

## Sermon Notes on Churched: We Fellowship (1 John 1:1-7 & other references)

- One of the words that gets thrown around a lot in church life is the word “**fellowship**”. It can mean different things to different people depending upon what its used to describe (can reference a building like a Fellowship Hall or church potlucks and refreshments or just socializing when the church gathers)
- The word “**fellowship**” is defined by a notorious Greek word – *koinonia* which means to share something in common. It’s a communion, a sharing, a common bond or partnership. It also focuses on the outcome of what is shared in common, like a contribution (Rom. 15:26; 2 Cor. 8:4).
- **1 John 1:1-7** provides a helpful overview of fellowship and highlights its two directions: the vertical with God (v. 3b) and the horizontal with other disciples (v. 3a, 7)

### 1. **Check your vertical partnership** (1 John 1:1-6)

- Before we can properly understand and experience our fellowship with one another, we must first check our fellowship with God
  - **Are you partnered with the real “Life”?** (v. 1-3) Jesus is the “Word of Life”
    - Jesus is a real historical life (v. 1a: “*what was from the beginning...*”) In the face of some growing heresies that viewed Jesus as divine, but without a real body along with others believing His divine side only connected with His humans side between His baptism and the cross, John wanted the church to know that Jesus was a real historical Person
    - Jesus gave a real experienced life (v. 1b, 2a, 3a: “*heard...seen...beheld...our hands handled*”). Jesus was real, not mystical or spiritual.
    - Jesus is a real proclaimed life (v. 2-3a: “*and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life...*”)
    - Jesus is a real shared life (v. 3b: “*and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ our Lord*”). 1 Cor. 1:9; 6:17 – This partnership is real and matters (1 Jn. 5:10-12)
- **Are you walking “in the light”?** (v. 3, 5-7): Yes, our fellowship with God is our connection to our fellowship with each other and “*darkness*” (wrong beliefs & behavior) can mess up that fellowship. We can’t deny our sins (v. 8, 10), but confess it to experience His cleansing (v. 9)

## 2. **Cultivate your horizontal partnership** (1 John 1:7 and other selected Scriptures)

- We have fellowship with one another if we are walking in the light (v. 7)
- **God uses one Greek word** to describe our reciprocal relationship (*allelon*) written as two English words: “*one another*”. This word is used 100 times in the New Testament and gives us about 38 ways to apply our fellowship to one another. There are 9 negative and 30 positive ways to exercise your partnership in Christ and one of them is used 15 times (“*love one another*”).
- **Let’s examine the A, B, C’s of our horizontal reciprocal relationship:**

**A** **Accept your common partnership with other disciples in Christ** (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:25). Positionally, this is who we are because of our fellowship with God.

**B** **Bless others with attitudes that honor your partnership in Christ** (1 Pet. 5:5; Rom. 12:10b; Phil 2:3). A mind-set of humility and viewing others as more important will make fellowship work well.

**C** **Constrain yourself from damaging your common partnership with others**

- The don’t list: John 6:43; Rom. 13:8; 14:13; Gal. 5:15, 26; Col. 3:9; 1 Thess. 5:15a; James 4:11; 5:9
- The unity builder list: Mark 9:50; Rom. 12:6; 15:5, 7; Eph. 4:32; Col 3:13; 1 Thess. 5:15; James 5:16

**D** **Demonstrate God’s love toward your fellow partners in Christ** (“*love one another*”: Jn. 13:34-35; 15:12, 17; Ro. 13:8; 1 Th. 3:12; 4:9; 2 Th. 1:3; 1 Pe 1:22; 4:8; 1 Jn. 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11; 2 Jn 5)

- Love is an attitude and action that willfully gives itself consistently and sacrificially for the highest good of another.
- It takes the initiative (“*Greet one another with a kiss of love*”-1 Pt. 5:4)
- It’s worth getting provoked to do (“*let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds*” – Heb. 10:24)
- It’s a debt we should always owe others (Romans 13:8)
- It’s something we should be willing to stretch to the limit of its capacity and “*from the heart*” (1 Pt. 1:22: “*ferently love one another*”)
- It serves the needs of others (Gal. 5:13)
- It values others like family (Rom. 12:10: “*be devoted to one another in brother love*”)

