

loneliness is to understand that, through Christ, we have been born into a wonderful family: the family of God. We may find our former our former friends no longer appreciate us (1 Peter 4) but this new family is a world wide affair and the thing that gives us unity is the fact of being in Christ. We speak of it as a fellowship..a gathering of “fellows” persons of common interest and bonding ans as such it secure for us in every society a family, a host of friends. There are some things to be noticed about the fellowship however---probably a good many more than I can now mention but it is basically fellowship with God and with one another having both a physical and a spiritual side.

II. Discussion: Fellowship is the state of being in a companionable association with others of similar interest, background, or experience.

A. The joys of fellowship and you can see them developed in our texts:

1. Companionship (Phil. 1:27-30)
2. Growth (Eph. 4:7-16)
3. Encouragement (Col. 3:12-17)

You may learn a good bit about these in the reading of books but it is in the association with others where they blossom.

B. The requirements of fellowship beyond the reality of the new birth and acceptance with God.

1. Participation: being with ‘em is crucial
2. Consideration (1 Thess 5 says a lot about it)
3. Respect for every member of the fellowship--regardless of whatever deficiency might be present. (You can work to correct these but only with an attitude of respect)

C. The results of fellowship are several and I mention these:

1. There is ample care for one another...every one has a role
2. The Gospel is collectively more effectively witnessed
3. The praise of God is more meaningful to the heart and encouraging to the soul of the saint
4. There are enough workers and helpers to do what is to be done and working together is a happy circumstance.