Introduction: In the movie “The Lord of the Rings” we have 9 characters. Four were hobbits, 1 dwarf, 1 elf, 2 men, and one wizard. They were from various backgrounds but they were bound together for one purpose. Hence, the movie was “The Fellowship of The Ring.” This illustrates for us the idea of “fellowship” a working together, communion, join participation. Fellowship must have a basis, a purpose, and an action. Sin breaks the bond between man and God**. Ephesians 4:17 This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart**. It also creates problems between people. Think of the robberies, murders, lies, marital infidelities, etc. Jesus Christ offers to His people fellowship.

**I) Fellowship with God.**

**A) In Christ we have peace with God.**

**Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14a For He Himself is our peace, …17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.**

1. Peace is the proper or right relationship, harmony in thought and will.

2. In sin we refuse God’s love. Man’s sin prevents God from extending Himself to man.

3. Sin declares man an enemy of God and fear replaces love.

**Genesis 3:8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. 9 Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" 10 So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."**

4. Through the blood of Christ our sins can be washed away and man can be reconciled to God.

**Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**

**Romans 5:10 For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. 11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.**

**B) In Christ we have access to God.**

**Ephesians 2:18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.**

1. Outside we are enemies, aliens, strangers, all showing the separation of man from God.

2. In Christ we are brought near, part of the commonwealth of Israel, part of God’s family.

**C) In Christ we have continued forgiveness of sin.**

**1 John 1:7 - 2:1 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. 1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.**

**D) In Christ we have the knowledge of God.**

1. **“Knowing God”** is different than knowing about God. Knowing involves study, prayer, worship, and meditation.

2. In order to love God, we must know Him. Matthew 22.36-38.

3. **“Walking with God”** – example of Enoch, Genesis 5.4.

4. We must walk with the Lord before we can fight for the Lord. Example of Paul:

**Acts 9:4 Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" 5 And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads."**

5. **“God’s dwelling in us and with us” John 14.23.**

**E) Christians realize how important God is.**

1. They realize the power of God, the importance of their soul.

2. Song such as “My God and I” – This earth will pass, and with it common trifles, but God and I will go unendingly.” “Be with Me Lord” I cannot go on without you.

3. The invitation of Christ is an invitation into a new fellowship with God.

**II) Fellowship with The People of God.**

**A) Peace with God makes possible true fellowship with others.**

**John 17:20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. 22 "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: 23 "I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.**

1. All true Christians have something in common.

**1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.**

2. All have obeyed the Gospel of Christ- heard the Gospel, Believed, Repented, Confessed Christ, and been Baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. Acts 2.38; 8.35-38; 22.16

3. This unique relationship binds together people who otherwise would be alienated. Ephesians 2.

4. We have a common work- serving God, worship, pray together, etc.

**B) We have a common life together.**

**Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. 43 Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. 44 Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, 45 and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. 46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.**

1. This spiritual kinship transcends physical ties. Many are closer to their spiritual brothers/sisters than their physical family.

2. Blood is thicker than water, but the blood of Christ comes first to the Christian.

3. From this fellowship other benefits occur – friendship, help, encouragement, knowledge, correction, prayers, etc.

4. One problem is some see no need to be around other Christians.

5. To the true Christian this fellowship is important because it is part of their life. One reason any kind of church discipline is largely ineffective is this fellowship does not exist.

a. Much like a family member you are never around and they pass away. You do not miss them because they were not a part of your life.