

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**

1 John 1:7 ... “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.”

Some people cannot function in life without many close friends, which makes them dependent on others. Other people are independent and believe they can function with few or no friends. Both types face problems in their walk with and service to Christ because God intends for us to live balanced spiritual and emotional lives in order to serve him. If you are too dependent on others, there may be little room for Christ in your life and you can begin to demonstrate the traits of other people, rather than the character of God. If you are too independent, you can become a dysfunctional member of the body of Christ, or even deprive the body entirely of the gifts God gave you for serving others. Both scenarios are contrary to the intent of God and his plan for you to be an active part of the body of Christ.

There are many pitfalls that a believer can stumble into if he or she does not understand the role of fellowship with other believers. For instance, if you do not attend Bible studies sponsored by your church because you feel more than adequate to study the Bible alone, you may become a victim of your own arrogance. You may also be depriving others of the insights God gives you in his Word. If you look for a church that meets your needs, instead of looking for a church in which you can serve, you are misunderstanding the purpose of the church. If you avoid fellowship with other believers because you consider them odd or not having the same knowledge as you, you are missing the opportunity to influence them for Christ.

The whole concept of serving God – which we are required to do – involves serving others. Spending time in personal prayer and Bible study is not service, it is your personal contact with God. And, serving God on your own terms, which means that you will only do for him what you are willing to do, is also not service. You may think you know everything there is to know about the Bible, but if you will attend a group Bible study, you will find that you do not have all the answers. Fellowship is how we satisfy the need for corporate (group) worship, uplift and learn from other believers, and answer God’s call for us to serve him. If you are avoiding fellowship with other believers, you are saying “no” to God’s plan for you. In fact, you may not even know God’s plan for you if you are so independent that you feel you do not need others in your life.

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