

# Fellowship Has Responsibility

by Paris Reidhead

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*Christian fellowship is based on a relationship with the Lord Jesus, which enables individuals to share life with each other and to be witnesses for Christ in their everyday lives.*

**Duration:** 46:41

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 20:9, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 8:1-9, 2 Corinthians 5:18, 2 Timothy 2:15

**Topics:** "Fellowship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of fellowship and sharing within the church. He highlights the example of the early believers who faced persecution and scattered, but continued to preach the word of God wherever they went. The speaker encourages the audience to see themselves as witnesses and missionaries for Christ, and to actively engage in evangelism. He references the ministry of reconciliation and the need for every believer to be able to share their faith and lead others to Christ. The sermon also mentions the example of Moody, a famous evangelist, who emphasized the importance of evangelism in the church.

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## Transcript

Will you turn please to Acts chapter 11. 11th chapter of Acts, beginning with the 19th verse, including the chapter, the 30th verse. Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenis and Cyprus and Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto the Jews only.

And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecian, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord. The tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem.

And they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch, who, when he came and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they should believe unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, and much people was added unto the Lord. Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus for to seek Saul.

When he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. It came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in

Antioch.

And in these days came prophets from Jerusalem unto Antioch. And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world, which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judea, which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

We are dealing week by week with the matter of fellowship, Christian fellowship, New Testament fellowship, that which is to be the foundation upon which the church rests. In the past, I have read many articles and books on the subject of the church. And somehow all of them, true as they were, have failed to be implemented in any striking or significant degree in my experience.

Because it is rather as though we were looking at the shell, we were looking at the form, we were looking at the edifice, rather than looking at that which has made it possible. And so we find that the word has a great deal to say about this subject of fellowship, communion, sharing, and participation. And when we have come individually into a relationship with the Lord Jesus, as we saw this morning, and we'll continue to look at next Lord's Day morning, then we find that there is the ground of fellowship.

There's the possibility of it. The church has a corporate existence because the individuals are in a relationship with the Lord, sharing his life with him, and thus they can share with each other. Now, we are seeing this sharing in effect.

We're seeing it at work in the portion that's been read for. Just to remind you of what we saw in beginning measure, at least last Sunday evening, was namely this. That persecution broke out in Jerusalem regarding Stephen, which caused the believers, the disciples, to flee the apostles' abode of Jerusalem.

And everywhere they went, they went preaching the word, and the Lord went with them confirming the word, with signs and wonders as we elsewhere read. And so they had the ministry of reconciliation committed to the rank and file of believers. This must come again.

We must see this. It must grip your heart and be fixed in your mind and become the very foundation of your life. If you are in Christ, you are a witness for Christ and a missionary for Christ.

We must see this. How long have we been governed and influenced by Rome? Someone has said Rome is the mother of it all, speaking of Protestantism. And in a sense it is as though Rome is the brick wall upon which the ivy of Protestantism is trying to climb, keeping itself separate and yet somehow clinging to it.

And in these days, I believe the spirit of God is trying to release the vine of his planting and get it to grow on the trellis of his word rather than on the trellis of history. And it's very difficult because the vine is deeply entwined and it's in the rocks. Have you ever tried to take ivy off of a wall? It's very difficult, very difficult indeed.

And sometimes you'll actually pull chunks of mortar out and you'll split bricks because these roots have gone in and have gone deep. And we thus have to recognize that the very form in which we're seated tonight, the very building in which we are, the decoration, all are traced back not to the word of God, but to Rome. Perhaps we could go and say to the synagogue of our Lord's day, this to some degree would be true.

But again, I would say back to Rome. Now, I do not feel that in my heart the least iconoclastic, the iconoclast is the icon breaker. I don't feel that I have that.

I'm certainly not fighting this arrangement of the pulpit in the center and the people spread around it. I do not believe that we could change all of this and change nothing for the better. This would be a simple mechanical change.

The change that we have to make is a change not in architecture or necessarily in organization to begin with, but it's a change in attitude, change in your attitude toward your life. You're not simply one that's to occupy 22 inches of space in an auditorium regularly and faithfully, though I must admit we miss you when you aren't here occupying that space, and we're delighted when you are. But our reason for it is that if you're here, perhaps you're going to hear from the desk and from the word and by the spirit that for the remaining six days of the week, God wants you as a witness for Jesus Christ.

