

How Does God View Fellowship?

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Introduction: Why does God want to have fellowship with us?

A. What is fellowship?

Fellowship - association, community, communion, joint participation, contact; in the N. T. as in classical Greek. 1. *the share which one has in anything, participation*; ... Phil. 2:1; 2 Cor. 13:13 (14); ... in the benefits of Christ's death, 1 Cor. 10:16. 2. *contact, fellowship, intimacy*: ... the right hand as the sign and pledge of fellowship (in fulfilling the apostolic office), Gal. 2:9 ... what in common has light with darkness? 2 Cor. 6:14 ... used of the intimate bond of fellowship which unites Christians: absolutely, Acts 2:42; ... of the fellowship of Christians with God and Christ, ... 1 John 1:3, 6,

1. The root idea is that of "sharing." This sharing is in spiritual things!

2. We have to be taught both what to "share" and how to "share" it! (Acts 2:42)

B. God's fellowship will always define the path in which we are to walk! (1 Jn 1:6-7)

1. There are two kinds of "fellowship" (light and darkness) offered to us!

2. There is great discernment and courage needed to stay in God's fellowship!

I. Fellowship with God is the foundation of all other fellowship

A. Fellowship with God must come first! (1 Jn 1:1-3)

1. It begins with understanding the testimony of the Apostles concerning the identity of Jesus. (Acts 2:32, 36)

2. The New Testament overwhelmingly speaks of "sharing" in eternal life. (1 Jn 1:2; John 1:4, 3:15-16; 4:13-14; 6:26-27, 35)

3. Only a humbled heart can seek and find this food!

B. Fellowship with other Christians can only come as we have fellowship with God.

1. My desire for fellowship with men must never cast aside my fellowship with God! (1 Jn 1:3; 2 Jn 9-11)

2. This represents one of the greatest battles we will face as Christians.

3. When men flee from doctrinal discernment to please men they will have no stomach to stand and lose human relationships. (Jn 12:42-43; Gal 1:10)

4. It does matter what you believe and where you may attend (fellowship)!

II. How God Views His Fellowship with us

A. God described his deep love when He rescued helpless Israel. (Ezk 16:4-5)

1. Listen carefully to what our God is like. He wants to heal, cleanse and provide for the utterly helpless ones!

2. Some view God's covenants as "rules and legalism." They do not know God.

3. Remembering our God is always the first step back. (Lk 15:17-18)

B. God likens this fellowship to a marriage relationship.

1. God will not share! In this sense He is a jealous God.

2. Israel became proud and committed adultery with other gods. (Ezk 16:28-30)

3. Paul also uses this language. (2 Cor 11:2; 1 Cor 10:20-22)

C. How many of you would be willing to occasionally "share" your mate with another?

1. God has always wanted all of our hearts! (Jer 3:10; 4:14)

2. What did the “non-traditional” service to idols involve? How might the Israelites have framed this new enlightened approach to God?
3. God called it adultery. (Jer 3:8-9; 5:7; 7:9-10)
4. We serve a God that wants a personal relationship with us! Think about this.

III. God’s powerful love is shown in this fellowship

A. Can we hurt (grieve) God? Yes! (Eph 4:30)

1. Consider the term “jealous” (zealous love) as used to describe our God.
 “The root idea in the Old Testament word jealous is to become intensely red. It seems to refer to the changing color of the face or the rising heat of the emotions which are associated with intense zeal or fervor over something dear to us. In fact, both the Old and New Testament words for jealousy are also translated “zeal.” Being jealous and being zealous are essentially the same thing in the Bible. God is zealous—eager about protecting what is precious to Him.”

2. Our relationship (fellowship) with God is personal.

B. When we take this fellowship seriously, it will change us! (1 Cor 6:19-20)

1. We are having fellowship with a Holy God! (Lev 20:26; 1 Pt 1:15-16; 2:9)
2. I first must be forgiven to have fellowship with God!
3. God dwells in us when we are born again! (Acts 2:38)
4. What is the purpose of evangelism? Of a local church?

C. How we handle God’s word will show how seriously we seek His fellowship!

1. Consider the attitudes that adulterous Israel had towards God’s written word. (Jer 23:14-17; 7:9-10)
2. We must have an integrity that demand an accurate teaching of God’s word.
3. Throughout history scoffers have arisen who ridicule sound doctrine and under the false banner of being “grace-centered” try to comfort people in their sin.
3. Look at how they were able to widen their “circle of fellowship” because they are more “caring.” How does God describe that “caring?” (Jer 23:17)
4. How many teachers are recommended because they “have a good tone?” (Jer 23:18-32; Rev 22:18-19)

IV. This fellowship comes through repentance that leads to complete obedience

A. God does not give up on anyone.

1. Imagine the scene as Hosea redeems Gomer from the slave auction block! (Hos 3:3)
2. Does God’s love towards me personally depend on my actions? (Rom 5:6-10)
3. How can this knowledge help me turn back to God?
4. How can this knowledge be perverted to drive me further away from God? (Rom 2:3-5)

B. When one understands God’s nature they come to understand unchangeable, dependable truths. (Hosea 14:1-2, 8-9)

1. We must approach God with “nothing in my hand” except a plea for His mercy.
2. How much have we been forgiven? Do we see ourselves as Gomer? (Lk 7:40-47; 2 Pt 1:9-10)

Conclusion: Will you answer the call to have fellowship with God?