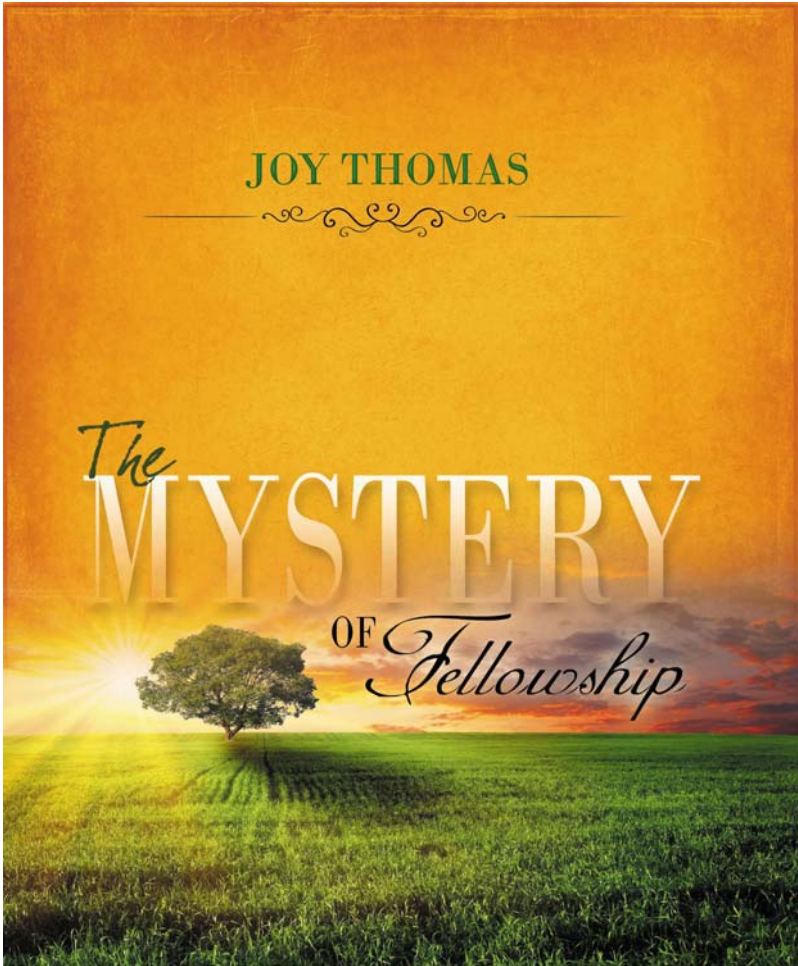


JOY THOMAS

A landscape photograph of a green field under a sunset sky. A single tree stands in the middle ground, with the sun low on the horizon behind it, creating a lens flare and casting a long shadow on the grass. The sky transitions from orange near the horizon to a lighter yellow at the top.

*The*  
MYSTERY  
OF *Fellowship*

“Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

*(1 John 1:3)*



# THE MYSTERY OF FELLOWSHIP

THE MYSTERY OF FELLOWSHIP  
*JOY THOMAS*

© GSF

APRIL 2014

Published by  
Good Samaritan Fellowship  
H2 / 22, Mahavir Enclave  
New Delhi - 110 045  
India  
Tel : 011-2503-4946 / 2503-2928

[www.oilnwine.org](http://www.oilnwine.org)  
[joythomas@oilnwine.org](mailto:joythomas@oilnwine.org)

Printed at  
New Life Printers Pvt. Ltd, New Delhi  
011 - 27651897

*The*  
MYSTERY  
OF  
*Fellowship*

JOY THOMAS





# CONTENTS



<i>Preface</i>		7
Chapter One	The Assault Against Fellowship	15
Chapter Two	Fellowship - A Mighty Weapon	29
Chapter Three	Fellowship - The Instrument Of Life	41
Chapter Four	Fellowship in Church Life	57
Chapter Five	Fellowship - A Testimony Of Life	71
Chapter Six	Fellowship - An Expression of Kingdom Life	85
Chapter Seven	True Fellowship Is In The Light	99
Chapter Eight	Fellowship - God's Deep Purpose	113