And hearing this, and sensing that the prime evangelistic strategy of the New Testament was gossiping the gospel on the part of everyone that named the name of Christ, that this was the means of evangelism. In fact, if you'll study the tradition of the New Testament and the writings of the church fathers, you will find that when the believers assembled, it was primarily a secret or private meeting. They really didn't know often who was going to do the teaching, frequently they didn't, but they did have a man stationed at the door.

Perhaps we could say the janitor was more important than the preacher, because it was his responsibility to invite everyone who did not know the Lord Jesus just not to meet with them. Because you see, it was an assembly of the believers worshipping the Lord, being nourished in the truth and faith, and then they were going out to witness, and the evangelism was to be where the people resided, in the streets, in the marketplace, in the home. And we find that it's increasingly difficult to get the unsaved into our evangelistic meetings, into our churches.

It's increasingly difficult to reach them in what we would call the traditional American pattern of evangelism. And we are thus being forced, by the sheer weight of necessity, to rediscover God's plan, God's means of evangelism. And it is this, that where you go, whether it be to work tomorrow, or to visit friends, or wherever it is, you go for whatever task you find necessary to go, but you go as a witness for Jesus Christ.

I'll never forget the experience I had in the Maban tribe in Africa. I had been introduced to a man, and I said, oh, you're here on business. You see, at that time the British were in charge of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, as it was called, and they had drawn a line, the ninth parallel, and said there would be no Muslims below that parallel, and no missionaries above it, incidentally.

Just yesterday, I believe it was established in the Sudan, I may have been a few days earlier, but I believe it went into effect yesterday, in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, that hereafter it will be illegal to talk to anyone about religion other than his own. In other words, it will be a defense for which missionaries can be excluded if they talk to pagans about Christ, or if they talk to Mohammedans about Christ. Or if pagans talk to the Christians about their religion, it will be equally criminal.

But, of course, it isn't criminal for the Mohammedans to talk to anyone about their religion, because this is the state of the mission. It's practically been a death knell for a witness in the Sudan. But I'll never forget that day, as I tell you, when I met this man, introduced to him.

He's a Mohammedan, obviously. Oh, I said, you're here on business, are you? You're here as a trader. He looked at me with the utmost sincerity and earnestness, and he said, no, my business is to be a messenger of the prophet.

I'm only here trading to pay expenses. Just quiet. I'm here as a messenger of the prophet.

And this has characterized Islam, and probably is the reason why nine people are being converted to Christ. For one, are being converted to Islam. For one, being converted to Christ in Africa.

Because they have learned that every Muslim is a messenger and a servant of the prophet. Now they've taken it right out of the book. Do you view yourself tomorrow as being scattered abroad, not primarily for the necessity of earning a living? Obviously, that's important.

But your real reason for being there is to live Christ, for these that are without it, and to intercede for those who know him not. And as opportunity is given, you can control the conversations you witness to them concerning Christ. This is true with your recreation.

This is true with other interests. Whatever community or society you may belong to, maybe some of you are members of the garden club or the PTA, or the veterans, whatever collateral organization you're a part of, is to be viewed as a legitimate and proper field of witness. Scattered abroad, they went everywhere preaching the word.

Driven by the sword of those who thought they could extinguish the faith, they actually scattered it. Now, we must see this, that the fellowship of witness includes every member of the body of Christ. I can't say it too frequently.

I can't say it too strongly. Until you come to the place in your heart of hearts that you realize that evangelism is your responsibility. Your responsibility.

He gave evangelists, pastors and teachers, and the evangelist, incidentally, is not the man who comes for special meetings. He would be fitted into the scriptural definition of an exhorter. He gave evangelists, church planters, pioneer missionaries, and pastors, all the elders, and teachers, as those having elders with a special ministry of teaching, for the perfecting of the saints into the work of the ministry.

And the work of the ministry is to live Christ before the sinner, intercede for sinners, and witness to them. Now, we must see this. It's imperative that you thus view yourself.

