



points to ponder

Describe your ideal setting for fellowship. What does it include? How has it changed as you have grown older?

words to wrangle

The Greek word for fellowship shares roots with unity, common and communion. Why are these important?

conclusions to consider

When things are going well in life, do I tend to fellowship more or less with other believers? Why is this?

read the daily Bible verses at the KBS website

How would you define Christian fellowship?

The word **κοινωνία** (koin-oh-knee-uh) is used 20 times in the New Testament, only about half of them use the definition of "fellowship." If your understanding of "fellowship" is that of "friendship," you are missing much of the riches this word has to offer.

Κοινωνία is a word used to describe the things in common between believers and their God. The word includes the common belief system or worldview (we look at the world through the same eyes), experiences (worship, rejoicing, comfort, hope), expressions (prayer, giving, communion) and the intimacy and security of God intermingled with the human existence.

Although the concept is primarily a New Testament development, it finds its roots in the covenant and promises made between God and Israel. The foundation for the experience is the Lord's promise, "I will be with you" (Exodus 3:12, etc). The promise was structured through the laws and agreements of the covenant (Genesis 17:7-8; Joshua 24:2-14; Jeremiah 50:5).

Fellowship intertwines the compartments of life. Faith is directed towards God, but it is meaningful when it is expressed, shared and affirmed with others. Love is directed towards God as a grateful response to His unending love for us, but it finds expression not only to others in the faith, but to those who are currently deemed "unloveable." Hope points us to our future but finds its rest in the past and its demonstration in the present.

The root of the word **κοινωνία** regularly used as a prefix in the ancient Greek language with words like family, home, meeting and business. Adding the prefix describes an immediate family or a public meeting.

Jerry Bridges wrote, "There are many elements that go into the total concept of fellowship, but the sharing together in suffering is one of the most profitable."