**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]](#footnote-1)**

**Lesson 3: Communion with God**

**Goal**: To learn what true community is and to practice biblical *Koinonia*

**Objective:** To experience communion with God (experiential relationship) in a personal intimate way through His Son Jesus Christ.

**Scripture:** *One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the*

 *Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple.* [Psalms 27:4]

Last month, we found that we must be united to Christ by our saving faith before we can have fellowship with Him on a daily basis.[[2]](#footnote-2) As believers, we are already partakers in the common life of Christ through spiritual fellowship with one another. Our goal is to become a church where true community and biblical *koinōnia* is practiced. ***Koinōnia*** is the Greek word in Scripture which is commonly translated ***fellowship, sharing, partnership, and participation****.* As we continue our study of what true community is and the biblical practice of koinonia, this month we are addressing the communion aspect with God. Communion with God is possible for believers because of Christ’s shed blood for us and the righteousness of Christ we received upon salvation. Today, we will explore how communion with God leads to greater fellowship with one another.

Many of us know God as our Savior but how many of us know Him in an intimate and personal way? In our personal relationships with family and friends, we take time to know one another and to deepen our relationships. Why not take time to know God and spend time communing with Him? In our quest to know more about God and His Word, we are often drawn to others who are “anchored in the Lord” or “rooted and grounded” in His Word. When mature committed believers show evidence of their devoted life to God, others, desiring the same intimacy with God, are attracted to them.[[3]](#footnote-3) This enables the ‘more mature’ believers to teach others how to fellowship or commune with God. As a result, a discipleship relationship develops with aims to grow spiritually and to know and commune with God more intimately. The prophet Isaiah and the Psalmist understood this perfectly. They provide good examples for us. Isaiah described his relentless search for God even at night:

*My soul yearns for you in the night; my spirit within me earnestly seeks you.*

*For when your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.* [Is 26:9]

In deep words of devotion, the Psalmist reflects on God and communes with Him in words of love. *...when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night…* [Ps 63:6]

As believers, we can grow and experience a personal relationship with God. We can begin to model for others a committed life of communion with God and teach others to do the same. As a result, the church begins to grow in its fellowship or communion with one another. Not only that, **they grow together as a church** **in communion with God**. To begin this process, one could start first thing in the morning. Moreover, Jerry Bridges said that *Our communion should be more than just having a quiet time in the morning; it should be an all-day-affair”.[[4]](#footnote-4)* This early morning time with God lays the foundation for us to tune our hearts to commune with God for the rest of the day.[[5]](#footnote-5) Just as David and Isaiah, **we should yearn for more continuous communion with God,** even during those awake hours at night**.**

*O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: My soul thirsteth for thee,*

 *My flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;* [KJV Ps 63:1]

A minister once elaborated on the importance of spending quality time with God. He explained what this does. He said: “It gives you “a praise” and a practice that is no longer private but public which not only influences your character and others around you but even your enemies. It is impossible to spend quality time with God and remain the same.”[[6]](#footnote-6) “As I walk in fellowship with Him, I am given strength to be like Him.”

**Living our lives continuously in the presence of God boils down to what is the major thrust of our hearts and minds.** In doing *“all-day-communion”* with God, we should ask ourselves how are we using our discretionary thinking time.7 Is it constructively or foolishly?

As we learn about the true meaning of biblical fellowship, we understand that we must have a purposeful daily communion with God. To commune with God, we must seek His presence. In His omnipresence, He is always near. He said *you shall seek me, and find me when you search for me with all your heart*. (Jeremiah 29:13) Acknowledge God in the process of living, recognize His presence, and attend to His ways. Seek His guidance and direction for your life. Find moments during the day to meditate upon God’s Word and to offer prayers to Him. Then, disciple others within the body of Christ. We cannot grow closer to God and with the Body of Christ or grow spiritually without **a** **serious emphasis on the study of the Word of God**.

*6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him,* 7 *rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.* [Col 2:6 -7]

 **Discussion Question #1:**

 What are some ways that we can develop the practice of depending on God?

**Discussion Question #2:**

What place does Scripture memorization and meditation play in our communion with God throughout the day?

**Points to Ponder:**

Does my life reflect all or some aspects of *koinonia* daily?

What does knowing God in a personal way mean to you?

**Helpful Scripture Passages:**

Psalm 5:3; Psalm 25:5; Psalm 27:8, Philippians 3:10; John 14:23

1. Bridges, Jerry. True Community - The Biblical Practice of Koinonia. Colorado Springs, CO, Nav Press (2012) Print. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid, 20. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid, p. 35 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid, p.35 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ibid, p. 37 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Rev. Dr. Tellis Chap, Galilee Baptis Church, Detroit, MI, November 9, 2013, Guest Speaker @ Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church, Detroit, MI. 7 Ibid, 35-36 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)