You've got to see it. If you are to fit into God's plan for your life, and have any part in that which he's doing, this must become a reality. I believe it's imperative if you are to know the fullness of the Spirit.

For you remember in Luke, the 13th chapter, I believe it is, or 11th, you have the account of the man who came to his neighbor at midnight, and knocked, and demanded bread, asked for bread. The man, the good man of the house, got up, not because they were neighbors, but because the one knocking was concerned about his inability to give bread to the hungry that came to him, expecting to be fed. I believe that we are on the grounds to expect God to meet us with the fullness of himself, and the empowering of his Spirit, when the reason for it is not our own comfort, not our own joy or peace or blessing, but the reason is that we might have bread to give to the hungry.

Now, they went everywhere, and the hand of the Lord was with them. The hand of the Lord will be with you. The hand of the Lord will bless that work.

I do not believe that you have to become, necessarily, the extroverted personality that talks to everyone he meets, gives facts to everyone he sees. You may, and if you can, and if this is true to your nature and personality, and you can do it sincerely, then the Lord bless you. We certainly need it.

But I think that when you have something so wonderfully real in the Lord Jesus Christ, you can talk to people without embarrassment. It's amazing, you know, how in the recent Cuban crisis, it's easy to talk with perfect strangers about the situation. What is it? It's something that you share.

Of course, they were as interested as you were. But I think people, I find people, perhaps it's something the Lord's doing in my heart. I'm finding it increasingly easy to talk with people about the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because I'm not trying to sell them something. I'm not trying to promote something. I'm not trying to get them to respond to a formula.

I'm just trying to get them to converse about the things of the Lord. Now, if you feel that witnesses essentially get selling Jesus, if you feel that it's getting them to sign up on a formula, you're going to be intimidated. You're going to be silenced.

First place, they won't do it. Second place, if they did, it would probably be just to accommodate you. And the third place, it's not necessarily what God wants.

But you see, what he's asking for is that he is just real, wonderfully real. And you talk with him. Now, you don't have to shoot them full of Scripture verses.

Now, this is good. It's wonderful to be able to turn to the Word and say, well, you see, this isn't my opinion of what the Lord's Word says. But I think it's a little stupid to just talk to Scripture verses when you're dealing with young saints.

Translate it into the language that they know and communicate with them. Just talk. Oh, we ought to read the Sermon on the Mount daily.

Stop for a little while, at least, until we find out that we can talk about heaven and hell and about redemption and grace in one syllable word with our Lord Jesus. Until we must see this, I promise you that I'm going to dwell on it until the Spirit of God grips our hearts and we become a witness to Jesus and find time and make time and take time just to talk with folks about the Lord. Do it simply.

Do it directly. Do it sincerely. Never talk above your experience.

Just simply be free. You want others to know. Let's think it.

This is the primary witnessing staff. All right? We find that it was the fellowship of witnessing was shared by all, but then there was the matter of church responsibility that came back upon the apostles. There was a group established, whereas you are the one that will probably have the best contact in your neighborhood, in your community, to your friends, to those you meet.

You invite me there, and there's a whole wall. I'm rather troubled when people haven't here, or perhaps I should be troubled they haven't, but elsewhere I've often had people say, Would you come over? Mrs. So-and-so next door wants to receive the Lord. Well, go ahead, leave her to the Lord.

You don't believe me? Oh, I wouldn't know how. Well, that's what we're here for. It's always a reflection on the pastor and teacher.

People don't know how to leave the Lord, do not know how to get them to close with Christ, to guide them and help them. But this is to be shared by all. Everyone here tonight ought to be able to go out tomorrow and the remainder of the week and count on you to be a witness for Christ.

The soul with the winner, if you please. Someone that's able to tell others about the Lord Jesus and how to carry on a conversation with others and to lead and guide and direct that conversation to the matter of the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is where evangelism is done.

I bring you back again, as I have repeatedly in the past, the words of Moody. He wrote to that church, to that committee in St. Louis that invited him for what then would have been the third citywide campaign in St. Louis, which he couldn't attend because of failing health. And he said, I've been 40 years an evangelist.

During this time, I've seen tens of thousands profess faith in Christ. But I have yet to find anyone who's made a profession of faith in Christ and lived 10 years thereafter as a consistent Christian. But what there was someone who witnessed to me and prayed for me before I came to town.

