

# Fellowship with Christ

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[ 0 : 00 ] I'd like to turn now to the Word of God as we find it in the chapter that I've just read in 1 Corinthians 1. And you'll find our text in verse 9.

God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. God is faithful by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

There are, as you can see, three great doctrines in our text. But today we are going to be chiefly concerned with the greatest doctrine of all, the doctrine of our communion, or, as it is in the text, our fellowship with Jesus Christ, our Lord.

And although this is the chief doctrine in the text, yet we shouldn't overlook the first two doctrines which are mentioned.

The doctrine of the faithfulness of God and the doctrine of effectual calling. If God was not faithful to himself and to you, there would be no fellowship for you with the Son.

[ 1 : 33 ] And if God did not efficiently, effectively call you, then there would be no fellowship for you, no communion for you with his Son.

And so we can see that the doctrine of fellowship is the greatest doctrine. It is the chief doctrine mentioned in our text.

And its reality rests upon the faithfulness of God to himself and to you, and the calling of God addressed to you from his own holy word.

And since God is faithful to himself, and since he is faithful in calling you, then this experience that you have of fellowship with him and with his Son is a real fellowship.

It is necessary, therefore, and desirable that we take notice of those former two great doctrines in our text. The faithfulness of God. Firstly, the faithfulness of God.

[ 2 : 45 ] And we could extend this to a whole subject in its own right and devote a lot of time to it in order to explore it and explain it and expand it.

When we think of the faithfulness of God to himself, or if we think of the faithfulness of God to the universe in creation and in providence, and in grace, then it is a vast subject.

But we're just going to reflect upon some of the principal features of the faithfulness of God. And the Bible has a great deal to say about the faithfulness of God.

And the Bible uses a variety of words and terms to explain the faithfulness of God. And it is one of the most important attributes of the deity that God is absolutely and eternally faithful to himself and to his creation.

It just means that God is faithful to himself, that he is absolute veracity.

[ 4 : 07 ] We have it in Deuteronomy 7, 9, wherefore, Know that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keepeth commandments to a thousand generations.

He is true to himself As the Holy One of Israel in opposition to the damn idols who are called vanity and lies.

He is true to himself in every respect. And therefore, he is faithful to us. So his revelation of himself is a faithful revelation and absolutely reliable and totally trustworthy.

And this is the basis of our confidence in God. This is the foundation of our hope in God. This is the very cause of our rejoicing in God that this God is the unchanging, he is the unchangeable God.

He is absolutely and eternally faithful to himself. He is the same yesterday and today and forever.

And therefore, this is the very foundation of our hope and the very cause of our rejoicing in him.

[ 5 : 37 ] God is faithful, Paul says. Because God is true to himself, he is faithful to you. His truth, his faithfulness to himself demands that sin must be dealt with, that his holiness must be vindicated, that his justice must be satisfied, that his love must be expressed, that all the, his administration of

all the affairs of the intelligent universe must be seen to be just and righteous.

For example, God's veracity demands that all error be exposed and judged and condemned. His righteousness demands that his holy law be fulfilled and satisfied and let his name be honored. And so God is faithful to himself and God is faithful to you in convincing you of sin, in showing you your sin and showing you your misery.

And this might be a painful process in your experience. God convicts us of sin and shows us and convicts us of our misery. This can be for us a most painful experience.

Nonetheless, it is a most necessary process in order that we discover the faithfulness of God to himself and the faithfulness of God to you in showing you who you are, where you have come from, where you now are, and where you are destined for.

[ 7 : 32 ] And this can be a painful experience. God is therefore faithful to himself and true to you in showing you your moral character as a sinner in his sight, as one who stands condemned by him and one who is in danger of falling into the pit of war.

God is faithful to himself and faithful to you when he commands his son to you.

When he offers himself in Christ to be your God and to be your Savior as he does.

When he said, this is my son, hear ye him. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes on him should not perish but have everlasting life.

