

The Blessings and Boundaries of Fellowship

Introduction:

- A. Having spent time in recent weeks studying the Christian's freedom in Christ and God's plan for unity, last week we asked, "What exactly is fellowship?" (2 Cor 6; 1 John 1)
- B. Today we use God's word to explore the blessings and boundaries of fellowship (Eccl 4:9-12).

I. "Who are My Mother and My Brothers?"

- A. As early as *Genesis 2:18*, we hear "*It is not good that man should be alone.*"
- B. While he walked among us, our King made some incredible, perspective-changing statements.
 - 1. *Mark 3:31-35* — "*Who are my mother and my brothers?*"
 - 2. *Matthew 10:34-39* — "*Whoever loves father or mother more than me...*"
 - 3. *Luke 9:57-62* — "*No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back...*"
 - 4. *Mark 10:28-31* — "*Houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands...*"
- C. At the base? Jesus' relationship with the Father (*John 10:30; Matt 11:25-27; 17:11,20-21*).
- D. We come to the Father only through the Son (*John 14:6,23*).

II. "Fellowship": A State into Which We are Called

- A. "*You were called into the fellowship of his Son*" (*1 Cor 1:9; 1 Thes 2:12; 2 Thes 2:14*).
- B. "*If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another*" (*1 John 1:7*).
- C. The goal of our fellowship? It's already been defined by our King in *John 17:20-26*.

III. "If We Say We Have Fellowship with Him While We Walk in Darkness..."

- A. "*You are slaves of the one whom you obey*" (*Rom 6:16,19*).
- B. What impact is had on fellowship if a brother or sister is disregarding the revealed will of God?
 - 1. *2 Thessalonians 3:6-15* — "*not in accord with the tradition that you received from us.*"
 - 2. *1 Corinthians 5:9-13* — "*not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother.*"
 - 3. *Ephesians 4:1-6* — "*eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*"
 - 4. *Ephesians 5:1-21* — "*take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but expose them.*"
- C. "*Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!*" (*Psa 133:1*).