

LIVING WELL #14: FELLOWSHIPING WELL

ESV TCL 2026/09/20

Q1. Discuss what activities and ideas are conjured up by the word 'fellowship'.

Like many biblical concepts, fellowship has both vertical and horizontal components, human aspects, is affected by sin, is involved closely with the gospel, and spans the whole Bible.



1. IN THE BEGINNING ...

There is no one biblical word that covers the idea of fellowship everywhere.

Genesis 3:8 And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ESV

Genesis 5:24 Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away. NIV

Genesis 6:9 ... Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. ESV

Q2. What early signs are there that God wants fellowship with those he created in his image?

Q3. What was the problem?

2. LATER

Exodus 24:1-12 Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Come up [Mount Sinai] to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel. You are to worship at a distance, ² but Moses alone is to approach the LORD; the others must not come near. And the people may not come up with him.'

³ When Moses went and told the people all the LORD's words and laws, they responded with one voice, 'Everything the LORD has said we will do.'⁴ Moses then wrote down everything the LORD had said.

He got up early the next morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵ Then he sent young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as fellowship¹ offerings to the LORD. ⁶ Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and the other half he splashed against the altar. ⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant² and read it to the people. They

¹ Niv. The esv has peace offerings here. The Hebrew word for *fellowship* or *peace* means this type of sacrifice. The word is very similar to shalom, meaning peace.

responded, 'We will do everything the LORD has said; we will obey.'

Q4. Who was the only one that could have immediate fellowship with the *LORD* God? Why?

Q5. What enables fellowship with God?

v3

Q6. What short-term solution to the problem of disobedience was there?

vv4b-7

Notice also how LORD³ is spelled throughout.

⁸ *Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, 'This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words.'*

⁹ *Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up ¹⁰ and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of lapis lazuli, as bright blue as the sky. ¹¹ But God did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God, and they ate and drank.*

¹² *The LORD said to Moses, 'Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone with the law and commandments I have written for their instruction.'* NIV

Q7. What everlasting solution is pictured in verse 8?

Q8. What happened and did not happen?

vv9-10

v11

3. NOWADAYS

Matthew 26:28 ... this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ESV

Q9. What very similar meal do Christians enjoy under the new covenant?

² Previous parts of Exodus.

³ יְהוָה (Yahweh) the covenant name for God.

1 Corinthians 10:17 Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share⁴ [in] the one loaf.

Q10. Is the fellowship at communion only with God?

As is often the case in scripture, what comes vertically down to God's people is something with horizontal ramifications. When we arrive in Greek part of the Bible, a single group of words stand out, meaning fellowship, sharing, partnership, in common, etc.

Philippians 1:3-7 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵ because of your partnership [κοινωνία (koinōnia) fellowship, sharing] in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. ⁷ It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace,[a] both in my imprisonment and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel. ESV

Q11. What activities make up this kind of fellowship? v5

v4

v6

v7

Acts 4:32 Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common [κοινός (koinos) shared, in common]. ESV

Q12. Is fellowship only a matter of talking?

Hebrews 13:16 Do not neglect to do good and to share [κοινωνία (koinōnia)] what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. ESV

Q13. How does this instruction connect horizontal fellowship with vertical worship?

1 John 1:6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. ESV

Q14. How is fellowship now the same as in Exodus 24:3,7 & 12?

⁴ μετέχω (metechō) share in

Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread⁵ and to prayer. NIV

Q15. In what ways are church life and fellowship the same thing?

Where are our own weaknesses in koinonia?

1 John 1:3 ... that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. ESV

Q16. Who is it that enables such both horizontal and vertical 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 his Son cleanses us from all sin. ESV

Q17. What can go wrong with our fellowship? How can we restore it?

Luke 11:4



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5 According to John Stott, *The Message of Acts*, IVP, 1990, this is probably the Lord's supper but as part of a larger fellowship meal.