

OTHER CHRISTIANS

9

DISCIPLESHIP





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LESSON 9: OTHER CHRISTIANS

“What is My Relationship to Other Christians?”

As we learned in Lesson 1, when you got saved, you moved from the devil's family to God's family. Spiritually, you now have a new family with many brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.

We saw how the church is likened to a body in the previous lesson and in this lesson we will study the special relationship which you now have with your spiritual family. This lesson is designed to give you a clear understanding of how the body of Christ operates as a family unit.

- I. You have both a family and functional relationship to other Christians.
 - A. Other Christians are your brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. Be sure to understand, **only those in Jesus Christ** (saved people) are your brothers and sisters regardless of any other factors. Likewise, those **NOT** in Jesus Christ (lost people) are not your brothers and sisters regardless of any other factors.

*Romans 8:29; 1 John 3:1-3; Romans 9:8;
Hebrews 2:9-12*

- B. Other Christians are your fellow laborers in service for Jesus Christ.**

I Corinthians 3:5-10

II. You share certain responsibilities with other Christians.

- A. We are to pray for each other. Almost every one of Paul's letters opens with a prayer for those to whom he is writing.**

I Thessalonians 1:2-3; II Timothy 1:3

- B. We are to minister to each other.**

1. Physically

- a. For those in your immediate family.**

Galatians 6:10; Romans 12:13

- b. For the entire body of Christ.**

Acts 11:27-30

2. Spiritually.

Galatians 6:1-2; Romans 15:1-2;

Hebrews 13:3

C. We are to encourage and edify one another.

I Thessalonians 5:11

D. We are to serve one another with humility.

Philippians 2:3-4; Matthew 20:25-28

III. You have a personal responsibility to maintain a biblical attitude toward other Christians.

A. You should love them.

I John 3:14-16; 1 Peter 4:8

B. You should be patient with them.

Romans 15:5-7

C. You should be sensitive to their needs.

I John 3:17-18; James 2:15-16

D. You should be forgiving of them.

Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13

IV. You have a part in a biblical fellowship that unites Christians.

A. Fellowship is sharing our common life in Christ.

1. "Fellowship" is a term commonly used by Christians generally referring to getting together for activities or times of sharing common interests. However, this is only a small part of true fellowship.

2. While fellowship is sharing things in common, true biblical fellowship goes **FAR BEYOND** just a meal or an activity. It is the sharing of **life** and ministry with other believers through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:3-6; 2:1-2

3. The essential elements of true biblical fellowship are not **physical** matters such as social status, friendship, common interests, etc.; but are the biblical essence of the common life and mission we share.

B. Fellowship involves many aspects of Christian living.

1. Prayer – *II Corinthians 1:11*
2. Faith – *Romans 1:12*
3. Ministry – *II Corinthians 8:4; Galatians 2:9*
4. Suffering – *Philippians 3:10; 1 Peter 4:13, 5:1*
5. Doctrine – *Acts 2:42; Romans 16:17*

C. Fellowship is maintained by the practice of biblical character qualities.

1. Humility – *Philippians 2:3-8*
2. Honesty – *Ephesians 4:25; II Corinthians 4:2*
3. Love – *John 13:35; Galatians 5:13-15*
4. Hospitality – *Titus 1:8; Acts 2:42, 46-47*

D. Fellowship among believers must be based on your fellowship with Christ.



You must learn to have personal fellowship with Him before your fellowship with other believers will be proper. True biblical fellowship is rooted in the elements listed above (prayer, faith, ministry,

suffering, doctrine) as we come together in our fellowship in the person of Christ.

I John 1:3-7; 1 Corinthians 1:9-10

V. Basic question: What if another Christian offends me?

Unfortunately, this will probably happen to you if you spend any time with your brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. Just as in your physical family, there will be times of offense, hurt, and disagreement within the body of Christ. The Bible gives us directions dealing with all situations. In serious cases of offence, the following principles provide a definite progression to deal with such matters:

- A. Privately take the offense directly to the other party first and try to settle it between yourselves.

Matthew 18:15

- B. If the matter is not resolved privately, take a mature believer with you as a mediator in the situation. This person should be able to bring an objective evaluation and give balance in dealing with the offense.

Matthew 18:16; 1 Corinthians 6:1-5

1. Do **NOT** go to the lost world to settle a spiritual problem within the body of Christ.

I Corinthians 6:6

2. Do go to the authorities if a crime has been committed.

Romans 13:1-5

- C. If this matter still cannot be resolved, take it to your pastor so the offending party has the opportunity to submit to biblical authority and respond to the structure of the church.

Matthew 18:17

1. Be prepared to support church discipline.

*Romans 16:17; I Corinthians 5:9,11;
II Thessalonians 3:6, 14; I Timothy 6:5*

2. Commit the situation to the pastoral leadership of the church. They will handle it justly as the Holy Spirit leads through the structure God has established.

Hebrews 13:7, 17

3. While you should be ready to forgive your brother or sister if there is true repentance, reconciliation and restoration cannot take place without this repentance on the part of the offending party. God made forgiveness possible when Christ died and rose again.

That forgiveness becomes operative only when we repent and receive His forgiveness.

*Matthew 18:21-22; Luke 17:3;
Colossians 3:13*

4. Pray for your brother.

Matthew 5:43-48; Romans 12:14

5. Though you are ready to forgive when the offense is dealt with biblically, be certain you do not enter into sin by harboring bitterness in your heart in the meantime.

Hebrews 12:14-15

NOTES

1. The first step in discipleship is to identify the person you want to disciple.

2.

3.

4. The second step is to establish a relationship with the person.

5.

6.

7.

8.

OTHER CHRISTIANS

Lesson #9

1. List the two primary aspects of your relationship with other Christians.

A.

B.

2. List four responsibilities you have toward other Christians and give a scripture reference that best defines each point.

A.

B.

C.

D.

3. List four attitudes you should have toward other Christians and give a scripture reference that best defines each point.

A.

B.

C.

D.

4. What does the term "fellowship" mean?

5. The essential elements of true biblical fellowship are not _____ matters, but pertain to the essence of the common _____ and _____ we share.

6. List five areas of true fellowship and give a scripture reference for each.

A.

B.

C.

D.

E.

7. List four character qualities needed in the Christian's life in order to participate in true fellowship with other believers.

A.

B.

C.

D.

8. True or False:
- A. True biblical fellowship is based on exact doctrinal beliefs. _____
 - B. True biblical fellowship is possible with a lost person. _____
 - C. We must have fellowship with Jesus Christ before we can have true fellowship with other Christians. _____
9. In the event another Christian offends you, list three principles which should govern your actions in attempting to resolve the matter.
- A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____

10. In the event your brother refuses to help resolve a problem, what should you do?

11. Briefly explain the primary purpose of this lesson.

Key memory verses:

Ephesians 4:32; I John 3:14-15;

I John 1:7

NOTE: Among many Christians today, the following attitudes prevail:

1. We are not to associate with Christians who do not believe exactly as we do.
2. "Fellowship" must be centered around a meal or an activity.

From the Bible principles taught in this lesson, you should understand these attitudes are false and why.

→Write any questions you may have concerning the subjects in this lesson.

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