

Philosophy of Ministry Part 9 Fellowship and Summary

Fellowship

- Acts 2:42 says that those in the early church were “*continually devoting themselves...to fellowship...*”
- Believers are in fellowship with one another because of a common calling in Jesus Christ.

Thus, Christian fellowship involves...

- ...sharing together in relationship (1 John 1:3-7)
- ...spiritual partnership/companionship (1 Corinthians 10:16-17).
- John MacArthur wrote,

Another wonderful mark of loving fellowship is companionship. Companionship is not something we directly do or give. It is the by-product of other things, things as simple as standing with a friend who is in trouble or sitting with someone who is sick, or as complex as mutual ministry. The main ingredient of companionship is togetherness; it cannot be experienced from a distance or secondhand.¹

- To have true, Christian fellowship, believers must spend quality time in community together.
 - However, the church must not view fellowship simply as an activity in which people participate.

¹ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 1 Corinthians* (Chicago, IL.: Moody Press, 1984), 482.

- Jerry Bridges wrote, “[Fellowship] is not primarily an activity; it is a relationship...We must grasp the idea that fellowship means belonging to one another in the Body of Christ, along with all the privileges and responsibilities that such a relationship entails.”²
- Given what is stated above, those in the church ought to endeavor to build genuine, transparent, and strong relationships with one another.
- This can be cultivated by the church creating opportunities for people to get to know each other, such as fellowship dinners and events.
- People in the church should also attempt to be hospitable and to serve one another.
- This fellowship should transcend all demographics. It should cross all ages, races, etc.

Summary

It is critical to have a clear vision of what biblical ministry is and how it functions. Christ’s ministry is to be carried out in the context of the church, because the church has been blessed, cleansed, consecrated, and gifted by Him. This ministry hinges on biblical leadership where the correct positions, people, priorities, vision, and mission are in place. Having core convictions and character qualities that are biblical properly prepares and motivates the church body to minister in a godly fashion. The function of the church boils down to the manifestation of love for God and man through the four core functions enumerated in Acts 2:41-42: worship, discipleship, evangelism, and fellowship. These functions ought to be done on four levels within the church: church-wide, in small groups, in families, and by individuals.

² Jerry Bridges, *The Crisis of Caring: Recovering the Meaning of True Fellowship* (Phillipsburg, NJ.: P&R Publishing, 1985), 17.