## PREFACE



The thoughts shared in these chapters were spoken in the House of God in New Delhi in 2011. The meditations given in this book opened our spiritual eyes to see the mystery of fellowship which is foundational for everything truly spiritual. In the local church here we were challenged by the Spirit and it led to positive changes in our lives. The Lord has laid a burden to publish these messages in book form so that saints who are hungry for His highest, may be encouraged to press on to the ultimate in these most confusing and perilous of times.

In the course of my preparations and study I was greatly blessed by several men of God who shared similar thoughts about the true fellowship and life unto which the Lord has called His people. I thank God for the light they have received which has helped me to see His thought and mind more clearly.

This book stresses God's desire to have fellowship with His people in splendid fullness. It offers practical guidelines



for experiencing His fellowship and shows how light, fellowship and life are so linked together in God's divine economy. As you read these pages, you will discover how God intends to bring His people into His ultimate purpose.

The Gospel of John was written by the Apostle with one purpose in mind – “that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye **might have life** through his name”. (John 20:31). The apostle John, however, wrote his Epistle with a slightly different burden, for he says, “These things have I written unto you that.....that ye **may know that ye have eternal life.....**” (1 John 5:13). Here he emphasizes that God's people must be conscious of the life they have received by believing. **Possessing of this life is not the end; it is only the beginning of Christian life!** The majority of born-again people are very happy that they possess His life, but they are seldom bothered about manifesting that life. **The burden that the apostle John shares in His letter mainly concerns the manifestation of His life as a true Christian!** He says that God's people ought to be primarily occupied with the life of the Lord that they have received because they are to manifest that very life here upon the earth! **The meaning of bearing the testimony of Jesus Christ is to manifest His life and to walk in relationship with the Father and the Son.**

Life in the Son is the basis of our fellowship and it is this fellowship that His life manifestation. **Life is the ultimate thing and not fellowship; fellowship comes out of life and works towards the expression of the fullness of life.**

**Fellowship is vital for maintaining life; it is imperative for our growth towards the manifestation of the fullness of life.** The word ‘fellowship’ is one of the most misinterpreted and misunderstood words, but at the same time it is one the most common words used by contemporary Christianity. **True fellowship is essentially inward and it is related to life within.** It is more than unity because it is possible to have a certain kind of unity without life! Many believers have friends among God’s people and they consider their friendship to be fellowship! However, that is a cheap counterfeit of true fellowship. **Friendship is a human trait or attribute whereas fellowship is the inter-communication or participation of life.** Many a time, the gathering of God’s people and times of interaction in spiritual activities do not touch our inner lives because of the absence of true fellowship. **Is fellowship the ultimate objective of coming together? No, the ultimate goal of every gathering is the progression of Christ-life. However, fellowship is an instrument for obtaining the life of the Son.**

The emphasis of John in Chapter one of his first Epistle is for “fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ”. This struck me so deeply! John says, “Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” This is very encouraging and enlightening. **The Holy Spirit has helped me to understand that this is all about being a family. John speaks about “our fellowship” as if it is all about a family relationship.** This is the nature of our fellowship! **This is evidently a family fellowship! It is “our fellowship with the Father and with His Son ...my little children”.** How precious it is to see the

**Body of Christ in this light! That is what a local church is to be - a family fellowship.** Saints, I would trust the Lord to open your spiritual eyes that you may see the precious truth about true fellowship. It will surely revolutionize your life too!

