

UNDERSTANDING TRUE BIBLE FELLOWSHIP and FAITH quotes

1) Understanding True Bible Fellowship

What Biblical principles are to govern our fellowship and union with one another?

“But if we walk in the light, as he (God) is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7.

The Greek word for “fellowship” used in this text is “koinonia”, and this word translates and means “a partnership, participation, fellowship” (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, word #2842). This verse is not dealing with someone who is just visiting. This verse is applying to someone who is joining in partnership or union with others, and thereby has gained the privilege of participating in the affairs of that fellowship group, which a visitor would not be allowed to do.

2) What exactly is this light of God that we must walk in before we can be allowed to join in fellowship with others? The Greek word used here for “light” is “phos”, and this word translates and means “to shine by rays, luminousness, fire, light” (Strong’s, word #5457). The light that we are to walk in is not any ordinary light, but it is a special light that shines with a fiery luminous radiance. And where do we find this special fiery light?

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” Psalms 119:105.

“Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?” Jeremiah 23:29.

“...his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing”. Jeremiah 20:9.

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” John 17:17.

This special fiery luminous light that we are to walk in is found only in God’s word of truth; not in the words of men, but only in the words of God. When God’s truth is known, it begins to work within like a hammer to break up our hard and stony hearts, and like a fire that burns away all our selfish barriers of resistance, until we finally give up our own stubborn ways and yield to walk in God’s word of truth.

3) What does it mean to walk only in this fiery light of God's word of truth? The Greek word used for "walk" in this text is "peripateo", and this word translates and means "to tread all around, to live, deport oneself, follow, be occupied with, walk" (Strong's, word #4043).

To walk in the light of God's fiery word of truth does not mean that we just know the truth. It means that we tread or walk all around in it, or we bring this truth into every aspect of our daily life and live in it! We also deport ourselves or bend our will to follow in God's word, and we don't walk in God's light of truth sometimes, and then forget about it the rest of the time; but we are to be occupied with or fully connected to this fiery truth all the time! As we choose to walk in obedience to God's word of truth, bringing it into every aspect of our daily life, this fiery word will continue to burn up all the worthless material within us, thus purifying and sanctifying us more and more.

4) Who are these "others" that we can join in fellowship and partnership with in unity?
"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" Amos 3:3.

Before two individuals can walk together, then must both agree to walk in the same direction. So in order to be united together in fellowship, two or more individuals must be agreed to walk in the same light of truth founded upon God's word. If they are both walking in the same truth of God's word, then they can have fellowship one with another! But without this prior agreement to walk in the same light of truth founded upon God's word, then there can be no true Biblical union in fellowship between these individuals!

5) How many individuals who are agreed to walk in the light of truth founded upon God's word do you need to have before you can then be part of a united church group?

"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matthew 18:19-20.

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken." Ecclesiastes 4:9-12.

Even though we are saved individually, yet one person alone cannot make up a Biblically based church group. There must be at least two like-minded believers walking together in the truth of God's word before a church fellowship group can be properly formed, and three or more like minded believers will form a much stronger church union and fellowship.

6) Are those seeking membership with our group to be immediately accepted into fellowship? No, because acceptance into fellowship is based upon the two-step condition of them knowing the light of truth of God's word, and of them walking in or obeying that truth. This means that if they know the truth, but are not yet converted in following it, then they are not yet ready to be accepted into membership.

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" 2 Corinthians 6:14-16.

There can be no yoking together, no fellowship and no communion with darkness, unrighteousness, or with unbelievers. And this is because Christ and Satan have no concord, union or agreement with each other. This verse is not talking about unbelievers visiting your church group, but is talking about not uniting with them in fellowship and membership until they are no longer unbelievers.

7) This shows us that potential members must first be screened or tested in order to see exactly what they believe. This will discover if they believe and are walking in all the light of God's word of truth held in agreement with the united church body they want to join. If they are not in agreement with one or more of these truths, then they cannot be accepted into membership or fellowship until they grow more in Bible knowledge and finally come into agreement. But if we go ahead and admit them into membership and fellowship before this testing is done, then we are jeopardizing the unity and fellowship of our whole church group!

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try (test) the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." 1 John 4:1-3.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20.

These verses reveal that individuals were being tested on what they believed, and if they did not answer or confess or speak in harmony with God's word of truth, then it was because they were not following the light of God, and thus we could not walk together with them in unity. Testing what individuals believe on various aspects of Bible truth is one way God states that you can easily determine whether or not individuals are walking in the light as God is in the light, and if it is revealed that they are not yet walking in the light, then they are not safe to admit into fellowship and membership in your church group.

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness [or with those who do not know or are not yet walking in the light of God's word], but rather reprove them [or admonish and instruct them in the light of God's truth]". Ephesians 5:11.

8) The word “Creed” is derived from the Latin word “credo”, and this word translates and simply means “I believe” (Wikipedia Online Dictionary, under word “Creed”, at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creed>). But the term “Creed” has been negatively stigmatized by what the Roman Catholic Church did to others which involved the Catholic church’s Creed of faith.

