Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church 2080 West Grand Blvd.

Detroit, Michigan 48208

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“True Community - The Biblical Practice of Koinonia”[[1]](#footnote-1)

 **Partnership in the Gospel**

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

**Objective:** To experience *koinonia through* *Partnership in the Gospel* based on biblical principles with others who share a common life in Jesus Christ.

**Scripture:** “*I thank God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. ” (Philippians 1:3-5*

Previous lessons have dealt with *Koinonia* when translated from the original language as *fellowship with* one another within the body of Christ. This month’s lesson will focus on *Koinonia* when translated, from the Greek, as *partnership*. When we build up and enjoy one another, we are in fellowship, but when we join together to spread the gospel, we are in partnership. In the latter, our objectives are focused outside of ourselves on those who need to be brought into the fellowship of God’s people.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Today’s lesson centers on gaining a perspective on how to become actively involved in *partnership in the spread of the gospel* throughout the world by providing ministerial support. The great commission given by Jesus tells us, *“Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptizing them in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost….” –*Matthew 28:20. This biblical mandate is fulfilled through the practice of *partnership in the gospel*. We are all called to spread the gospel, but for practical reasons the majority of us are limited to the geography in our local areas.

Our partnership in the gospel, once clearly understood ought to inspire us to become actively involved in the *spread of the gospel* by means of fervent prayer and financial contributions. Paul’s letter to the Philippians gives us a biblical model to follow and value as partners in the gospel. “He considered his dear friends in Philippi to be actively engaged in partnership with him in the spreading of the gospel to other cities, even though most of them never left Philippi.”3 In a similar way, we can become actively engaged with the body of Christ to fulfill the great commission.

There are two significant ways that everyone can be partners in the gospel. Paul first acknowledged the Philippian church and thanked God for them in his prayers for their *partnership in the gospel* from the very beginning of his ministry up to the end. They entered into partnership with Paul by making material and financial contributions. Their partnership with Paul allowed for the spread of the gospel to cities that lie far beyond them. We can do likewise, even from the comfort of our homes.

The second way believers can practice *partnership in the gospel* is through regular and meaningful prayer for those who are called to go and spread the gospel throughout the world. There are members within and outside of our own church body who travel regularly to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ. Then, there are others who are called to do active missionary work not only locally, but also abroad. We, too, must be willing to put in quality time and go out as fishermen among men even within our own workplace and communities. As a result, when we as a community of believers truly apply the principles of *koinonia*, this should compel us to increase the body of Christ and to grow in spiritual fellowship with one another.

 *For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means of their own accord begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints*. (2 Corinthians 8:3-4)

**Partnership in Giving**

Paul acknowledged the Philippian Church for their financial support from Philippi throughout his letter. “Every Christian today has the same privilege of being a partner in the gospel enterprise. Each of us has the opportunity to practice partnership with various ministries by our prayers and/or financial support far beyond our personal physical endeavors, both in cities at home and in countries overseas.”[[3]](#footnote-3) Claiming our Jerusalem, the Autumn Fellowship, Hope Ministry, and CRU are some of our opportunities to engage in a gospel partnership effort that all of us at Tabernacle can support; physically, financially, and/ or through prayers.

**Partnership in Prayer**

The Philippians not only gave, they prayed for Paul, so should we regularly pray for ministries and missions in their spread of the gospel message. Prayer unifies us with other active participants to fulfill God’s work as we seek Him to fulfill His purpose in us and in others. Paul relied on and gratefully acknowledged their prayers and monetary gifts. Not only did their partnership benefit his missionary efforts, but also, it helps us learn from this model. We can feel encouraged and inspired to become involved in a much needed and powerful way to be active partners in the spread of the gospel throughout the world with our prayers and monetary gifts.

**Point to Ponder:**

What ministries within Tabernacle can you partner with through prayer, financial support, or even join to facilitate the spread of the gospel of salvation to others?

**Helpful Scripture Passages:**

Mark 16:15, 1 Thessalonians 5:25, Matthew 9:38, 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2

**Closing Prayer:**

 Father, as the Philippian Church, we desire to have a partnership in the gospel with fellow believers who spread the gospel. We pray that as a church, we will begin to work or continue working to spread the gospel beyond the walls of our church. Help us to extend monetary gifts and prayers to support ministry workers and those who need salvation. Our contributions serve to help bring unbelievers into fellowship with God and His people. When we cannot physically go, let us be of a mind to financially support ministries both at home and in other countries as Christ commands us, particularly those of our own household of faith. We know our prayers are powerful so we pray for our church, its endeavors, and missionaries in other countries who are separated from family, friends, and from the safety of this country.

In Jesus Name we pray! Amen.

1. Bridges, Jerry. True Community - The Biblical Practice of Koinonia. Colorado Springs, CO, Nav Press (2012) Print. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid, 75 – 76. 3 Ibid 75. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-3)