God is faithful to himself and faithful to you in the offer of himself in his Son to be your Savior. He's offering you his Son as his fellow and the one near to you as your brother born for adversity as the prophet spoke unto us a child is born and to us a son is given.

[ 9 : 08 ] Now then we could extend this subject but we're going to leave it there and we're going to notice secondly the second great doctrine the apostle refers to the doctrine of the calling of God.

The calling of God in the gospel is based upon the faithfulness of God the veracity of God the truthfulness of God and is not that a tremendous doctrine that in the preaching of the forgiveness of sins you can rest assured that God is absolutely and eternally sincere and genuine in his offer of forgiveness to you.

It is based upon the very stability of his character the integrity of his being depends upon the very veracity and the absolute faithfulness of the almighty in his offering himself to be you God and offering himself to be your Savior.

the very foundation of the preaching of the gospel is the faithfulness of God all those who are elected by God the Father to eternal life are called by him in the gospel to fellowship with him and with his son Jesus Christ our Lord.

The faithfulness of God is the basis of the calling of God and no one has any authority to call you to fellowship with Christ but God the Father himself alone.

[ 10 : 48 ] The effectual call of God the Father is the echo of the voice of God the Father in election. All those who are sovereignly elected to eternal life are infallibly called out of a state of death into an estate of life and eternal life.

It is therefore an heavenly calling because it comes down from above. It is a holy calling because it is a call to faith and life and holiness.

it is the call of God and his word and therefore it is a powerful call. So no one can effectually call anybody else to fellowship with Jesus Christ the Son of God.

God alone can do this. It requires the forth putting of divine power to effectually call a soul from the grave of sin into the experience of eternal life.

Jesus says and I when I am lifted up I will draw all men unto me. When Christ will rise from the grave Jesus would draw all men unto him as we have Paul given expression to this power that is referred to in the resurrection of Christ.

[ 12 : 35 ] In Ephesians 1.18 he says that ye may know what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us who believe according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.

And there the apostle is linking together those two things. The resurrection of the believer from the grave of sin and the resurrection of the saviour from the grave of death.

And those two are expressions of the forthputing of the divine energy to bring to life that which was dead. And you and I by nature are dead in trespasses and sins and requires the forthputing of divine energy in order to resurrect us from the dead.

The call therefore is the effect of God's election and free choice and it is an authoritative call and it is moreover a powerful call.

It is a visible call because it comes to you through the preacher in the sense that it comes to you person to person.

[ 13 : 57 ] The preacher being a visible sign of the resurrection of Christ who called him to stand before you in his name with his word for your salvation.

The call of God is an authoritative call. It is a powerful call. It is a visible call and it is an audible call. It comes to your outward ear that those who hear the gospel are listening to the voice of God in the word of God.

And it is a call from death to life and from the fellowship former fellowship with the works of darkness to present fellowship with Jesus Christ in life eternal.

It includes every gospel blessing for our life in this world and every gospel privilege for the world that is to come.

God is faithful, he says, in his calling you to fellowship with himself in his son.

[ 15 : 27 ] God is faithful to himself in regenerating you, in justifying you, in adopting you, in sanctifying you, in glorifying you.

He is faithful to himself first, and then he is faithful to you. First of all, he must vindicate himself and his own procedure in his administration of all the affairs of his spiritual kingdom.

And then you see that God is faithful to you in this as well. And there is certainly this great doctrine of fellowship, of communion.

Let me try and illustrate and elucidate this doctrine that the apostle is referring to here in these words. God is faithful, who has called you unto the fellowship of his son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. And Paul lays down the principles of fellowship in those two former doctrines. The basis of this fellowship is the effectual call of God in the gospel and the faithfulness of God to himself and to you.

[ 16 : 45 ] It is on this basis alone that fellowship is began and continued and sustained and consummated. on the basis of God's faithfulness to himself and his faithfulness to you.

