



February 2016

Why fellowship with like-minded believers? Because we benefit abundantly in body, soul, and spirit! Fellowshiping with like-minded believers helps us build the knowledge of God in our lives and live His Word, and it helps us build a heartfelt respect for one another.

Once we are born again, we belong to a body of believers—the Body of Christ.

I Corinthians 12:13:

For by one Spirit [God] are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews [Judeans] or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit [the gift of holy spirit].

We are all partakers of the gift of holy spirit from the same Source, and that gift is the basis of our spiritual unity. We are now spiritually united in this one Body.

I Corinthians 12:27:

Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

Each member of the Body of Christ is a necessary and unique member placed in the Body to work in harmony with all the other members. We do this by living in one accord on the truth of God's Word.

God's Word shows us that from the earliest days of the Grace Administration, members of the Body of Christ lived God's Word and fellowshiped together with like-minded believers.

Acts 2:41,42:

Then they that gladly received his [Peter's] word were baptized [born again]: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

True fellowship is based on the doctrine of the Word. The apostles taught the doctrine—the standard for right believing—and the believers each made it their own and lived it. The believers had fellowship first with God as their Father and then with one another. Being together daily, these believers shared fully with each other and had a mutual concern for one another. This manifested itself in their being in one accord on the Word.

Here are some examples in the Book of Acts of how the fellowship of like-minded believers helped others. Look at the individual and collective support given and received in the fellowship of believers in these four records.

Acts 4:23:

And being let go, they [Peter and John] went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.

After Peter and John had been threatened by the Judean authorities for teaching and healing in the name of Jesus Christ, they went back to their fellowship of like-minded believers and shared all that had happened. They then prayed with them for more boldness to speak the Word, which led to great power being manifested (Acts 4:24-33).

Acts 12:12,17:

...he [Peter] came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark; where many were gathered together praying. But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.

After Peter was released from prison by an angel of the Lord, he first proceeded to a home fellowship nearby. These were like-minded believers who had been praying for Peter, whose deliverance was miraculous. Now let's see examples in Paul's life.

Acts 9:19:

And when he [Saul—later called Paul] had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.

Soon after Paul was born again, he spent time fellowshiping with born-again believers in Damascus, getting like-minded with them. Here's another record of Paul's continued fellowship with believers.

Acts 14:26-28:

And thence [Paul and Barnabas] sailed to Antioch, from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled.

And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles.

And there they abode long time with the disciples.

After their journey, Paul and Barnabas returned to their home base, to the fellowship that had sent them out. They shared with these like-minded believers how God had worked within them.

Fellowshipping with like-minded believers provides avenues to give and to receive. The benefits are numerous, providing profit in body, soul, and spirit. Here are some examples of benefits we can realize when we fellowship with like-minded believers:

- We give and receive exhortation, comfort, and edification by the Word of God we speak to each other.

Colossians 3:16:

Let the word of [pertaining to] Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing [exhorting] one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

I Thessalonians 5:11:

Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

- We are not alone in life's victories and/or challenges.

I Corinthians 12:26:

And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

Philippians 1:27,28:

Only let your conversation [manner of living] be as it becometh the gospel of [pertaining to] Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit [stand fast as one, spiritually], with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

- We sound out the Word of the Lord as we live that Word together.

I Thessalonians 1:8:

For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing.

- We develop great respect for God's Word and one another.

Acts 2:42,43:

And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

And fear [respect] came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

As we fellowship with like-minded believers in the Body of Christ, we can build the knowledge of God in our lives, making it our own, and build a heartfelt respect for one another. When one rejoices, we all rejoice. This is God's Word and will. This is why we fellowship with like-minded believers.

For more information, visit www.theway.org

© 2016 by The Way International™. All rights reserved.