

The Distinctive of the Church ■ Fellowship

by Donny Coulter

This sermon delves into the distinctives of the church as outlined in Acts chapter 2, emphasizing the importance of true fellowship rooted in a common bond with Jesus. It challenges individuals to examine their personal relationship with Christ and how it impacts the collective body of believers. The message highlights the need for genuine partnership, mutual care, and shared participation in the faith community, reflecting the unity and love found in the early church.

Scripture: Acts 2:40, Acts 2:42, Acts 2:44, 1 Corinthians 1:9, 1 John 1:1, Romans 12:15, 1 Corinthians 12:25

Topics: "Fellowship in Christ", "Unity in the Church"

Description

This sermon delves into the distinctives of the church as outlined in Acts chapter 2, emphasizing the importance of true fellowship rooted in a common bond with Jesus. It challenges individuals to examine their personal relationship with Christ and how it impacts the collective body of believers. The message highlights the need for genuine partnership, mutual care, and shared participation in the faith community, reflecting the unity and love found in the early church.

Transcript

Acts chapter 2, if you would, Acts chapter 2, I'm going to begin with verse 40. Acts 2 and verse 40. Now we are speaking of the distinctives of the church, that which sets the church apart from every other institution, that which sets it apart from the government, from business, and even from other churches.

What sets us apart, what is distinctive about us, what should be the distinctives of a church like ours as we look to the New Testament church as our example. Now I want to encourage you as we continue to walk through this series over the next three weeks, two weeks, that you still remember, I want you to ask yourselves a question. Okay, and that question is, are we this kind of church? Are we, we being the collective body of believers that gather here consistently, are we this kind of church? But I also want you to keep in mind as you think of the answer to that question, are we this kind of church? It also points back to you as an individual, because our church cannot be this kind of church if it's not made up of individuals that are this kind of people.

You understand what I mean? So we have to understand, constantly keep before us the idea that I could be the hindrance of my church being this kind of church. Because if I'm not pursuing the distinctives themselves, then I can hinder our church from being that kind of church, a church that is set apart. Let's read together Acts chapter 2 beginning with verse 40.

And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, be saved from this perverse generation. Oh, to be able to preach a message with just one sentence. And then to have the results that they had.

And then those who gladly received his word were baptized. And that day, about 3,000 souls were added to them. May God make us so distinct as a church that as we live out our faith, our church begins to grow because people are enamored with Jesus, the message of Christ, so that they come to Christ in droves.

Would you not like to see that? To see your neighbors come to Christ? See your family come to Christ? To be able to speak a simple word, turn from this perverse generation, and see them turn. Like I've said before, if they had 3,000, I'd be satisfied with three. We need to start somewhere, don't we? Verse 42.

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, in fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. Now, there's our four distinctives that we will pursue. We talked about the word last week.

This week we're talking about fellowship. But here are our four distinctives. Number one, they were steadfastly, continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine.

And today we're going to be talking about fellowship. And then in the breaking of bread, which pertains to the Lord's Supper and in prayers. Now, as I said last week, in the breaking of bread, I have named that or put the word worship on that.

So the four distinctives is the word of God, doctrine, fellowship, worship, and prayer. Verse 43. Then, you notice, transition, verse 43.

Then, as they continued steadfastly in the four distinctives, it says, then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. You know where I'm at. I'm a good Baptist.

And I would love to see God move in such a way that people would look at Him with the awe that He deserves. Verse 44. Now, all who believed were together and had all things in common and sold their possessions and goods and divided them among all as anyone had need.

So continuing daily with one accord in the temple and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. Let's pray.

Father, thank You, Lord, for Your Word. And Lord, thank You for this church. Thank You, Lord, for Creekside Community Church.

Thank You for every person who calls this place home, who consistently attend. I pray for us as a church body, Lord, that we would pursue You so much that we would place You before us and beside us so consistently that it would distinguish us from everything in everyone else. God, not so that we could get recognition, but so that the name of Christ could be lifted up and be honored and glorified.

Let us be that kind of church, Lord. I pray that You would help us as individuals, Lord, as individual members of the body. I pray that You would help us to pursue You in such a way as that, God, that we would be different.

And so, Lord, we thank You and, Lord, we offer to You ourselves and submit ourselves to You that we might, that Your Holy Spirit might do His work in us and through us today as we look into Your Word. We

pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Now, the first distinctive that we talked about last week is that they were a studying, teaching, proclaiming church of the Word. They studied and they taught and they proclaimed the Word of God. And I want to say to you that, we emphasized this quite a bit last week, that you as a child of God have been given the Holy Spirit.