God is faithful, who has called you to the fellowship of his son. And the word that is translated fellowship, *koinonia*, is a common Greek word that means that we are called to share with Christ the things that interest him and concern him and interest us and concern us.

And it belongs to a beautiful family of Greek words that mean, that gives the idea of people sharing together things that mutually interest them and concern them.

Fellowship. And you'll find that the dictionary describes or explains this word as coming from fellow, an equal, an associate, a companion, one of a pair, that we are co-heirs with Christ, that we are fellows with him.

And Jesus Christ is referred to as God's fellow. And in a very true way, the Lord Jesus Christ is our fellow as well.

[ 18 : 26 ] And in that union with him and identity with him, we have what we call fellowship.

The Bible refers to believers having fellowship with God the Father and with God the Son and with God the Holy Ghost and with the Christian community of believers.

But in our text, we are concerned with the fact that the Apostle is referring to that we are called particularly and specifically to the fellowship of Jesus Christ, His Son.

Now, in order to our participating in fellowship with Jesus Christ, His Son, three things must happen.

Three things must happen in order to our participating in the things that belong to our greatest concern fellowship.

[ 19 : 37 ] And the first of these things is this, that there must take place in our experience a change.

There are three things that express the idea of fellowship. Three words I want to use to express the idea of fellowship. And the first word is change, and the second word is exchange, and the third word is interchange.

And I want to use these three words for this particular purpose of elucidating and illustrating what it means for us to have fellowship with Jesus Christ.

I say there must first of all take place in our experience a change. first of all with reference to us, we must be changed.

Because this fellowship that we have with Jesus Christ is not based upon nature. Not on the basis of nature, but on the exercise of faith through grace.

[ 20 : 50 ] And in the call of the gospel, we are brought into confrontation with the challenge of God, the challenge of faith that is addressed us in the gospel.

And faith exercised by us puts us in possession of the word of God written. And it puts us in possession of the Son of God.

And it puts us in possession of the righteousness of God. The faith that God gives us puts us in possession of these three things. The word of God written becomes ours.

The person of the Son of God becomes ours. We believe in Christ. We make him our own. He is my Savior. Savior. This word of God is my word.

This Son of God becomes my Savior. And the righteousness of God becomes my righteousness. Because the word of God brings to us the Son of God.

[ 22 : 07 ] And the Son of God brings to us the righteousness of God. We are made of God, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.

All of these things. Whenever we are challenged by the gospel of Christ, and whenever we respond in the attitude of faith, then we are put into possession of these things.

We are given possession of all of these things. Believing in Christ and trusting in Christ, we receive all things. And he is all and in all to us.

We are given God's holy word and God's holy son and God's perfect righteousness. And so preaching for us is the business of declaring Jesus Christ to be you all and in all.

Therefore there must take place in our experiences this first thing that I've mentioned, this idea of change. We must be regenerated, we must be justified, we must be adopted, we must be sanctified in order to enter into an experience of communion and fellowship with Jesus Christ.

[ 23 : 34 ] God's God's God's God's effectual call addressed us in the gospel. For faith is the gift of God and it is the life of the new man.

For to us many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them who believe in his name, who were born not of blood, not of the will of the flesh, but of God.

And this is our regeneration, this is our justification, this is our adoption, and this is our sanctification, this is our change that takes place in our inward life and in our outward life.

And there it takes place also a change in the person of the Son of God. He must come down from heaven's glory. He must be born of the virgin.

He must assume our nature. He must live a holy life for us. He must die upon the cross for us. He must rise from the dead for us.

[ 24 : 52 ] He must take possession in our name and on our behalf. He must reign until all his enemies be made his footstool. So the first word that I use to elucidate and illustrate the doctrine of fellowship is this word change.

There must take place change on our part and on the part of the Savior. And then secondly, the second word that I choose to illustrate and elucidate this doctrine of fellowship is the word exchange.

