

Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church
2080 West Grand Blvd.
Detroit, Michigan 48208
Nathan Johnson, D.D., Senior Pastor

“True Community - The Biblical Practice of Koinonia”¹

Lesson 1: Introduction

Objective: To introduce the true meaning of Christian fellowship (Koinonia) and its biblical practices.

(Scripture) *“for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1: 5-6)*

Introduction:

For the past seven (7) years the Writer’s Ministry has written lessons that focus on the unity of the Church body and our spiritual relationships with one another. We began our first lesson with the “One Another Scriptures” written by the Apostle Paul. We proceeded to the Church Covenant which explains our commitment to God and our fellow believers.² Our third assignment was taken from book “Never Alone Church³” which emphasized the fact that we were created as relational beings who were intended to have spiritual relationships with God and others. Our last assignment came from Wayne and Clay Jacobsen’s book on “Reestablishing the Art of One Anothering⁴” which provides scripture support for loving others in the manner that God loves us.

This fall, we are embarking on a new study entitled “True Community -The Biblical Practice of Koinonia” written by Jerry Bridges. The Greek word Koinonia means true spiritual fellowship as practiced by the New Testament church. It can further be defined as *close association involving mutual interests and sharing, association, communion, fellowship, and close relationship.*⁵ This definition may also include *‘an attitude of good will that manifests an interest in a close*

¹ Bridges, Jerry. True Community - The Biblical Practice of Koinonia. Colorado Springs, CO, NavPress (2012) Print.

² Turner, William C. A Journey through the Church Covenant. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, (2002).

³ Ferguson, David, The Never Alone Church, Wheaton, Illinois: Tyndale House, (1998) Print.

⁴ Jacobsen, W., & Jacobsen, C. *Authentic Relationships: Discover the lost art of “one anothering”*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, (2003). Print.

⁵ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

*relationship, generosity, fellow-feeling, altruism*⁶. As we proceed in this study you may find that it requires sharing God's word versus simply carrying out the usual social activities such as drinking coffee or eating together while discussing current events and etc. These latter events can be construed as Christian fellowship but in essence are not much different than everyday social fellowship.

"And, they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts 2:42)

Due to our salvation in Jesus Christ, we all share a common life in Christ. When we are in Christ, this gives us a new identity by the indwelling by the Holy Spirit.

As we begin to study the principles of Koinonia, we will cover the following four areas:

- Relationship – sharing together the very life of God
- Partnership – a community of believers in action for Christ
- Communion With Others - revealing to other Christians what God has done in our lives
- Sharing Material Possessions – sharing your belongings with others in need

Discussion Question #1:

What are the benefits of Christian fellowship in the body of Christ?

Discussion Question #2:

What are some ways that we can engage in Christian fellowship that will have lasting value?

Points to Ponder:

Ask the Lord to show you some persons to reach out to in the body of Christ during the next church gatherings.

Helpful Scripture Passages:

Philippians 2: 1-4 Hebrews 13: 16 I Timothy 6:18

Closing Prayer:

Dear God help us to be more Christ-like each day. Grant us hearts of genuine love, concern, and care for one another in Christ. Show us ways to encourage, strengthen, and support one another. Amen.

⁶ Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Monthly Biblical Lessons

Month	Year	Monthly Biblical Lessons
October	2013	Introduction – True Community
November	2013	Sharing a Common Life