It is not something special that a pastor gets that you don't get. I have received the same Holy Spirit received at your salvation. So you have the Holy Spirit living in you and therefore you have the opportunity and the responsibility to study for yourself, to study the Word of God, to teach the Word of God to your children and to your neighbors, to proclaim it to those who are around you.

You have been given the Spirit of God. Now fill yourself up with good doctrine, good teaching. I know that, jump on YouTube and there's a lot of preachers on YouTube nowadays, right? I feel like sometimes it's become dangerous that we've become a YouTube church.

Because you can watch anybody and I want to say to you, please be careful who you listen to. Make sure that their life matches the doctrine that they teach. Make sure that when they teach you something that they are teaching you something that promotes and encourages you to look to Jesus, to put Him before you and beside you and nothing else.

Make sure that the people that you're following are the kind of people that should be followed. And then in this, you know that we've been talking for a couple of years about the pursuit of holiness. And the only way that you're going to be able to properly pursue holiness is to get your head and your heart in the Word of God and discover what God desires of you as His child.

You understand what I'm saying? You just don't learn these things by osmosis. They don't just happen. You get and receive through the Word of God and the indwelling teacher that you have, the Holy Spirit, the ability to know what God desires for you and of you.

And then you can live that out in your pursuit of what He desires. This holy God desires from you. Thayne sent us a message here last week and here's a quote from a man named Jerry Bridges.

He says, it is impossible to practice godliness without constant, consistent and balanced intake of the Word of God in our lives. And it is true. If you're going to pursue holiness, pursue the Word of God.

So the first distinctive of the church that set them apart was they were a studying, teaching, proclaiming church of the Word of God. They stood on the Word. But secondly, they were a fellowshiping church.

Now fellowship, the word fellowship is kind of one of those words that's changed over time. There's a lot of words that change over time. I started looking into words that the meaning has changed or adjusted over time.

A word like unbelievable. Unbelievable used to mean it is not able to believe, right? Unbelievable. In other words, it was something that you could not believe.

Somebody said something and it was not believable. Therefore, you did not believe it. Well, now it's come to mean unbelievable.

Wow, unbelievable it says, you know. The idea is it's good. Now it means it's good or impressive.

The word naughty. The word naughty actually used to mean in its original was not to have not. To have nothing.

So it was used to refer to people of less means. They were poor. Children especially.

Naughty children. They had not. Well, now we know that it means something completely different.

It's gone from having nothing to being bad. The word gay. It used to have the sense of being happy or jovial or even impressive in terms of dress and color and all of those things.

And we know now that it means something completely different. That began in about 1971-73 when it really began to mean something completely different. Words change in their meaning over time.

And fellowship from the time that we just read the word here in Acts chapter 2 and verse 42, the idea is that I'm trying to get across to you is that the fellowship that they're talking about here has kind of changed its meaning to the point that we think fellowship is standing around outside the coffee table. We call it that. But we think that's fellowship.

Standing out there in the back talking about cows and talking about horses and talking about the stock market. And that's fellowship because we're there and we're talking together. But I want you to know that we've allowed that to define what fellowship is.

That fellowship is visiting. Fellowship is getting together. And it is.

It is a part of fellowship. But the definition of fellowship goes much deeper. The word itself is koinonia.

Koinonia means participation. It means participation. It has the idea of having in common.

We participate because we have in common with one another. All sharing in is what it means. If you notice that the New Testament was written, well, the Bible was written in Koinonia Greek.

All right. And the reason why it's called Koinonia Greek is because it was a common language that went throughout much of the world. So you got this idea of in Corinth, in Rome, in the Roman Empire, in the Mediterranean, and even found in Mediterranean ships is this common language of Greek.

It was commonly used in Jerusalem, in the temple, and in Athens. Two totally opposite kinds of places. So it was a New Testament language that was universal.

And so it was called Koinonia Greek because it was common to everyone. And so when we use the word koinonia, we are saying that we are all in common. We have something in common together.

And so it goes beyond just talking about cattle. There's something that brings us together that we share in that makes us common. There is a joint participation in things that are held common.

That's the idea of koinonia. Now, a worldly partnership says, well, you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours. A worldly partnership says, what can I get out of this relationship? Now, that can be in business.

