

THE POWER OF FELLOWSHIP 2

6/5/17

The Holy Spirit delivers us from humanity's failings and comes with a simple list of lifestyle changes that turn our weaknesses into blessings. These verses are similar to a product service manual, that makes it possible to understand new design and management practices that will keep us alive and well. Fellowship is much more than turning up at a meeting and communion is much more than drinking and eating food elements once a week.

Paul makes some very sobering observations about the benefits of fellowship and the severe cost of misunderstanding these truths.

1COR 11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

27 Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

29 For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. *How is it possible to mistake the Lord's body... we all know what it is, don't we? Isn't it Christ, the son of God that died on the cross? We all know how to eat and drink the communion elements, as no skill is required... what can be the problem?*

30 For this cause **many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.** *This would seem such a terrible result to come from the way the elements are handled or eaten... or is there another understanding? These warnings relate to fellowship... By not supporting and understanding the value of the scriptural fellowship, these failings can come about... see the box above.*

31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. *We need to determine whether we are genuine partakers of the fellowship or not. Numerous other scriptures highlight our fellowship responsibilities and it is in our interests to know them well.*

32 But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. *God has asked us to learn what our requirements are... if we don't, he will bring it to our attention, whether we like it or not... he wants to save us from failure.*

33 Wherefore, my brethren, when ye come together to eat, **tarry** (wait) one for another. *Be there for each other... not just for yourself.*

More basics on fellowship/communion. **1JOH 1:4** 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 (with the Lord), and walk in darkness, 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 (participants in His spiritual values), and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. *Both our spiritual health and our joy are associated with our participation in Godly servitude.*

Learning to use the voice gifts is a fellowship value as well. **1COR 14:5** I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied: for greater *is* he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying.

These verses highlight the requirements to fellowship and the primary actions of those who do. **HEB 10:24** And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: **25** Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. *This is the same type of warning that Paul revealed to the Corinthians.*

There is no substitute for patiently developing the skills of active fellowship, nor are these benefits achieved through any other practice. Lasting joy comes from God who blesses us for our ongoing development.

1COR 10:15 I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. *This warning is written because the following points are not as obvious as many assume.*

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the **communion** (fellowship... participation) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the **communion** (fellowship... participation) of the body of Christ? *Our working together in the power of the Spirit.*

17 For we *being* many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. *The church members are the true bread. We are all members of the one body. 1Cor 12. Participation in servitude is the primary requirement... not just eating food tokens. Consider Paul's following chapters.*