I conclude that he, the important thing then, is not the coming of the unbelievers, but the intercession by and the witness of the people that are now living in St. Louis. I think this is true. Fellowship, a witness.

But there's something else. There's fellowship in the church. And so the apostles are concerned.

They're keeping close touch with what's happening. Letters are sent, messages are carried, and they heard in Jerusalem what God had done. And so they said, who among us is able to go and to help these people? So we find fellowship of responsibility.

And so Barnabas was sent that he should go as far as Antioch. It was some distance. It was a difficult journey.

But Barnabas was prepared to go. He was there. He wasn't an apostle.

He was a good man, a wealthy man, that had sold his home and given it to the church. But he came representing the apostles. And so it ought to be that we see continually in developing in the congregation those that are able to take increased responsibility.

You are going to discover that your Christian life is not going to become effective on the basis of some tremendous thing. You know, a lot of people say they were on the wrong side of the road the wrong time, and that's why they were not successful. No, I believe that if you're going to have a ministry for the Lord, it's going to be doing each day a simple task that comes.

And Barnabas did it. So there was this fellowship in responsibility that was shared by the apostles and by Barnabas. But I want you to see something else that's extremely important.

Barnabas was a good man. Barnabas was a generous man. He was a man full of the Holy Ghost and faith.

And I have proof for it because Barnabas knew he needed help, and he decided to send for him. And he sent for one that would completely outshine him, one that would completely obscure his ministry, one that was going to put him completely in the background, and one that was safely residing up in Tarsus and wasn't being hurt by, and was thus no threat to his father. If Barnabas had been interested in promoting himself, he did the most foolish thing he could have done by sending for Saul of Tarsus.

But you see, he was a good man, and full of faith, and full of the Holy Ghost. And he wasn't the least concerned. He was quite prepared, I'm sure, to say with John, he was guilty, but I was free.

And he was quite prepared to send up and bring this man of whom the disciples had been afraid. He had introduced Saul down in Jerusalem to the disciples, and they'd withdrawn from him, not at all sure. And Paul, I am confident, drew from his own experience when he wrote to young Timothy, and he said, lay hands on no man suddenly.

Don't avoid people too quickly, the responsibility. Don't say to this young confidant, oh, you're a deacon. Don't say to this young man, you're an elder.

Don't lay hands on people suddenly. Don't obey them suddenly, because if you do, you'll get into trouble, and if we do, we get into trouble. And so the apostles had sent Saul up to Tarsus, and they waited, and they waited, and they waited, and they didn't send for him.

But you see, there was a time when he was needed, when he was prepared. He'd spent three years, postgraduate work in the backside of the desert, unlearning, getting ready to minister. He had been content to just stay in Tarsus.

And frankly, I think that he was just running a little kink shop up there. I don't know what the rest of you think of it. I just think he'd gone completely out of the Pharisee business.

He had no living there. And every Jew that day had the wise parents and the wisest society that said that they had to. At the time of Bar Mitzvah, they learned a trade, because they were afraid, you know, that something like this would develop.

And I think he had a nice little business up in Tarsus. He was sitting there. He'd learned much about the Lord in those three years in Arabia.

He was having sweet and warm fellowship with the Lord. He had this revelation of Christ. And he wasn't particularly worried.

He was just a sailor. And the time came when the Spirit of God pressed upon Barnabas' heart that he was ready for Saul. My friend, if you are ready for his service, there will come a time when God finds a place for you.

It's imperative, therefore, that you should understand that if you are to be used of God, you must allow God to win you what he desires to do. And so, three years wasted, someone would say, this brilliant man, this scintillating intellect, this eloquent orator. And here he is, John City, in the desert, and now up in Tarsus.

What a waste. What a pity. What a waste.

Waste? Waste? Ever. What a waste. The only thing that is a waste in a Christian's life is when he's out of fellowship with God.

But as long as he's in fellowship with God and in the Word, whether he's used or not used, that is profitable time. The arrow that's being polished and the shaft that's being smoothed is not being wasted because the time will come that only the polished arrow can do the boldest bidding. So God has been polishing this shaft.