And we see that clearly in the Gospels this exchange. That Jesus Christ exchanged heaven for us. grace. He exchanged a life of glory for a life of misery and sufferings in this present world.

He exchanged innocence for the guilt of his people. God the Father accounted him as sinful for he made him sin.

[ 26 : 11 ] The Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all. He who is life itself died and was buried for his people. I lay down my life of myself, he says.

And he was on the cross for sinners, but he was in the tomb for his people. And therefore his exchange was an infinite exchange.

we see that believers also exchange something. This exchange takes place in their experience as well.

They exchange their sins for the righteousness of Christ who was made of God unto us wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. we have exchanged a life of death and darkness and sin and condemnation for a new life of justification and righteousness and sanctification and adoption and all the privileges and all the blessings of the children of God.

And what a glorious exchange this is for us. That instead of living a life of unbelief and disobedience and rebellion against God, we exchange all that for a life of faith and trust and obedience and a life of righteousness and conformity to the will of God.

[ 27 : 44 ] We have exchanged unbelief for faith and hate for love and heaven for hell. Glorious exchange.

And all of this culminating in what the apostle calls fellowship. Called unto the fellowship of his son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

And the third word I mentioned was the word interchange. Change, exchange, interchange. And they all follow one after the other in a logical and scriptural way.

There must take place change in the Godhead. There must take place change in humanity, among men, among sinners.

And as a consequence of that, there takes place exchange. because all that has taken place, now it is possible for the process and the work and the privilege of interchange to go on.

[ 28 : 57 ] It leads me thirdly to this third word interchange.

And Christ shared with his people the whole of their sinful guilt. He bore our sins in his own body and tree. And he bore the whole of our earthly misery as a consequence of our guilt.

And those two things are linked together in the scriptures. Sin, guilt, and misery. And as I said before, it's a painful experience for us to be convinced of our misery.

And it's a necessary process in the administration of God's spiritual kingdom in the church to convince his people not only of their sin but of their misery as well.

There are many who are not convinced of their misery or very seldom are aware of misery because of the palliating circumstances, because of their privileges and their privileged status in society.

[ 30 : 18 ] They're unaware of the misery that besets others because they are underprivileged and don't have the same status in society as themselves. But God, in dealing with his people, he convinces them of their misery.

and the believer shares with Christ the whole history of his earthly mission and ministry, and they will share with Christ the fullness of all of his heavenly glory.

And this is what I call interchange, and what Paul calls fellowship. The believer shares with Christ the whole of his earthly mission. And we can pinpoint specific and critical points where this interchange takes place, where this fellowship takes place.

And we can pinpoint it, for example, in the birth of Christ. The believer has fellowship with Christ in the birth of Christ.

It is by the same spirit, it is by the same spirit, that we are born again, as he was born in the womb of the virgin.

[ 31 : 53 ] And your new birth is your fellowship with him in his incarnation and in his birth in the womb of the virgin.

Both are new entrances into the kingdom of heaven. He entered the kingdom of heaven by his birth in this world, by his incarnation.

he became a subject of his own kingdom, of which he himself was concurrently both lord and king. And you have become a member and a subject of his kingdom by your regeneration.

He by the incarnation and you by regeneration. And it is the same spirit by whom he was born as that you were born again.

He was born a child and a subject of his own kingdom into and of his own kingdom of which he himself was concurrently lord and king.

[ 33 : 12 ] And this he did for his people. This he did for you in order that you might be regenerated, in order that you might be quickened into newness of life, in order that you might be holy and harmless and blameless and unreprouable and without spot before him in his sight.

And therefore we have fellowship with Christ in his incarnation and we have this fellowship at the point of our regeneration. His name is Wonderful Counselor Mighty God and his birth was wonderful, was miraculous.

And is not your rebirth wonderful and miraculous and is not the Holy Spirit of God involved in his incarnation in fashioning and preparing a body for Christ?