The fellowship that the Lord speaks about takes us back to God's eternal and primary desire to share His life with us. God's deep desire is to share His life with us. That is the purpose of the fellowship that God had at the beginning between man and Himself. His primary desire was to share His life with man and to fellowship with His creation. A clear, pure, open fellowship is what He wanted. He ached for an unblemished, unsullied, untarnished fellowship between Himself and the man that He had created. That is the picture we get from the book of Genesis. Pristine fellowship is the fellowship that the Lord had with man in the Garden. This is the kind of fellowship that the Lord wants to have with His remnant. It is to be a pure, love-based relationship between man and God! The Bible says that God and man walked together in the cool of the day in blessed fellowship; God and the man whom He had made walked together in blessed fellowship! There was intimate communion between God and man! That kind of fellowship was very precious to the living God. It is difficult for our human minds to fathom this; the best of us are lost in awe and wonder at the thought of such oneness. Here is a God who is all self-sufficient, so full, so mighty, so wonderful in Himself, so sovereign and absolutely independent in Himself and the wonder of wonders is that such a God should find in His heart a desire to have

fellowship with His creation as a Father with a family!  
*Hallelujah!*

**Saints, the fellowship that apostle John speaks about takes us back to that beginning!** The apostle John reiterates that our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son. The emphasis is on **OUR FELLOWSHIP!** That was God's desire in the beginning of creation. **The apostle John linked fellowship in the church with the fellowship that God had in the beginning with man.** He takes us to that eternal thought and desire of God and says this is what God is looking for – to have His creation with Him in fellowship, as a natural father has with a family! Apostle John, by the Holy Spirit, brings that into a lively expression amongst God's children now! All of God's hopes are bound with that!

All God's intentions and plans are bound up with fellowship. All of God's purposes are bound up with fellowship with Him and His Son. **All of God's interests for now and eternity are based upon fellowship between God and His children, and between His children and Himself. And that is why there is such a prolonged battle about fellowship.** It is because God has vested in this very thing called fellowship everything He hopes for and everything He has purposed and planned. It is God's great investment.

**Saints, in other words, the fellowship that proceeds from life is God's great investment plan to secure His inheritance in us. Until that original relationship is recovered, restored**

**and re-established, how will God bring about the desires of His heart?**

Dear saints, all that we are ever going to come into of God's great purposes and desires, will only be secured on the basis of our fellowship with God and the continual maintenance of our fellowship with Him! Unless His remnant will come into an exclusive, pristine fellowship with the Father and the Son and with one another there is no way He will be able to fulfill His purpose. Beloved, God works on that basis of fullness. If we come out of fellowship with God everything comes to a standstill. If anything cuts across our fellowship with God, well, all is gone! It is as though everything is lost! We know quite well that there is no moving on, no getting on, and no hope, whatever, until we get back and put right that fellowship and relationship!

It is God's desire that His remnant people should come into the fullness of all that He has purposed in eternity. However, this can only happen when God's people are open to His counsels in this present hour. It is my prayer that the Holy Spirit will reveal the Father's desire in His eternal Son to you so that you may experience the manifestation of the fullness of the life of the Son through "our fellowship"!

Joy Thomas

April, 2014





## CHAPTER ONE



# THE ASSAULT AGAINST FELLOWSHIP

**T**HE strength of God's Word in our lives can be experienced by us on a daily basis if we are given to His Word in all seriousness. It is a matter of our openness to the outworking of His Word in us. Thus God's mind will be made known to us in these perilous times. God has called us with a purpose, but we see many who are confused about the purpose of God in their lives, even after having come into salvation and having walked in this calling for many years. We see many who are spiritually stagnant and left groping around in places of discouragement. However, in spite of the spiritual conditions all around, we see God's merciful hand upon us and all those who are open to God's Word. It is not that we have no trials, perplexing situations or problems in our lives.