The idea, why do we have so many contracts in business? Because we have to protect each other from somebody wanting more than the other. It's what I can get out of this. You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours.

How much can I get out of this relationship? What can I draw out of, you see the question? What can I draw out of this relationship? That's the idea of a worldly partnership. Not a koinonia partnership, but a worldly partnership. But our partnership is a Christ-centered partnership.

And in a Christ-centered partnership, the difference between us and a worldly partnership is that I have, as one who shares in common in Christ, I should have a generous spirit of giving that's contrasted to a spirit of taking. Right? So proper koinonia, proper fellowship is about how can I give into this relationship? As Christ gave to me, how can I give into this relationship? And our giving is based on the common bond of Jesus, that we are connected. We are absolutely connected, and we're going to talk about that in a moment.

We are connected in Christ. Look at Acts chapter 2, right there in verse 44, 45. Now, all who believed were together and they had all things in common, and they sold their possessions and goods and divided them among all anyone who had need.

They had all things in common. Turn over to chapter 4. Chapter 4, Acts 4, verse 32. Now, the multitude of those who believed were of what? One heart and one soul.

Do you see the common? You see how the word is so beautiful, the way it's built, the way it's written. And now he says, in definition of koinonia, in definition of fellowship, they were of one heart and one soul. They were common, and that common bond between them was Christ.

But he says, they were of one heart and one soul. Neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they all had things in common. And with great power, the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and a great grace was upon them all.

Nor was there anyone among them that lacked, for all who were possessors of land or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold and laid them at the apostles' feet, and they were distributed each to anyone who had need. And Joseph, or Barnabas, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles, which is translated son of encouragement, a Levite of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. Now here's the idea.

I had the privilege of visiting some Hutterites here a couple weeks ago, right before Christmas, and just enjoyed the fellowship to have around Christian Hutterites, believers that were Hutterites. And we sat around the table and they asked me the question, what do you think about that verse in Acts where it talks about their living in common? Do you think it means a commune? And I said, no, I do not. I do not believe it's pointing to selling everything and moving into a central place where everybody lives in one place as in a commune and separating ourselves from the rest of the world.

I don't see that in there. But what I do see in terms of a principle is that they loved each other so much. They had Christ so in common that they held on to one another so tightly that they did not hold on to their stuff.

You see the difference? When we are in participation, when we are in participation together, when we are in a common bond in Jesus, then none of the other things that we hold on to are important. That we consider all of the stuff that we have of less importance than the condition of my partner in the faith. They were totally and absolutely connected to the common bond of Jesus that they did not hold on to their external stuff.

And when someone was in need, they were willing to get rid of it. They were willing to sell it. I'll tell you a story, and I know I've probably told this story before, but our church back in Tennessee, when it came time to build a church, they had grown from little of nothing to a really thriving brand new church plant.

And so they were looking at land and building a building and those kind of things. And they didn't, as a young church, always didn't have a whole lot of money. And so they turned to the congregation and said, you know, we need to raise some money.

And they had a dedication service. And in that dedication service, the pastor's wife walked up to the altar and took her wedding ring off and laid it on the altar to be sold. And after that followed others who sold boats and properties and vehicles and offices.

All kinds of stuff began to be sold to be able to build the church. Why? Because they had a common bond and the need was there for the community of believers. And they all jumped in and they didn't hold on so tightly to all of that stuff.

They let it go. And that's the kind of heart that we need to be able to participate in true partnership. The common bond was not found in their stuff.

The common bond was found in Christ. And we have to remember that. I think you know what I want to encourage you as I think through that.

I know that our church has done a pretty good job of doing that. You know, we've reached out to missionaries that are in need. We've reached out to some of the Dave and Susie and their need.

And we've responded so well. And thank you for that. But I want to see that permeate every part of who we are.

Do you remember, you ever heard of Tertullian? He was a writer in the first second century. And in those first couple of centuries after Jesus' death, the gospel was taken off around the world. Especially around Rome and North Africa.

And it was a growth that happened that what people recognized, lives were changed. They weren't just going somewhere else to a building. Their lives were changed and people began to see that.

And you're talking about pagans whose life has completely changed. And people on the outside were going, something's wrong here. And there was a distrust towards those people.

And so there were spies that were sent in among them to see what was going on. And it is said that they said they love like nobody else. And there's, in their worship services, there's only one that they worship and there's no idols of him.