Is God polishing you? Is he polishing you in some little corner? Has he got you where the place where you're before him in prayer? And you're asking him to teach you the Word, and you're feeding his eggs. Well, I don't want to take a Sunday school class. It means too much study.

My friend, if you aren't studying the Word of God without a Sunday school class or some other minutes for your living, it's disobedient to God. Because God is there to study, to show thyself a proof of God, a witness that we ought to be changed. If your study is conditioned only upon your responsibility, you've reached the limit of your service.

And you won't have that. The blessing of God. You ought to study the Word of God, knowing that all Scripture is given by inspiration, God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God might be perfect, truly furnished unto every good work.

Now you've set a limit on your usefulness for God, unless you're studying the Word. Now, I don't have reference to correspondence courses. I don't have reference to night school.

These things are good. I don't have reference to just reading the books of other writers. I'm talking to you upon this which is study, which is concentrated thought and attention to the Word of God.

Till it nourishes your heart and strengthens your spirit, and until you have something to give, something that's burning in you. As Thomas said, I meditated in the Lord, and my heart burned within me. That I had to speak with Jeremiah's Word.

If I hadn't spoken, literally, I'd have blown a fuse. It's just the pressure was building up to the place where I couldn't stand it. Something was going to go.

And you didn't know. Saul asked his wife, how could he have said, study, to show thyself approved unto God, if he hadn't been studying to show himself approved unto God? He said to Timothy, give thy attention to reading. Meditate in these things.

Why? Because that's what he's done. And he's done it in the Arabian desert. And he's done it in Tarsus.

So when the Spirit of God prompted Barnabas, the sweet and tender man, the son of consolation, you need help, Barnabas. You need someone to share with you. Your gifts, as they are, aren't adequate.

Don't you see the fellowship of the church? The church needed every man as a witness. The apostles needed Barnabas, now Barnabas. Oh, how marvelous it is that every member of the body is absolutely dependent upon every other member.

And my dear friend, there is something that you can do in the plan of God better than anyone else. If you're willing to be available to me. There's some life you can touch, some place you can feel, some work you can do.

So, you're preparing for it by your attitude tonight, as you listen. Now, what you're going to do before you go to bed, what you're going to do when you wake up tomorrow, what you're going to do when you're on the subway going to work. You tell me what you're thinking about.

You tell me where your mind runs when you release it from the task at hand. And I'll tell you the kind of a Christian ministry and life you're going to have. For as a man thinks in his heart, so does he.

It's all in the heart that you prepare. Just by being God. And the Spirit of God says, Barnabas, you need Him.

Oh, you need Him. Barnabas didn't say, oh my, look what He'll do. He'll procure it.

Oh, you see, He's full of the Holy Ghost. And He was full of faith. And His only concern was who can God use for the blessing of His people.

Who can be God's servant? Who is the one that can speak? And so, He said He was willing to go as far as Antioch. But you know, He went further. He went as far as Tarsus.

He was prepared to go as far as God would lead Him. And so He went on up to Tarsus for to seek Saul. Because Saul was important in the plan of God.

And when He had found him, I like that. He went, where's Saul? Well, I don't know. He's come back to the dead.

Well, where is he? Well, he's up there in Tarsus somewhere. I remember a few years ago, a young man in the ministry went to a public relations company in Chicago and paid them \$500,000 in order to make his name a household word. Well, they made it a household word, all right, but there wasn't much else to find.

They had his name around. I've forgotten what it was now, but for a while it was quite well-known. And he paid \$1,000 for it.

He was burned. Well, dear friend, you don't need to do that. The only thing you need to do is just be at your place.

With a heart filled with love for God and a heart filled with burden for His people and your heart and mind filled with the truth of God, your life poured out, and in due course, God will have some part of us that will keep you where you are. That's what the ministry is all about. A new parent found out.

He said, my son's going to Bible school, and I'm just so distressed that there's no place, no church in the Alliance for him. I said, I'm not worried about that. This doesn't concern me in the least, but the only thing that I'm concerned about is that your son should be prepared for any place in the Alliance or elsewhere.

For if he has the preparation, God has the plan. And the preparation isn't a diploma. The preparation is a relationship to the Lord.

