

TAKING A CLOSER LOOK

What does the Bible say?

What have we learned so far about 'Following the Master'? We've seen that following Jesus involves spending time with him and learning from him so that we can become like him. We've also learned that communicating with God is important, and that two powerful ways to communicate with him are through the Word of God and Prayer.

So far the focus has been on our 'vertical relationship' as disciples with God. But following the Master also influences our 'horizontal relationships' with people. This week we'll look at how we live towards fellow disciples. This is called 'fellowshipping'.

Take a look at 1 John 1.3-7

The word 'fellowship' means *partnership, community*.

- Why did John tell his readers about the Lord Jesus? Whose fellowship were they being invited to join? (vv. 3-4)
- What do you think it means to "walk in the light"? Why is 'walking in the light' a requirement to fellowship with God and his people? (vv. 5-7)

The Body of Christ

The Bible uses the analogy of a body to describe the relationship of believers with one another and with Christ.

Read 1 Corinthians 12.14-27.

What do verse 27 and verse 14 say about your relationship as a disciple with other disciples?

- Who gave the parts of the body their unique contributions? (v. 18)
- What is his desire? (v. 25)

What attitudes can lead to problems in the body?

Verses 15-16 –

Verse 21 –

If a part of your body is cut off, what happens to it? What happens to the rest of your body? What principles would you draw from this?

THINKING IT THROUGH

What does the Bible mean?

A Band of Brothers

Read Ecclesiastes 4.9-12.

- Why is fellowship important? What negatives come from not having it?

Take a look at the following verse. It reveals the *objective* and *mechanics* of fellowship.

“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (Hebrews 10.24-25)

What are the three mechanics of fellowship found in these verses?

Verse 24 – “Let us...”

Verse 25 – “Let us...”

Verse 25 – “Let us...”

- What is the objective of fellowship? (v. 24)

Read 1 John 4.20-21. Can a person have fellowship with God and not be committed to God’s people? Why or why not?

MAKING IT COUNT

How do I live what I’ve learned?

Jesus’ disciples are to live as a community, partnering together to make him known among all mankind.

- Do you have a community of believers you are committed to? Are they encouraging you and spurring you on to love and good deeds?
- How can you partner with them to make the Lord Jesus known to others?
- List one fellow disciple you could “consider how to spur on” toward love and good deeds. What specifically will you do to help them?