There's only one that they worship. But Tertullian wrote these words in one of his apologies. He says, it is mainly the deeds of a love so noble that lead many to put a brand upon us.

See how they love one another, they say, for they themselves are animated by mutual hatred. How they are ready to even to die for one another, they say, for they themselves will sooner put to death. See, when they got in, when those spies came in the church, they discovered that they knew what love was.

They began to see that these people had a common bond of Jesus and they would die for one another. They would sell everything they have for one another. Now, I bring you back to our question.

Are we this kind of church? Are we this kind of individual? Well, we know that definition defines function. Right? Definition always defines function. And so, if we're going to define koinonia as a joint participation held in a common bond in Jesus Christ, then we need to see what that means as it functions in life.

So, we share. So, here's the function. We share with one another because we belong to each other.

Right? And we belong to each other because we belong to Jesus. Now, I have some pictures here that I want to share with you. Let me give you four things.

And I think I included them in your notes. Let me give you four things and then we're going to jump off of that. They shared themselves with Christ as in a marriage relationship.

They shared in the provision of Christ by the Holy Spirit. They shared themselves and their possessions with one another. And then they shared the provision of Christ with others.

This is true fellowship. Complete fellowship. So, let me get... Have we got it up? Oh, we do got it up there.

Man, we are on fire. Thank you, Leslie. You see in this picture, what's happening? What's happening in the picture? Okay.

Believer is talking to believer. They're helping one another. They're hanging out with one another.

Did you know that the world can have partnership? The world can have fellowship. Right? The world can have that. They can give to one another and they can help each other.

We see that all the time, right? We see that constantly. So, that is something that the world can do. But the difference between what's supposed to be the difference between us and outside is the fact that in this picture, without the connection of Christ and the provision of Christ and the sharing of Christ together, without that, relationships have a high probability of falling apart.

Okay? So, here we have fellowship, but not true Christian fellowship. All right? Next slide. Here in this slide, what do you see? Do you see a one-way or a two-way street? Is it up there? Yeah, it's up there.

Is it a one-way or a two-way street? And where is the one-way coming from? From Christ. So, that means that here's this person, we've got the label believer, but there's something missing in this picture that really mislabels the believer because there's nothing returning back to Jesus. Is that fellowship? No.

It's a one-way street. It's not a joint participation. This is a one-way street.

And in this, I do not believe that there is a relationship with Jesus. In other words, this picture does not contain salvation at all. That there are people that come to church that receive from Christ, the Holy Spirit comes and brings conviction.

There is that touch in that song that we sing that grabs a hold of your heart and moves you towards Christ, but there's a lack of a relationship, and all of that is to move you into relationship with Christ. And someday, you will move into that relationship. Next slide.

So, now we still got a problem, don't we? We still got two people sharing with one another, Christ sharing with them, but there is no sharing with Christ. Is this true biblical fellowship? This is not true biblical fellowship. These are individuals who receive from Jesus, and then they relay the provision that they have received to others that need ministry in their specific areas, but there does not exist a marriage between Jesus and the believers.

And when that happens, meeting the needs of others, in other words, ministering, healing, and deliverance, and touching needs, and all of that stuff, and being close in fellowship with one another, it's not proof of a relationship with Jesus. Don't be fooled. Now, bring up this verse.

I believe it's there. Is it? There we go. Matthew chapter 22.

I'm going to read it from here. Matthew 7, verse 22. Many will say to me in this day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? Have we not cast out demons in your name and done many wonders in your name? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you.

Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness. Let me issue a warning to all of us as we sit here this morning. You could have been sitting in that place in church your entire life and still not be married to Christ.

You've experienced all the blessing of being in a church body, of the passing on and the giving of way. You've maybe even taught Sunday school, cooked a meal, done a lot of wonderful, beautiful things for the family, and all of those things. Even read your Bible and pray, but be careful.

Because this tells me, Jesus says that there's going to be some on that day that say, but didn't we do all that stuff in your name? And he says, no, I'm sorry. Depart from me for I never knew you. So when you ask yourself the question, am I that kind of person? It starts with a personal relationship with Jesus, not with doing stuff for and in the church.

And so my question to you is, young people, just because your mommy and daddy have made you come to church your whole life, does not mean that you are a believer. You're not necessarily a follower of Jesus. Will you consider that you really know him? Can you recall a place in your life where you had a place of faith, where you said, I am a sinner, I am separated from you, and I need you to fix that problem? Can you recall that? Because in that picture of Christ sending down his provisions, that's what he's provided to you.