It's so vital and so warm and so rich and so convenient that wherever one is, there's something to share. Walter Lewis Wilson, riding in my car in Minneapolis, going to a service at the First Presbyterian Church, looked at me and said, brother, do you sense what I have? So few of God's dear people have anything to give. He said, every day before I leave, I say, Lord, give me something warm and real in Bible, that if I touch a hungry heart, I can share with them.

If I touch a needy heart, I can help comfort them. He said, it's just so few that there's anything from the Lord. When you go out in the morning, do you just fill your backpack? Lord, is there something that you've given me for a burdened heart? Is there something you've given me for a perplexed heart? Is there something you've given me for a lost heart? Can I have something to share? I'm so glad that little boy has been thoughtful enough to bring his Bible over to me.

He's vicious, aren't you? You go out that day away and find the hungry that God has left. Well, you see, when you do, there's always some opportunity. You have an opportunity if you have something to use.

And I think many times God keeps us from opportunities because He doesn't want to hurt us. When we have something from Him, we have certainly a place from Him to share. He's not there.

He'll be the way. He'll be the path. He'll come.

He'll come. I've just been groaning in my heart because I had to fly a few weeks ago over the rest of it. Out there, south of Lincoln, that dear little girl I wanted her to come and meet me.

Glad to see her. She was one of the dearest people that ever breathed. She left alone.

I had to take that little book with stripes in the midst every once in a while just in order to keep my own scope. When I was flying from here to Denver and back, the great grief was that I just couldn't find time to stop off. Go and sit in her room in that little old folks' home somewhere out in the Nebraska plains and hear what the Lord has been telling me.

Because I've never met her but what she had something warm and fresh to share with a hungry heart. And people killed me to pass the word on because they'd never been turned on before. Long as you breathe, you're going to breathe out something worthwhile.

All right, this could be you. But notice, it wasn't only that Saul was ready and God had a place for him and he was included in the fellowship of the ministry with Barnabas, but it was something else. It came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church and taught much people.

I don't know when it'll come. Perhaps it'll never come again. But you know what one of the best things could be for revival? Would be to go back to what happened a few decades ago in America when they started the meeting.

They didn't say when they were going to quit. I get a little amused when I drive through the South. I don't see it so much up here.

Drive down the South and it says revival beginning November 15th, closing December 2nd. They've got it all arranged with God, haven't they? It's nice, neat. They can turn it on and turn it off like you turn the hot water in the hotel.

Comes out boiling, goes off, all day. Well, the only thing is they're having a meeting. One preacher said, have you ever run a tent meeting, brother? Oh, I've never run a tent meeting.

He said, oh, it's great. God, you ought to do it. Well, you know, I really feel that if we'll come back to where the fathers were, and we say this is God, and this is God, and maybe we can do that here.

God is home after the fall. Man anointing. We'll just stay with it.

We'll meet like our ancestors did. Now, that's what happens then. That's all.

Jim Stewart, he was here with us in 1957 at our missionary convention, had that kind of a ministry. James isn't well understood in this country, because all the anointing of God seems to be pre-Orphan. He was in ministry down in south Germany, in Austria.

The Spirit of God said to him and his wife, go north. Go north. He went up to Copenhagen.

Go north. He went on up to Oswald. Go north.

And they went on up. Finally, they got up almost to the Arctic Circle strong enough. He was very good on early believers.

He went over and sits on it. God has been leading him from down in the middle of nowhere. I don't know why, but he's been telling him to go north.

My name, by the way, is James Stewart. And the man looks at his shoes. James is on his toes.

Brother Stewart is just praying for all of us. He's been asking God to give us revival. He's been asking us.

We didn't know how to get in touch with you or where you were. But there's a little group of us that are meeting. They met in the back room of the church for two weeks.

They just broke before the Lord. The office is gone. They go over.

Then they announced to the Christians. A little letter went out to the Christians of the area that we're meeting for fellowship in the word of God, to see what God has to say to his church for revival. So they met in a little church building.

And soon that was pretty well sealed. Three, four weeks had gone. Then they said, and now we want to bring out the members of churches who are professing nominal Christians, that they might see the wonders in Jesus.

So another announcement went out. And it was about three or four weeks that they met. There was an evidence of the moving of God.

