

## The Fellowship of the Truth

(2 Corinthians 13:8) For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

- I. fellowship: Partnership; membership of a society. Participation, sharing (in an action, condition, etc.); 'something in common', community of interest, sentiment, nature, etc.
  
- II. Few things in Christian life can compare with the comfort, satisfaction and sense of belonging that we derive from fellowshiping with others with whom we have something in common.
  - A. We need the mutual support and company of others. **1CO 12:25-26**.
  - B. On what basis, though, should fellowship with others be measured?
  - C. Consider some false standards for church fellowship.
    1. "I am in that church because that's where my family and friends are."  
But see **MAT 10:37-38; JAM 4:4**.
    2. "I am in that church because it's nearby and accessible." But see **1KI 12:28-29**.
    3. "I am in that church because it's big enough to look like a church."  
But see **LUK 12:32; 2CO 10:12**.
    4. "I am in that church because of the opulence and pageantry."  
But see **PSA 29:2; REV 3:17**.
    5. "I am in that church because it is respected in the community and in religious circles." But see **LUK 6:26**.
    6. "I am in that church because of everyday needs." But see **JER 44:16-17**.
    7. "I am in that church because everyone is so sweet." But see **PRO 27:5-7**.
    8. "I am in that church because nobody judges me." But see **1CO 6:5**.
    9. "I am in that church because religion is easy there." But see **MAT 7:13-14**.
    10. "I am in that church because they are more about mercy than doctrine." But see **PSA 85:10; 1JO 5:16**.
  - D. What then is the chief grounds for genuine fellowship, the "something in common" which defines us, unites us and keeps us together?
    1. Some might say, "It is our love for the Lord Jesus Christ."
      - a. But there are "lords many" (**1CO 8:6**), "another Jesus" (**2CO 11:4**) and "false Christs" (**MAT 24:24**). How does one know who he loves?
      - b. Some love a Lord Jesus Christ who marginalizes obedience. But see **JOH 14:15, 21**.
      - c. The identity of the Lord Jesus Christ and how He expects to be loved must be determined from the truth of the Scripture.
    2. Charity is indeed the bond of perfectness for brethren. **COL 3:14**.
      - a. But then the question arises, "How do we define charity?"
      - b. Scripture speaks of *unfeigned love of the brethren* (**1PE 1:22**), which implies a *feigned* (false, pretended) love/charity. This verse shows the basis for unfeigned love of brethren: "...obeying the truth through the Spirit..."
      - c. Charity must be defined by truth. There is charity that is errant and some that is hypocritical and wicked. **2CH 19:1-2; EZE 33:31; JOH 12:4-6**.
      - d. Charity hates false ways and rejoices in truth. **PSA 119:128; 1CO 13:6**.
      - e. Love is genuine when according to truth and *in the truth*.  
**1JO 3:18; 3JO 1:1**.
      - f. True love places a brother's well-being higher than that brother's love of you. **LEV 19:17**.
      - g. True love may not be perceived as such. **2CO 2:4; 12:15**.
  
- III. Genuine fellowship is not just fellowship with other men, but with the Father and His Son Jesus

Christ, Who is Truth. **JOH 14:6.**

- A. The fellowship of believers is a common fellowship with Christ and must be grounded in the word of God. **ACT 2:42 c/w 1JO 1:3; PHIL 1:4-5, 27.**
- B. Conversion to fellowship with God is not caused by philosophy, philanthropy, pageantry, popularity, pleasantness, etc. It is by the truth. **PSA 19:7; COL 1:5-6.**
- C. Christian fellowship is fellowship of the Spirit. **PHIL 2:1.**
  - 1. The Holy Spirit by Whom we fellowship with God and His children is the Spirit of truth Who guides men into truth! **JOH 16:13.**
  - 2. How can there be genuine spiritual fellowship in the absence of the truth?
- D. Scripture describes godly saints as being of "...LIKE precious faith..." (**2PE 1:1**).
  - 1. A shared faith in the truth of the gospel is what facilitates real unity. **EPH 4:13.**
  - 2. How can there be genuine fellowship between those who believe the truth and those who deny it? **2CO 6:14.**
  - 3. The righteous are grieved to "...sing the LORD'S song in a strange land" (**PSA 137:4-5**). They treasure the kingdom where God's truth reigns. **MAT 13:44.**
  - 4. (**PSA 119:63**) I am a companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy precepts.

IV. Consider other facets of the importance of truth.

- A. Truth purges and sanctifies. **PRO 16:6; JOH 17:17.**
- B. Our full salvation is directly related to truth. **2TH 2:13.**
- C. Our temporal salvation is through the doctrine. **1TI 4:16.**
- D. John's love for saints was based on their embracing the truth. **2JO 1:1-2; 3JO 1:4.**
- E. Worship **MUST** be in truth. **JOH 4:24.**
- F. The church should be *the pillar and ground of the truth*. **1TI 3:15.**
- G. We are specifically warned against:
  - 1. receiving not the love of the truth. **2TH 2:10-12.**
  - 2. not being valiant for the truth. **JER 9:3.**
  - 3. making lies a refuge. **ISA 28:15.**
  - 4. sinning wilfully against the truth. **HEB 10:26-27.**
- H. Truth is a dividing issue of the judgment. **ROM 2:6-8; 2TH 1:8-9.**
- I. If the truth is not **THE** issue in Christianity, then all the martyrs were/are fools!

V. The thrust of the gospel is to gather saints together for corporate growth to make a fitting habitation for God. **EPH 2:21-22.**

- A. There are times, though, when God calls saints to isolation from others.
  - 1. Abraham was called **ALONE** from Ur. **ISA 51:2.**
  - 2. Noah had only his family for fellowship. **1PE 3:20.**
  - 3. Elijah had only a widow and her son for fellowship for years. **1KI 17.**
  - 4. Jeremiah sat **ALONE** because of the truth when there were apostates with whom he could have joined in fellowship. **JER 15:16-17.**
- B. If it comes down to a choice of uniting with error for fellowship or loneliness with the truth, the latter is the correct choice. **PSA 26:3-5; 84:10; 2TH 3:6.**
- C. Genuine fellowship is walking in the light of truth. **1JO 1:6-7.**

VI. We are not worthy of any mercy or truth (**GEN 32:10**). God could have left us in darkness.

- A. The godly will cleave to the one who shows them God's truth. **ACT 17:34; JOH 6:67-68.**
- B. God will improve the truth to those who exalt it. **PHIL 3:15-16.**
- C. God will rescind the truth from those who do otherwise. **2TH 2:10-12.**