He's provided to you everything you need to fix your sin problem. And have you allowed him? Have you opened up and received his answer? Next slide. Here we have a two way street between us and Jesus, don't we? So we've received from Jesus and now we're reciprocating back to Christ, we're in relationship now with Jesus, we are in relationship, but there's something missing, isn't there? There's no relationship to the believers, there's no real fellowship, there's no true sharing in common with one another.

See, a church with this setup will only exist as individuals grouped together in a building without really experiencing true biblical fellowship. And I don't know about you, but I don't want that kind of church. I want one that experiences, the next slide, this is the three chord strand, three chord, three fold chord of strand, oh my goodness, can't even read my own writing.

This is the three fold chord of koinonia, too many C's in there and K's. You see it? That's God's plan for his world, that's God's plan for his children, that's God's plan for his church, is this picture here. God created

man to be in fellowship with him, with himself, and through that to be in fellowship with others.

Your marriage relationship is supposed to be a picture of that very thing. Do you know that? That's why Paul says in Ephesians, I speak of a greater mystery. So how can we have this kind of fellowship? How can we, as Creekside, how can we enjoy that kind of fellowship? Turn to 1 Corinthians 1 verse 9. 1 Corinthians 1 verse 9. Well, it starts in Jesus.

Look what he says. God is faithful by whom you were called into the fellowship of his son, Jesus Christ our Lord. So true koinonia fellowship starts with entering into that relationship with Jesus and me as a believer.

That's where it starts. Now turn to John chapter 1, 1 John chapter 1, 1 John chapter 1 verses 1 through 3. That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and our hands have handled concerning the word of life, what an experience it must have been. Sorry, my mind floods with pictures and thoughts when I read that.

Verse 2. The life was manifested and we have seen and bear witness and declare to you that eternal life, which was with the father and was manifested to us. That which we have seen and we have heard, we declare to you that you also may have fellowship with us. And truly our fellowship is with the father and with his son, Jesus Christ.

And these things write, we write to you so that your joy may be full. Let me see if I can, I can, I can put this in a picture we can understand quickly. The father and the son of the spirit have always had fellowship with one another throughout all eternity.

They have had fellowship with one another. They are one. They have had fellowship with one another as the Godhead.

But Jesus came as one of us. And the reason why Jesus, we just celebrated that, remember from, from the light of the world, from the stable to the cross. We just celebrated that.

Jesus came as one of us. And the reason why he came as one of us is that our creator, grab a hold of this folks, that our creator desired to have fellowship with us. What an amazing thought that the creator of the universe desires to be with you.

This holy God that we've talked about, this God that is, that is separate and unique is so separate that we can't really comprehend what holy means. And, and he desires to have fellowship in common with you. I don't, I, it blows my mind when I think about that, that he desires to have fellowship with me.

And because of that, he sent Jesus as one of us. He sent Jesus so, so that he could be in flesh, that God could be in flesh and have common with us. How amazing is that? And in doing that, he gave me and you the opportunity to have fellowship with the father.

Oh my goodness. From the Holman treasury of key words, listen to how it explains this probably much better than I can. The unique fellowship between God and Jesus began in eternity and was manifested in time through the incarnation of Jesus was introduced to the apostles and then introduced to each and every believer through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

Now watch now because I have entered into that relationship and you have entered into that relationship. We now have this Christ in common with one another. Don't we? We now have this Christ in common and that folks is what defines our fellowship.

That's why it goes beyond, but includes standing around the table talking about cattle. That's why it, it, it, it, when somebody says we got a need and we, we go into the bank account and pull out more enough that it hurts because someone that we have in common with is in need. It's that fellowship.

It's, it's that very fellowship that, that comes down to the, when we have that, we have this common contribution of prayer for one another, of service to one another, of giving money to one another, of encouraging one another, of supporting one another. It is that common bond in Christ that gives us that. Turn around right now and look at your neighbor.

Look at your partner. Look at your wife or your husband. I want you to do that.

Look at them. Now look at the, the person beyond them. Do you, when you look at them, do you see Jesus who is your common bond that draws you together? I've often said that, that, that we are brothers and sisters because we have the same blood running through our spiritual veins.

And so when you see that person that sits next to you, when you see that wife that you were irritated at this morning, or that husband that you've been mad at all week, when you see them, what you have to see is Christ and He's the common bond between us. It's not just because you're in love. It makes it even more beautiful to be in common with Christ.

