anyone *teaches false doctrines* and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions and constant friction..." Please notice that false doctrine undermines the fellowship of the church.

There's a powerful movement in religious circles called ecumenism. The thinking that drives the ecumenical movement is, "God is one, so we should be one. We need to get everybody together. We can't let little things (like doctrine) keep us apart."

It sounds right, at least at first. But think about it. What we believe [doctrine] does matter. In fact, what did we learn is the basis for true fellowship? It's the person and work of Christ. In Philippians 1:5 Paul referred to the "fellowship [NIV partnership] of the gospel." It's the gospel makes true fellowship possible. If a person or church doesn't believe the gospel, we can't fellowship together.

That doesn't mean another church has to cross every "t" and dot every "i" the same way we do. We can differ over personal preferences (such as Bible versions, music styles in church, etc) and still have fellowship. But if we differ over the gospel, there's no basis for fellowship.

"But all churches believe the gospel, don't they" you ask. No, they don't. Some believe it—at least on a doctrinal statement—but they don't preach it. Others simply no longer believe it.

Let me illustrate. In some "churches" Jesus Christ is presented merely as our example, not as our redeemer. If you

listen to their sermons you'll hear that Jesus came to show good men how to live, not to save depraved men from their sins. In other "churches" Christ is presented as Savior, yes, but they suggest we receive His salvation by means of the sacraments rather than by grace through faith alone.

Should we partner with them? The apostle John offers this counsel in 2 John 9-11, "Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. Anyone who welcomes him *shares* in his wicked work."

So there is a time when hospitality is *inappropriate*. When? When a teacher comes and doesn't teach the truth about Jesus, you don't need to feed and house him. Because our fellowship is so important, we must deal with sins against the doctrine of the church.

2. *It's why we must deal with sins against the purity of the church (1 Cor 5:1ff).* That's what Paul told the church in Corinth. Notice 1 Corinthians 5:

Verses 1-2—"It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife. And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have *put out of your fellowship* the man who did this?"

What should happen when a member of a church refuses to repent of and forsake personal sin? The church is to exercise church discipline and put him *out of the fellowship*.

"But aren't we supposed to love sinners?" you ask. Yes, and this is the way you show you love a brother who is living in unrepentant sin, not by acting like everything's okay, but by taking painful steps intended to rescue your brother and protect the church. As Paul explains in verse 11, "But now I am writing you that you must not associate *with anyone who calls himself a brother* but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat."

There is a condition to fellowship. It's called *walking in the light* in 1 John 1:7, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin." What happens if we *don't* walk in the light? Then we don't have fellowship.

3. *It's why we must deal with sins against the unity of the church (Rom 16:17-18).* "I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people."

It's a serious thing to divide what Christ died to reconcile. When a person does that, Paul says to stay away from him. Don't fellowship with people who attack our unity.

Friends, it's supposed to mean something to be a part of a New Testament local church. To have your name on a church roll doesn't impress the Lord one iota. But to make priority in your life what the Lord died to create pleases Him greatly.

That's why we seek to keep an active membership roll at WBC. On a regular basis we remove the names of people who say by their actions that this local church is not important to them. I'm not talking about missing a service once in awhile due to sickness or travel. But if a person fails to fulfill their church covenant responsibilities over a period of time, and he resists the reconciling efforts of the rest of the body, that person is removed from active membership. Why do we do that? Because fellowship is supposed to be an adjective. Our Savior's intent is that we be a *fellowshipping* people.

Inventory Time: Ask yourself these three questions...

1. *Do you belong to the fellowship?* In his book, *The Body*, Chuck Colson writes:

"...Membership in a confessing body is fundamental to the faithful Christian life. Failure to do so defies the explicit warning not to forsake "our assembling together." His understanding of this prompted Martin Luther to say, "Apart from the church, salvation is impossible." Not that the church provides salvation; God does. But because the "saved" one can't fulfill what it means to be a Christian apart from the church, membership becomes the indispensable mark of salvation."^[7]

So do you belong to *the fellowship*? To do so, you must first put your trust in Christ as your Savior and Lord. That's how you enter the family of God. But to enter *the fellowship* of the family of God you must "be added to the church." That's the phrase we read over and over in Acts. People were saved, baptized, and then *added to the church* (see Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 5:14). Have you been added to a local church?

2. *Are your actions showing that fellowship is important to you?* One wonderful way to do that is through hospitality. This month, we as a church family are reading together *The Hospitality Commands* by Alexander Strauch,

and we'll be discussing the implications together in our Sunday evening mini-growth groups. I encourage you to participate. Next Sunday morning we'll do a biblical study of hospitality and explore ways to use our homes for kingdom purposes.

If fellowship is really important to us, it will show. Let me give you some suggestions. Send a card to a brother or sister you've missed. Invite a new family to your home. In order to get better connected with your brothers and sisters, make our Sunday evening church family service a priority in your schedule, and get involved in a Sunday School class. Cut off a conversation this week if you find yourself speaking critically of a brother or sister or your church, not because they are perfect, but because we are a *fellowship*.

3. *What do you plan to do this week to apply what you have learned?* Let's look to the Lord for His abundant grace to make it possible.

**Note: This is an unedited manuscript of a message preached at Wheelersburg Baptist Church. It is provided to prompt your continued reflection on the practical truths of the Word of God.

[1] This message was built upon a sermon preached at WBC in 2004 as part of a series "Seven Values of a Strong Church."

[2] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_hospitality

[3] I'm indebted to Carl B. Hoch, Jr. for this definition, in "What Is Biblical Fellowship?" *Chapel Time*, Sept 1976.

[4] The word *koinonia* translates into English most commonly as "fellowship" or "communion." Associated terms include "association," "joint participation," "community," and "partnership."

[5] Also in Philemon 17 where Paul says, "So if you consider me a *partner*, welcome him [the runaway slave Onesimus] as you would welcome me."

[6] We see this as well in 2 Corinthians 8:3-4 and in 2 Cor 9:13."

[7] Charles W. Colson, *The Body*, 1992, Word Publishing, p. 70.