

Series: 1 Corinthians
Title: The Fellowship of Jesus Christ
Text: 1 Cor 1: 9
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Our subject is “The Fellowship of Jesus Christ.” In 1 Corinthians 1: 9, Paul wrote, “God *is* faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” What does it mean to be called into “the fellowship of Jesus Christ?”

UNION WITH CHRIST

Christ is the Life. Union with Christ is the only way we can have spiritual life. Union with Christ is the sole means of spiritual life. Our Lord Jesus said that very thing:

John 15: 4: Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5: I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Paul used this same illustration when speaking of the Gentiles being grafted into Christ with the Jews.

Romans 11: 17: And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, [wild olive branch] wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

Christ is the Root—the Olive Tree—the Vine. We partake of his Spirit like the branch partake of the fatness—the sap—of the olive tree.

Romans 11: 18: Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.

The branch does not give life to the root. Rather, the root gives life to the branch. So it is when God the Father calls us into fellowship with Christ. We receive spiritual life from Christ the Life. Union with Christ is the sole means of us having spiritual life. Paul said,

Galatians 2: 20: I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

Other ways this union is spoken of in scripture is “the head, the body and its members.” Christ is the Head, his church is his body and we are members in particular. The only reason my little finger moves is because it is united to me. The only way we have life is because we are in union with Christ our Head in his body.

1 Corinthians 12: 12: For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13: For by one Spirit are we all [Paul, Apollos, Peter, me, you, and everyone called into the fellowship of his Son] by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

This union is illustrated by the husband and wife.

Ephesians 5: 31: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32: This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Is Christ teaching husbands to have many brides? No, only one, even as the church is Christ's one bride. My favorite place this union is spoken of is when Christ speaks of this union:

John 17: 21: That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Isn't it amazing, brethren! Believer, you, me, and every member of Christ's church are a "habitation of God through the Spirit." Amazing! We are united in one!

PARTAKERS WITH CHRIST

Secondly, fellowship with Christ means we are partakers with Christ. This is as essential, as it is amazing! when God calls us unto the fellowship of his Son, Peter said, we become--"partakers of the divine nature." (2 Pet 1: 4) Only by partaking of Christ's divine nature do we escape "the corruption that is in the world through lust."—beginning with the corruption of our own sin-nature.

Also, by the fellowship of Christ we partake of all that Christ accomplished by his obedience. Let me give you my illustration again, slightly different than last time: When Adam broke the law—all Adam's children were in Adam's loins—so we all became unrighteous by Adam's disobedience. But we did not have a being till we were born of Adam. Once born of Adam, we became partakers of Adam's sinful nature, as well as his unrighteousness. So all the credit goes to Adam for making me unrighteous and unholy by his disobedience. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." (Rom 5: 19)

Likewise, when Christ fulfilled the law—all his children were in Christ's loins—so we became righteous by Christ's obedience. But the new me—God's workmanship—did not have a being till I was born of Christ. Once born of Christ, I became partaker of Christ's holy nature, as well as his perfect righteousness. So Christ gets all the credit for making me righteous and holy by his obedience—"So by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

If a man knows he is a partaker of Adam's sinful nature, I do not know why he would want to deny the necessity of the believer being made a partaker of Christ's divine nature.

Thirdly, fellowship with Christ means we partake in God's Spirit of faithfulness and love. This goes right along with being made a partaker of the divine nature. God loved us but we could never love God or one another until God called us to partake of Christ's love by God dwelling in us.

1 John 4: 10: Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. 11: Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 12: No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. 13: Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

God gave us his Spirit of love so that now we love one another and we love Christ. Men without it divide, they do not love God's people to Christ. Nor could we believe and confess Christ till God called us to partake of Christ's faithfulness by his Spirit dwelling in us.

1 John 4: 14: And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son *to be* the Saviour of the world. 15: Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. 16: And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.” (1Jo 4:10-16)

The only way we can believe and love is to be made a partaker of the divine nature, to have God’s Spirit dwelling in us. No other way!

In addition, fellowship with Christ means we now partake of fellowship with the Father and with fellow believers.

1 John 1:3: That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. 4: And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full. 5: This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6: If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, [in the darkness of the lie of man-exalting, free-will-works religion] we lie, and do not the truth: 7: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Amos 3:3: Can two walk together, except they be agreed?

When we have the same faith, by the same Spirit, by the same Truth, we have “we have fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ” and “fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

Our “fellowship [is] in the gospel.” (Php 1: 5) That is the only kind of spiritual fellowship that exists. We have “no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.” (Eph 5: 11) The world does not understand that Christ is the tie that binds us in Spirit and in Truth and that is why it is called “the fellowship of the mystery.” (Eph 3:9) We have “fellowship in ministering to the saints.” (2 Cor 8: 4) We serve the saints gladly here and around the world as they have need. When one suffers, we all suffer and when one rejoices, we all rejoice.

This is the best part. Fellowship with Christ means each believer jointly partakes of everything that Christ possesses. This is what makes the true church of God such a peaceful, pleasant place. We are not in competition with each other. We are not trying to earn better rewards than one another. We are all joint-heirs with Christ.

When he took on him the seed of Abraham, his life became our life, his suffering our suffering, his death our death, his resurrection our resurrection. Now his righteousness is our righteousness, his holiness is our holiness, his acceptance with the Father is our acceptance—“your life is hid with Christ in God.” Now his Father is our Father—He said, “I go to my God and your God, to my Father and your Father.” Now his kingdom is our kingdom--“I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.” Now his throne is our throne--“To him that over-cometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” Now his inheritance is our inheritance and his glory our glory so long as we bear suffering for his sake—“And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”

You see brethren, it really is, like Christ said in the beginning of the message, Christ’s church—every redeemed, regenerated child of God—is one, even as Christ and the Father are one! So again, let’s end with Paul showing us that is exactly his point. Endeavor to make this our goal in everything we do with one another here and with our brethren in other local churches.

1 Corinthians 1: 10: Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

How could we do otherwise, God has called us unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ OUR LORD!

Amen!