We may indeed have greater trials, but the point is that we are not found to be caught up with any kind of confusion. We have sufferings, we have many conflicts, but the wonderful thing is that His mercy is able to keep us and we can go on with God. If we are sensitive to the Lord, God's Word does a very important work in our lives. We need to understand that God's Word strengthens us when we are open to hear His voice. God does an establishing work in us through His Word when we are open to receive His Word. However, if we do not remain open to His Word, we may not experience His workings in the depths. Beloved, God's Word is not to be seen as a philosophical Word that is merely to be appreciated intellectually. **God has given us His Word so that we must KNOW the Lord through His Word. We grow in the knowledge of the Holy One through the Word.**

When I became a child of God, I realized straightaway that God's Word is not a matter of philosophy. The world has produced many philosophers who have spoken and written books appealing to the intellect and the psyche of man. Appreciating their concepts and ideologies, men have honored them and placed them on glorious pedestals. But their philosophies could not change the nature and the morals of people from within. The present world conditions and the terrible degradation into which mankind has fallen reveal that education and philosophy is not enough to bring changes in people. Technological advancements and modern day inventions have failed to lift man out of moral decay because philosophy has no power to transform man. **On the other hand, we see**

**that God's Word has the power to change man intrinsically.** There is a burden in my heart to say this for God is speaking to us, week after week, so that our lives may be transformed.

When God speaks to us through His Word, He is able to challenge us and change us, provided we are open to His Word. The Word is able to impact our lives and change us, even though we may think that the Word is too lofty for us. Though the thoughts in the Word are heavenly and spiritually uplifting, it is able to touch the depths of our lives. Therefore, we are not to merely appreciate God's Word when it is spoken and say, "wah, wah, wah", but we are to be open and to be submitted to that word and that thought. It will then produce life and substance in us. Yet, we see that many a time, the Word fails to have an effect upon our lives. This is because it is heard, but it is quickly forgotten. It is heard and appreciated, but that is the end of it! It is lost forever because it was not grasped within.

Beloved, understand well that God's Word has the power to change our lives. This is something I came to understand fully only after I had accepted Christ as my Saviour. As a Christian, a nominal one at that time, I had read the Word of God and had memorized many verses as a child. Sunday school brought me several small prizes for recitation. One of the verses I had memorized was, "Jesus said, I am the way, the truth and the life", but I never knew what this meant! Though that word did not mean anything to me at that time, the same word brought me to salvation in Christ, years later. And how did that happen? It happened when I opened my heart to that

word. That is what happens when we are born-again! Though I had known that word all the days of my youth, and in my teens, yet I had not been open to that word. It is only when I submitted myself to that word that it had the power to change my life. Let me encourage all of us that though we may have heard the Word in our youth, but not felt its power, yet the power of the Word is able to work within us. It surfaces years later when the time is right. So, if we hear the Word intently and seriously, it will bring forth fruit at a later day. Even as we hear the Lord through His Word, it will blossom another day, if it is heard with the right kind of heart. I want to remind each one of us that God is sending His word to us every Sunday. If we are sensitive and open to His word, it has the power to change our lives. The Word He is speaking now is very much related to the existing condition of our lives. Beloved, it is not a matter of just appreciating the niceties of the Word, and closing the Book thereafter! The Word has the power to govern our lives, to operate our lives in a practical way and to help us to progress on in this calling. So let us be grateful to the Lord for the Word that He is speaking to us in these days from verses 5 to 17 of Chapter 8 of the Book of Isaiah.

## **THE LIFE OF THE SON IN US**

From the start of the year 2011, the Lord has made it clear to us that He is in need of a remnant people, a company of people through whom God's purpose could be fulfilled. God has ministered to us that He desires to have a people who will make Him their sanctuary, who will come into a deeper love

relationship with the Lord, and who will come into a closer walk and intimacy with Him, so that He could fulfill all things through them in these last days. We read of many details of this in the first Epistle of John.

God's desire is, first of all, that His people may walk before the Father and also before one another. Our lives must be expressed before the Lord, before one another as well as before this world. Though this world is hostile towards the life of the Son in us, yet we see that the testimony of Jesus is formed as a result of our estrangement with this world. The world, be it the nations or the religious people, have never accepted the fact that we could live the life of the Son. The Lord said not to marvel that the world rejected Him. We are not to be surprised if the people of the world turn their faces away from us. We shall be brought into intimacy and oneness with the Father because the prayers of our heavenly High Priest, Jesus Christ, shall come to pass.