The Catholic church formed a creed which pertained to their own church members. But then the church ambitiously believed that their creed of faith should apply to all religious people around the world and not just to Catholics. To achieve this unsanctified man-made goal, they began using the civil power of various nations to enforce their Catholic creed upon all non-Catholics. Any person or group that refused to accept the Catholic Creed of faith were persecuted and tortured to try and force them to concede, and if that failed then they were murdered; and this Godless process went on for 12 centuries — beginning from 538 to 1798, or for 1260 years!

Around the 15th - 17th centuries, the Movement of Protestantism arose contending that God had given all mankind the freedom of conscience to choose to only adhere to the particular doctrines of faith they were personally convicted were the truth founded in God’s word, and therefore they had the liberty to flatly refuse any doctrines founded in the words of men or of churches. So because Catholicism had used its Creed in association with brutally forcing non-Catholics to embrace only the Catholic faith, then this word “Creed” became synonymous with papal apostasy and control.

This then led Protestant believers to completely avoid using the word Creed when they were declaring what doctrines of faith they believed in, and to instead use other terms — such as “Statement of Faith”, or “Confession of Faith”. But technically, any verbal or written statement of what they believed in could be called a Creed.

“A creed (also *confession*, *symbol*, or *statement of faith*) is a statement of the shared beliefs of a religious community in the form of a fixed formula summarizing core tenets.” (Wikipedia Online Dictionary, under word “Creed”, at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creed>).

According to this definition, a Creed would be a set of fixed or unalterable doctrines of belief that an entire religious community of churches share, whether these churches were local or world-wide. But in this study we are not dealing with a world-wide church body holding fixed and unalterable beliefs. We are instead dealing with the Biblical truths which a single local church group have unitedly agreed to walk together in, and instead of these doctrinal beliefs being fixed and unalterable, they would be open to improvement and enlargement as more and more of God’s word of truth was studied, understood, agreed upon and walked in. So whatever verbal or written document of faith is made by this single local church group would only pertain to their own group and would not extend to any other church group!

Since this Statement or Confession of faith of this single church group only applies to their own group, then as long as they remain walking in the light of God, it is impossible for their chosen beliefs to be used by them in the same Satanic controlling way over other groups as Catholicism did. This is because before this church group could follow Catholicism's apostate example of trying to force other church groups to concede to their creed, they would first have to accept and begin walking in darkness and no longer walking only in the light of God's word. This shows that it was not the agreed upon doctrines of faith of that church group that were at fault and were to be blamed and avoided, but it was the decision of the church group in seeking to control all other groups that was at fault and was to be blamed and avoided. So the fault is not with the truths of God they agreed to hold, but with the unconverted hearts of the members of that church group!

9) Asking people questions to determine what they believe is in complete harmony with God's will and Bible truth!

"He (Jesus) said unto him (the lawyer), What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." Luke 10:26-28.

Jesus asked this individual what he believed, or in other words Jesus was testing this man's faith, and after examining the answer that this lawyer gave, Christ determined that it was in harmony with the truth of God's word.

Acts 8:27-38 reveals the instance in which a eunuch of Ethiopia was reading the Bible, and Philip was led of the Holy Spirit to go up to the man and asked him this question: "Understandest thou what thou readest?" (Verse 30) The eunuch said no, and then desired Philip to teach him the truth. Philip did so, and the eunuch desired to be baptized into this truth that Philip shared, and then notice what took place:

"And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." Acts 8:37-38.

Philip asked this individual what he believed, or in other words Philip was testing this man's faith. This eunuch was not yet believing or walking in the same truth as Philip was. But after teaching him the truth, Philip again asked him what he believed, and after examining the answer that this eunuch gave, Philip determined that it was in harmony with the truth of God's word, and then baptized him.

Acts 2:14-42 reveals the instance in which Peter and John and 10 other Apostles were preaching their unitedly held Bible truths to a multitude of Israelites, and as the Holy Spirit was bringing conviction of the truth upon their hearts, these Israelites asked what they needed to do? Peter then told them to believe and to follow or walk in the truths of God's word which he had taught them, and then about 3000 individuals chose to do so. Then notice what took place:

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts 2:41-42.

Peter taught these Israelites the particular doctrines of faith founded upon God's word of truth which he and the other apostles and believers unitedly held. Then these Israelites chose to believe and to walk in these very same truths, they were then baptized, and then these 3000 converts were allowed to join in membership with the church, and afterwards these converts continued stedfastly walking in these truths.

10) Following God's instruction and testing the beliefs of any who come to your group for membership before admitting them, will gain God's smiling approval and not His frown!

"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted." Revelation 2:2-3.

11) There are critical, key doctrines of truth that will hold up, stabilize and evenly support the whole foundation of the faith of your church group. But without these key pillars, your church group is less capable of standing firm amidst the real and intensifying dangers of these last days. And how many of these key salvational pillars does the Bible declare there are?

"Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars". Proverbs 9:1.