

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

When was the last time you were part of a team?

Being part of a team doesn't just mean you spend time together or have certain things in common; it also means you are part of a group that works together. A team is a group of people who share resources and responsibilities.

The connection among teammates is a lot like the connection among Christians. The Bible talks about this connection with words like: fellowship, participation, partnership, and sharing.

Christian fellowship involves much more than just spending time together; it's a deep and practical connection. God's desire is not only that we *learn* about fellowship but that we *apply* it to our life.

One of the sections of the Bible that helps us understand Christian fellowship is the book of Philippians. After reading each of the verses below, review what it teaches about fellowship and discuss with your group how it might be applied in your life. Some sample discussion questions are given

Philippians 1:3-5

- We should be thankful and joyful for the fellowship we have with other Christians.
- We should pray for those we have fellowship with.
- We should partner with others in proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- *What specific aspects of fellowship bring you joy? Do you regularly thank God for your family in Christ? Why or why not?*
- *Do you regularly pray for those in your church family? Why or why not? What specific things can you pray for?*
- *What part do you play in helping your church advance the gospel of Jesus Christ? What else can you do?*

Philippians 2:1-4

- Our fellowship is a gift from the Holy Spirit.
 - Our fellowship should express itself in unity and humility.
- *Do you ever feel more or less important than other people in the church? How does the truth about the Holy Spirit help correct this kind of thinking?*
 - *What would it look like if our entire church had the same mind and same goal? Is this even possible?*
 - *In what situations is humility most difficult for you? How can you be an example of humility to others?*

Philippians 3:7-11

- Our fellowship with Christ is our most precious possession.
 - Our fellowship with Christ includes suffering.
- *What other parts of your life are you tempted to value more than knowing Christ? How can you show that you value Christ more?*
 - *How might a false understanding of the gospel take away your joy in salvation?*
 - *How have you suffered in life? How did those times draw you closer to Christ? What can you do to see suffering for Christ as a joy and blessing?*

Philippians 4:14-16

- Our fellowship includes giving money to help others and receiving money from others.
- *What are some examples in the Bible of people helping one another by giving money?*
 - *What are some examples in your own life of people in the church giving for a specific purpose?*
 - *What effects can this practical expression of unity have inside and outside the church?*

If time allows, ask the members of your group what stood out to them the most from today's study. Then end your time with prayer.