Thus the reason why we encourage young people to find believers to be their husbands and their wives. That then should translate to other believers. It should, it should move out from, from there to, to being able to invite others in, drawing others in.

Now watch this, evangelism or the proclamation that we have of the gospel is not complete. It is never complete until we draw those converts, those people who say yes to Jesus, until we draw them into that circle of participation with one another in common. It was so important.

We just read in Acts chapter 2 verse 41, 3,000 new souls, 3,000. Can you imagine those 3,000 babies all running around without an anchor? Can you imagine that? And so there's a reason why they were in common and they were together on a daily basis in the temple and in houses breaking bread with one another. No, I don't believe 3,000 bought property and moved in together.

I think they just had communion with one another. Let me give you an example of that, our camp kids. One of the hardest parts about our, our ministry, we had, we had just sitting in here last night, we had 10 or 12 native kids sitting in here last night for youth night, camp night.

The reason why we do that is because at camp we bring kids in and they get to experience five days of love. They get, they get to, they get to hear about Jesus and not just hear the stories, but they get to experience Jesus through the people that love on them. And they get that for five days.

And then we load them up on a van and we take them back. And for some of them, we send them back to 360 days of hell. The reason why we have a, an activity every month is so that we're, we're, we're creating an opportunity for them to pull into fellowship with us as they learn to pull into fellowship with Jesus.

And we need that in the church. It's important that all of the three chords of Koinonia are there for us. It's important that all of it is there because if it's not, then we are not experiencing the fullness of Koinonia.

And I want to tell you that our government COVID, COVID, COVID and our government and the media and all the hype that comes with it has taught us to do something different than the Bible teaches us. We're taught to shun one another and stay away from one another. It teaches us exactly the opposite of biblical fellowship.

Romans chapter 12 and verse 15. You don't have to turn there. I read it for you.

Rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. That is fellowship. First Corinthians chapter 12, verse 25 and 26, that there should be no division in the body, that the members, but that the members should have the same care for one another.

And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. When somebody gets a thorn in the flesh, we all have a festering blister. And if one member is honored, if one member is placed up on a pedestal, we don't get jealous and angry.

We don't deserve that. Why do we give that to her? Says all the members rejoice with them. When somebody is honored, we rejoice with them as they are honored.

That is true fellowship. Fellowship. That's fellowship on a practical level.

We are mutually identified with one another in Jesus. We rejoice with the happy and we genuinely weep when the others are sad. So what does it mean to us practically here at Creekside? Number one, we need to see one another as a body.

We have got to see each other as a body. We are one. And we must begin to hold each other.

That is one another. We must begin to hold each other in high esteem. Place the other above ourselves.

That's what Philippians 2 tells us. And then we've got to seek opportunity to partner together. Now you have a different definition of partner.

To partner together. Bible studies, care for one another, missions, everything like that. Your Bible study is fellowship.

Are we this kind of church? Let's pray. Father, I pray this morning for that one who sat in church for much of their life or for a long time, and they have never entered into that marriage relationship with you. They've never entered in to a relationship of salvation with you.

I pray that your Holy Spirit would speak specifically and completely in their lives this morning. Expose the lie. Expose the deception by the light of your spirit so that they can break free from it and have life and have it more abundantly.

That they might experience what it means to have joy unspeakable. Father, we pray for those who are hearing the message probably for the first time or at least the first couple of times, that you would help them to, God, to see their own sinfulness and turn to you for the answer. And then, Lord, we pray for our church, corporately and as individuals, that you would help us to be a truly fellowshiping church.

To really discover exactly what that means. Thank you, Father, for providing Jesus, oh my goodness, that thought again, that you desire to be in fellowship with me, that you became human flesh so that you could hold common with us. Oh, Lord, thank you.

How sweet the thought. Oh, may the truth of that and the depth of that sink within us. And then, Lord, may we share that with one another.

Help us to share that with each other, with our wives and with our husbands, with our children. Help us to share it. We trust you with that eternal work because it is an eternal work.

We thank you in the precious and the powerful and the holy and the wonderful, glorious name of Jesus we pray these things. Amen. Amen.

Thank you for your patience this morning. Next week we'll be talking about worship. What does it mean to worship Jesus? So, may God bless you and may you have a wonderful

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/daP9Nz0u1Gs.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/donny-coulter/the-distinctive-of-the-church-fellowship/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net