The Apostle John encourages us to walk even as He walked. He says that this is possible because there is One on the Throne who is interceding for us. The desire of each one of us must be to come into that closeness, that intimacy, that love relationship and that fellowship with the Lord as He Himself had come with the Father. All the sufferings of Christ are explained by His intimacy with the Father. The enemy hated that fellowship. Even today our walk and fellowship with the Lord and with one another will be detested by the evil one. In John's Epistles we see an account of the enemy's antagonism against the Lord and His church.

*“I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.” (1Jn 2:13)*

Here we see John writing to young men because they had overcome the wicked one. We see him making mention of the wicked one. They were victorious over the wicked one who was all set to oppose the manifestation of the testimony of Christ, which is the expression of the Son in believers. The wicked one is perpetually opposed to the love relationship between the Son and believers in which we are to progress on. Remember the antagonism of the enemy is because of the life that is in us and is growing in us. The hatred of the enemy and the animosity of the evil one against God’s people exist because of the manifestation of Christ’s life in them. The focal point is the issue of life, the life in us and its manifestation. That is the issue and it is the cause of all the hatred and the malice of the enemy.

*“Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.” (1Jn 3:12, 13)*

John speaks of the wicked one who is out there in this world working against God’s people. Then he says not to be alarmed that the world hates you.

*We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not. (1Jn 5:18)*

John says that the wicked one toucheth him not! The enemy is set against the life of the Son in His people. He has many means and methods to counter it. He employs countless means against God's people with one undivided intention to quench the expression of that life in them. The enemy knows that he cannot extinguish that life. Therefore, he is all set to hinder it so that it is not expressed in any form. That is the thrust of his concentrated effort. He is all out to work against this life (of Christ in us). **Let us understand that what he intends to do is not to end or destroy the life, but to somehow hinder and by all means, to repress and quench that life from any kind of expression or progression.** That is what we see all around us today. The enemy is so much at work in the midst of God's people. He knows that He cannot easily expunge the life of Christ in us. Therefore, his intention is to somehow quench the expression of that life. There is a reason why he does that. May God help us to understand that! **The expression of the Son in all His fullness is the mightiest force in this universe.** The enemy is well aware of that. Hence, the enemy is not out to just end this life, but he tries to make sure that this life does not progress and come into its full expression in the earth. We see how effectively the enemy is doing his work in the midst of God's people!

God's people are happy to have this life; they are happy to be born-again. They say, "The Lord is our Saviour; He has brought us out of darkness into His wonderful light." This life of the Lord in His people is a challenge to the enemy, but more than that it is the expression of the fullness of the life of the Son that challenges him. That life in full expression is the mightiest force in this world. **The enemy wants God's people to remain content and satisfied with the life they have. If God's people are in a place of contentment and satisfaction, assured of going to heaven, they will not be sensitive to death working against them to quench and hinder the progression of that life.** Saints, we need to have the eyes of our understanding to be opened. **It is an issue of life and death; it is a matter of life of the Son and death working against that life. God's intention is that even the last enemy, which is death, may be destroyed.** That was the Lord's final triumphant work. He wants His Church to come into a realm of victory over death even as He did, and to even overcome the last enemy, which is death. That is God's intention and purpose in transforming us into the fullness of Christ. It will be surely fulfilled in a people on the earth by His help.