And finally they said, the believers said, oh, we must take the auditorium. They got the largest hall in Trondheim. And they went on for about another month.

And it was filled. At six o'clock it would be filled. They didn't go home to eat dinner.

They came. They sat there. When Brother Stewart would come in at seven o'clock, there'd be a service in progress, led by the Holy Ghost.

Someone would start a song and they'd sing. Someone would get up to pray. Someone would start to weep and come and kneel to receive praise.

Sometimes he couldn't even preach. Do you know the last day when they were clear that God had finished, the mayor and the city council of Trondheim declared it a city holiday. All businesses closed.

And morning, afternoon, evening, they filled and filled and filled the auditorium. Again and again. And God brought revival to Trondheim.

I'm wondering if that isn't what happened here. And God brought this man down. His heart had been filled with the love of God, the truth of God.

And he taught much people. I think it's sober simplification. I think God met them.

Because there was a fellowship. Fellowship. A witness that gathered the believers.

A fellowship of the apostles that sent instruction to give name and strength to the church. A fellowship of Barnabas who reached out to find the man whom God would use at that time and in that way. There was fellowship.

There was koinonia. There was sharing. And then Paul comes with a deep yearning and a burning longing that the people to whom God had sent him should have everything he had.

He'd hold back nothing. Because he wanted to leave home. He wanted them to know the Lord as he knew him.

And God had in that place what he wanted. But notice the fellowship. All the way to sharing.

The community. The responsibility. The vision.

The prayer. Mutual caring. It's not just revival for the work of God.

It has to be yours. You have to carry it. Then, of course, there's the whole church.

And finally, there are those that are the responsible agents of God. I believe that here's a pattern for the blessing of the local church. Here's a pattern for revival.

I want all of you to set by in your calendars, February 17th through the 20th, we're going to have the privilege of having Armand Guesswine with us for four nights. Just four. But I believe God wants to do something.

We talked with him on the telephone the other day. Armand Guesswine, who was a pastor in Long Island but then went to Norway and saw God working to create revival. Armand Guesswine has been living with a burning, groaning, longing heart for God to get revival and get a church that he could bless and produce.

And you sent those days back. He's coming to us just for those four days. Let's ask God to meet us in preperance for something that will be holy years.

We thought perhaps it would be the week later, but it had to be this week for two reasons. I mean, so we all remember that. I believe, dear friends, that God is wanting to do what is here, what he did, but it falls on you.

Each one carries a responsibility. It's on the eldership. It's on the pastor.

It's on the man whom God will send to us anointed to minister. We bear it jointly. We share it together.

And so I deal with it. We have here a pattern, a pattern that shows us clearly that the Holy Ghost has a place and a ministry and a part for everyone. No one's excluded.

No one's overlooked. And no one's unimportant. Some who do different work.

Saul had one ministry that Barnabas didn't have. Barnabas had a ministry the apostles didn't have. The layman had a ministry the apostles didn't have.

Each had its place. You have your place. May God show us that this is the nature of fellowship.

The beginning of Paul's ministry was when he had been prepared to serve. God had prepared a place in which he could serve. The beginning of every ministry is the same.

So if you will allow your Lord to lead you into the fellowship with himself that he desires, into the fellowship and understanding of the word that he desires, so that you have something to share, something that you can commune with others, then I think the scripture gives us every reason to believe that God has a ministry for you. Let us bow our hearts together in prayer. Are you willing to just find your place in God's plan? Are you willing to take him at his word when he said, Study to show thyself approved of God.

Meditate, give attendance to readings. Are you willing to be to the Lord Jesus what he planned and desired? You see, you are very important. Everything seems to hang or fall on you.

Oh, the church can go on without you, but it won't be the church, because you have a part in it, a place in it. So you're going to have to fulfill your responsibility. It falls heavily upon you.

Are you prepared to say, Lord, what will thou have me to do? Then to do what he shows you. Our Heavenly Father, we thank and praise thee that thou hast given us this word that shows us the pattern of thy working, the plan of thy ministry. Shows us the place of every believer, the responsibility of the eldership, the particular ministries that thou didst choose, and those that have special ministries and teachings.

Amen.

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