

“The Message of Fellowship”

1 John 1:5 - 1 John 2:2

Introduction

Fellowship with God is based on understanding and activating His provision for addressing sin. The world often describes fellowship as an experience of shared interests, activities, and feelings between people. However, consider the following logic. If two people have a shared interest or feelings about understanding that one plus one equals two, their shared interest or feelings don't create the reality of that equation. The fact that one plus one equals two is a standard that exists regardless of how people feel about it. Similarly, God does not adjust His divine standard based on our interests or feelings. He cannot change His character, which is the basis of determining light from darkness and right from wrong. Communion with God based on His standard is critical for fellowship with Him, operating in light, and the cleansing of sin.

Prayer is relational communication with God. It is an avenue for us to confess our sins to the Lord, receive forgiveness, and be cleansed from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). As believers, we must recognize the reality of sin in our lives and align with God in declaring all forms of sin to be wrong. When we acknowledge sinful behavior as right when God declares it wrong, we operate by our own thoughts and not God's standard as defined by His Word. As a result, we break fellowship with God, who is light Himself, and we live in darkness. Fellowship with God and living in the light requires His Word to be our standard.

We are all guilty of sin and fall short of God's Holy standard. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, our representative and advocate with the Father. He intercedes for us when we acknowledge and confess sin as wrong to God, the Judge of righteousness. Jesus is the Son of the Judge and also the satisfaction for sin. His perfect righteousness is transferred to us so that we stand corrected and pure before a Holy God. Because of Jesus, the Father does not have to judge us any further, and we can remain in fellowship with Him. We should praise God daily as an expression of gratitude for the advocacy that we have in Jesus Christ.

Getting Started

1. What non-Christian standards are visible in our society today? How does our culture promote non-Christian standards as the “right way” of living life?
2. What are your beliefs about the need for fellowship with God? Why do you think some people operate outside of fellowship with God more consistently than others?

Let's Get Personal

1. How has operating outside of God's standard impacted your fellowship with Him?
2. How do you know when your walk with Christ is not aligned and you are operating outside of fellowship with the Father?

Take the Next Step

1. What changes are needed to help you return to a relationship of close fellowship and/or draw you closer in fellowship with God? Who can hold you accountable to honor God's standard in daily living? Are you praying about your relationship with God? If not, pray to God individually and with others who can support you in this area.
2. How can you encourage those who may find it difficult to have a relationship and fellowship with God? Give an example of how you could encourage someone to pursue a deeper relationship and fellowship with God, delivering truth in love.
3. Want to go deeper? Take time to look at the following passages: James 1:17; Ephesians 5:8-13; Revelation 12:10; Zechariah 3:1-10; Luke 22:31-34; Hebrews 10:26-31

Renew Your Mind

*"...for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord;
walk as children of Light..."*

Ephesians 5:8
