

## Our fellowship with God depends upon our living in His truth

God created us in His own image. One thing this means is that we are “persons,” and we are able to have a “personal” relationship with Him. Another thing it means is that we are able to have personal relationships with our fellow human beings. When through the gospel we are forgiven of our sins and restored to a right relationship with God, we are able to live with God in what is called “fellowship” (1 Jn. 1:3), and we are also able to have fellowship with other faithful Christians. Peter wrote to those “who have obtained a faith of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pt. 1:1). The fellowship that Christians have among themselves is possible only because of the fellowship that each has individually with God.

There is no fellowship with God, even after we obey the gospel of Christ, if we do not live, or “walk,” according to God’s will. John said, “If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth” (1 Jn. 1:6). ***Our fellowship with God depends upon our living in His truth.*** Jesus prayed to God on behalf of His disciples, “Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth” (Jn. 17:17). It is only on the basis of this truth that the unity is possible for which Jesus prayed: “that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (Jn. 17:21).

The basis of our fellowship in the local congregation is that each member individually is in fellowship with God. When any member severs his fellowship with God by walking “disorderly” (2 Thess. 3:6 NKJV) or “in darkness” (1 Jn. 1:6), and if he refuses to repent and return to the Lord, then we have no choice but terminate our fellowship with that person. We cannot have fellowship with one who is not in fellowship with God (Rev. 2:14-16; etc.).

Our intent ought to be to receive all those who have fellowship with God, and reject those who do not. Care must be exercised, of course, but while the judgment must be made carefully, we cannot avoid the responsibility of making it. To the best of our ability — and with the utmost reverence and humility — we must seek fellowship with those who are in a right relationship with God. It matters greatly who has fellowship with God and who does not.

### Monday: 1 John 1:1-4

**Key Idea:** Faithful Christians have fellowship both with God and with one another.

**Questions for Family Growth:** In v.3, with whom did John say he had fellowship? In vv.1,2, what was the basis of that fellowship? When the gospel was declared to others, what other fellowship was possible, according to v.3?

**Wisdom for the Day:** Proverbs 15:26.

## Tuesday: Ephesians 4:15,16

**Key Idea:** Our relationship with other Christians grows out of our relationship to Christ.

**Questions for Family Growth:** Who is the head of the body? In **v.15**, what is our goal with respect to the head? What is said about the body in **v.16**? If he or she is not connected to the head, can any member be connected to other members?

**Wisdom for the Day:** **Proverbs 15:27**.

## Wednesday: 3 John 9,10

**Key Idea:** It is wrong to exclude from our fellowship those who are in fellowship with God.

**Questions for Family Growth:** What did John say Diotrephes had done? Was what he had done right and acceptable to God? In correcting this kind of problem, should we just accept anyone who claims to be in fellowship with God?

**Wisdom for the Day:** **Proverbs 15:28**.

## Thursday: 1 Corinthians 5:1-13

**Key Idea:** It is wrong to include in our fellowship those who are not in fellowship with God.

**Questions for Family Growth:** What did Paul say the church should do about the man he spoke of? What was said about “judging” a brother in **vv.12,13**? Why does this not conflict with what Jesus said about judging in **Mt. 7:1-5**?

**Wisdom for the Day:** **Proverbs 15:29**.

## Friday: Romans 14:12

**Key Idea:** Each of us must give account of himself individually to God.

**Questions for Family Growth:** What does it mean that we will give “account” of ourselves to God? Can one person do this for another? Does this mean we should not make any distinction between those who are faithful to the Lord and those who are not? Consider **Mal. 3:18**.

**Wisdom for the Day:** **Proverbs 15:30**.

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