And so you see the faithfulness of God to you and showing you your community of interests with his son and his birth and his community of interests with you in his willingness to being born of a woman made under the law to undergo all the sufferings of this world and to die at last upon the cross of Calvary.

It is therefore this idea of interchange introduced in the doctrine of fellowship. And the second critical point that we have fellowship with the Lord is in his baptism.

[ 35 : 00 ] it is the Holy Spirit who attests the divine sonship of Jesus. You remember how when Jesus was baptized there was the Spirit of God alighted upon him and a voice came from heaven saying this is my beloved son hear him.

And it is the Spirit of God who attests the divine sonship of the Son of God. And similarly it is the Spirit of God who attests your divine sonship.

In your heart the Holy Spirit attests the divine sonship of Jesus and the word of God.

and it is the Holy Spirit who attests your sonship. Put in the word put in his in our hearts the word of God is written on these fleshly tables of the heart and the Spirit of God witnesses with our spirit that we are the children of God.

And we have this fellowship of Christ at this critical point of his baptism and our baptism of the Spirit in his testimony that we are the children of God.

[ 36 : 34 ] There is therefore this idea of change and exchange and interchange in the doctrine of fellowship. We are changed, he is changed, we have exchanged, sin for righteousness and the Lord exchanged heaven for us.

And there is interchange therefore takes place at these critical points. And on the cross for example we will find the apostle saying I am crucified with Christ and the believer has fellowship with Christ in his death.

But I may know him says the apostle and the fellowship of his suffering has been made conformable unto his death. I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and who gave himself for me.

And Christ died for sin and the believer dies to sin in the death of Christ. And all of this we have fellowship with Christ, communion with him.

And we will have fellowship with him and communion with him in the fullness of his heavenly glory. As you are called unto fellowship with Christ in his birth, to his cross, and in his resurrection.

[ 38 : 04 ] So, God is calling you not only to fellowship with his Son in these things, but he's calling you to fellowship with his Son in the fullness of his heavenly glory as well.

The glory thou hast given me, I have given them. Such is the certainty of his people entering into the enjoyment of this glory, that Jesus can speak in the present.

The glory thou hast given me, I have given them. So certain and true is it. And that glory is none other than a manifestation of the Father's love for the Son.

And the believers to participate in a manifested declaration of the love of God for the Son. And such is the splendor of that glory that it is referred to as the glory of the church.

The glory of the church is nothing less than a display, a declaration, a manifestation of the love of God for the Son. And the church is caught up in that display, declaration, manifestation, and participation in the divine glory.

[ 39 : 30 ] If you have suffered with his Son in this world, then you will participate with his Son in the glory that is yet to be revealed. how abundantly God has provided for his people in the personal work of his Son, Jesus Christ.

For example, God has provided for sinners perfect righteousness to justify the ungodly who believe in Jesus, perfect holiness to sanctify the unclean, divine wisdom to guide the foolish, perfect love to glorify, believers, and perfect peace to keep the heart and mind and love of Christ, and perfection of heaven at last to beautify and glorify and satisfy the believer.

Ah yes, what a great doctrine this is. God is faithful, who has called you unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

God is calling you today. He's calling you today not only to give up your sin, not only to give up your sinful acquaintances and your sinful practices, God is calling you to participate with his Son in the fullness of his heavenly glory.

joy, and what tongue or what mind can grapple with this? We know it is exceedingly glorious, and we know that it is exceedingly joyful.

[ 41 : 18 ] At thy right hand are pleasures forevermore. At thy right hand is fullness of joy, and pleasures forevermore. evermore. Why then?

Why then live a life of rebellion and disobedience in darkness, in separation from God, from light and love and glory?

Oh, that you would be wise. Oh, that you were wise. To listen to the authoritative call of God addressed you in his gospel today, calling you to the fellowship of his Son.

Pharisee Paul God He was an undert God He was one two three Microsoft will answer he will hopefully he will Americans and we will