

# FELLOWSHIP:

Psalms 55:14	1 Corinthians 5:2	Galatians 2:9	1 John 1:3
Acts 2:42	2 Corinthians 6:14	Philippians 2:1	1 John 1:6
1 Corinthians 1:9	2 Corinthians 13:14	Philippians 3:10	1 John 1:7

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## QUESTIONS: WHAT IS THE NATURE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP??

What is involved in Christian fellowship? How could it be defined? What types of things are associated with it? What are the consequences of such fellowship?

Who is or isn't involved in Christian fellowship? Who determines who can or cannot be a part of that fellowship? What is the criteria for inclusion or exclusion?

In what ways can fellowship be disrupted? How are we to respond to such disruptions?

Is Christian fellowship optional? Do you see it practiced among those who claim to be disciples of Christ? Explain. If not, what is the problem? What does the Bible say about this?

What have you learned about Christian fellowship, in these verses? How can you use what you have learned, so that you will become more "Christ-like" in the way you interact with other believers? Are there other verses that you could study (even though the word "fellowship" is not present), which would help you in your attempts to better understand (and live according to) the will of God? (Perhaps after studying them, you could go through these questions again... or perhaps invent a few questions of your own!)

What *can* you do to apply what you have learned to the way you live?  
What *will* you do to apply what you have learned to the way you live?

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## FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY: Our Obligations Toward Other Christians

This section uses the word "obligation" quite a bit. Some may interpret it as being "harsh" and "unfeeling." But in reality, it is nothing more than the expression of love toward our neighbor, which Jesus says is our second-greatest *obligation*. (See Mark 12:28-34.)

Many verses in the Bible deal with a Christian's obligation toward other Christians. Although this is but one aspect of the concept of *fellowship* studied above, perhaps it would be beneficial to spend additional time focused on it.

- What types of things ought you to be doing toward other Christians? Not doing toward them? Why?
- Are all your obligations "pleasant" ones, or must you sometimes do (or say) something that you would consider "unpleasant?"
- Under what circumstances (if any) might you be excused from fulfilling your obligations?
- What are the priorities and values in your life? (Example: Do you excuse yourself from fulfilling obligations, claiming that "don't have time"? If so, what are you valuing as more important than fulfilling your obligations?)

### **When Things Don't Work the Way We Expected**

Suppose you try to fulfill your obligations toward others, and it "doesn't work." The outcome you expect does not occur. Or others reject your attempts to do so. What then? Will you quit trying? Will you use that experience (or even several such experiences) as a justification for "giving up?" What determines the way you live and act and think... your experiences or the Word of God? How can you prepare your mind and heart so that you will be ready for any such "setback?"

When others fail to practice the things you learned in this study, it provides you with an opportunity to show the type of love that is described in 1 Corinthians 13. Remember that you yourself are not perfect in this matter, so be gracious to others when they are less than perfect. All of us must GROW in this expression of grace. Pray for each other; encourage and build each other up.