

Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church  
2080 West Grand Blvd.  
Detroit, Michigan 48208  
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“True Community - The Biblical Practice of Koinonia”<sup>1</sup>  
**Social Fellowship**

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

**Objective:** To experience *Koinonia* by actively desiring to know Christ and the power of His resurrection and social fellowship.

**Scripture:** *Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.*

**Overview:**

As we conclude our study of this book, “True Community - The Biblical Practice of Koinonia”, our primary focus has been spiritual fellowship. This spiritual fellowship reveals our common life in Christ that we share with other believers. The word Koinonia in the Greek gives reference to the New Testament which means sharing, participation, partnership and fellowship.<sup>2</sup>

Our spiritual fellowship is vital as we share the gospel through our relationship with Christ to stimulate others to righteousness and obedience to His Word. However, spiritual fellowship ought to be coupled with social fellowship in order to be most effective. We are not called just to be duty bound saints that are overwhelmed with obligations of the Christian community. God created us with a capacity to be social creatures and to enjoy relationships with family and friends. We need relaxation, fun and the purely good aspects of Christian fellowship<sup>3</sup>. Christ engaged in social fellowship during His earthly ministry. An example of this is His first miracle at a wedding in Cana where he turned water into wine. (John 2: 8-11). The gospels record several occasions of Jesus eating in someone’s home. Jesus was observed to reveal aspects of Himself and the truths of Scripture during these occasions. For example, a Pharisee invited Jesus to eat with him in Luke 7:36-50 and then a sinful woman washed His feet with her hair in gratitude for the forgiveness of her sins. Jesus desired that others would have the opportunity to obtain eternal life. The parable of the Prodigal son, that Jesus told, climaxes with the father’s statement; “*Let’s have a feast and celebrate.*”

We as Christian must make a conscious effort to reach others using both spiritual dimensions and social dimensions. Our initial approach may be the social dimension to draw them, and then we may be able to further develop a deeper spiritual communion and partnership. As we continue our Christian journey, we must not forget that the church formed on the day of

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

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid,150.

Pentecost was balanced, being devoted to spiritual needs such as praying and teaching as well as the social fellowship such as partaking in meals together and enjoying each other's company<sup>4</sup>.

*“They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”*

(Acts 2:42)

Often, many Christians never get beyond the social dimension of fellowship. The New Testament writers took the Greek word *koinonia* and gave it a significant spiritual dimension to emphasize the spiritual aspect.<sup>5</sup> A good example is our church's Super Saturdays where we come together for spiritual growth and practical learning along with food and social fellowship. The church is on the verge of celebrating her 99<sup>th</sup> anniversary this month with the centennial celebration of God's grace and faithfulness to us is rapidly approaching. These monthly lessons are designed to help our Deacon's groups continue to develop the spiritual dimension as we enjoy social fellowship and other planned events with one another.

Over these past months, we have grown in our understanding of the need for the church to have balance between the social and the spiritual dimensions. As a caring community of Christ followers, we must mutually build up one another spiritually and share both our spiritual gifts and material possessions. We may find that we suffer with one another in trials and loss and celebrate one another's successes. As we partner in the gospel, we are to support, comfort and care for one another through visits, prayer and exhortation as well as enjoy social fellowship.

Most important is our communion with God. He is the reason for our being, the existence of the church, and He is the source of our blessings. We are in union with Christ which allows us to receive an abundant supply of His sanctifying grace and immeasurable spiritual riches. This points to the objective nature of *koinonia*; **we belong to one another in Christ**. As we are in union with Christ, we are connected to Him and one another as a spiritual body. Christ is the head and we are members of His body. (Ephesians 5: 23-30) He is the vine and we are the branches. (John 15: 1-8) He desires that we regard and treat each other with love, concern, and respect as a united spiritual family.

*Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. [Ephesians 4: 15-16, ESV]*

Christ has planned a great fellowship for us in eternity; The Marriage Supper of the Lamb. It fully signifies our relationship to Christ as His bride who has made herself ready, adorned in fine linen, made possible by the grace of God. (Rev. 19:6-9)

*....For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. ¶ Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready;*

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid. 150

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 151.

*8* it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure”—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. *9* And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” [Rev. 19: 6b – 9a, ESV]

**Discussion Question #1:**

What are some ways we can add a spiritual dimension to some of our customary social fellowship activities?

**Discussion Question #2:**

In what ways can we reach out to new members and engage with them in social fellowship with a spiritual dimension?

**Points to Ponder:**

The hymn in the New Testament, Revelation 19: 6-10, begins with the words “*Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.*” It is the so-called wedding song to celebrate the coming together of bride and bridegroom for the nuptial ceremony and the supper to which invited guests may come.<sup>6</sup> We, the church, are the bride and Christ is the bridegroom. Can you imagine joining in song with a multitude of heavenly voices to sing this song of praise? What a gloriously indescribable moment in heaven that will be!!!

**Helpful Scripture Passages:**

2 Corinthians 11:2, Revelation 3:20, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Luke 15:23,

**Closing Prayer:**

Father, we thank you for all that you have provided for us. In all that we do, may Your light encompass us, may Your love enfold us, may Your power protect us, and may Your abiding presence watch over us. In the name of Jesus we pray.  
Amen

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<sup>6</sup> Kistemaker, S. J., & Hendriksen, W. (1953–2001). *Exposition of the Book of Revelation* (Vol. 20, p. 512). Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.