God's people are to live in this hope; God will fulfill it on the earth in His time. Many saints have lived in this hope; they have not seen the fulfillment of this in their lives, but they manifested the life in greater measures than the rest. Surely when He establishes His kingdom they will reign with the Lord. They will be a part of that great bridal company. We don't know when all this will be fulfilled in the earth. Though we are

living in the end-times, we do not know the hour and the time of the fulfillment of this work. Yet we need to live in this hope. **When we say that death is the last enemy, we need to know that death is already working today in the earth in many ways. Beloved, the knowledge of this truth will enable us to overcome the enemy in our daily lives.**

## OVERCOMING THE ENEMY

We need to know that every means the enemy uses against us, every means he tries to employ and bring in, are instruments of death in us. We need to look at this with an eye that is set against the enemy. Remember, that the friendly suggestions of the enemy will bring nothing but death. Therefore, we need to know that every trick he employs is against the life we have; every conceivable means is directed against the expression of that life; they are instruments of death; they are forces of death. We need to understand this. Many times we are not sensitive enough in our lives. **They are like naked forces of death that descend upon our lives, our souls, and our minds.** This is a reality that we know the Apostle Paul had experienced. There was a descending upon his life by the forces of the devil. But he overcame it by God's grace. The workings of the enemy are a reality. Men of God have gone through such pressing times in their lives; they were not able to think, they were not able to feel through those situations that they faced. Beloved, the mind becomes blank and everything in the soul is pressed down under a dark cloud. And then a suggestion from the devil enters in to say that your life is at an end! It comes as



a terrible attack by the enemy to suffocate and choke the life out of the saint. It's the way of the enemy to discourage us, and we begin feeling that this is a difficult path to pursue and the end is near. We know the man of God, Elijah, who said, "*It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.*" (1 Kings 19:4). He thought the game was up, the battle was over for Satan whispered, "You are out of the battle. You are beaten." This is the way the devil works upon the instruments of God even today! And I know that we all go through such times in different measures when some situations really seem as though the battle is over and the enemy will be triumphant! We see this clearly from the life of Elijah. Let me say that I have also experienced such times in my life. It is hard and very difficult to battle against them, but we need to know that there are instruments of death that are set up against the lives of God's vessels by the enemy to quench the progression and expression of life. **Sometimes it is done by the application of naked spiritual forces, like that which descended upon Elijah.** The enemy stands up against that instrument to prevent that vessel from bringing the testimony of Christ upon the earth. Beloved, the enemy is ready to do that against any one of us, individually and also corporately. Anyone who stands up for the testimony of Christ will be prone to open attacks from the enemy. That is why we have to be super-sensitive. The wicked one is out there in the world to deceive and to somehow work death in us so that the life of Christ in us is not brought into its full expression.

Sometimes the enemy's attack is upon our physical bodies.

He afflicts us in our bodies so that we are not able to give ourselves to the things of God. We come to a place of helplessness when the strength of the body is sapped. Sometimes we see that the enemy's assault comes by an outward occurrence as happened when Cain, who hated his brother Abel, slew him. This was nothing but the work of Satan, the murderer, working in and through Cain. Satan was against the very life that was expressed by Abel. It was a life that was pleasing to God and Satan was all set to quench that life that represented the satisfaction of God, the closeness and the proximity of a life to God. The enemy used Cain as an instrument to bring death to his own brother! **So it is apparent that the enemy has many ways to employ against life, but whichever method he uses, they are always instruments of death working against life.** In this incident (of Abel), the attack came from outside. It was directed against the body so that it would be destroyed as the vessel of the testimony of life. **The enemy's aim was to get that vessel out of the way. This is also the strategy used by the enemy against many of God's people today.** It is very important that we take this counsel seriously. As a new believer, full of zeal for the Lord, we may say many things such as, "Lord I am ready to die for you," but **when we become an instrument for the testimony of Christ, it is the enemy who sets himself against us, to put us out of the way.** Note the contrast! We need to understand that. It is pictured so well in the life of Abel. The enemy attacked Abel's body not from within but from outside. He did this so that this instrument and vessel may be put out of the way. The enemy has many ways to come against **this life by bringing death to our soul, to our mind, to**

our will and emotions, and even to our spirit. He is only interested in quenching the very expression of divine life. That is why we have to be very careful with the confessions we make, with the thoughts we have in our minds, and with the emotions we express. As we have seen, God's mind for us is the life of His Son; God's thoughts for us are seen in the life of Jesus.

Saints, our fellowship is with God and when we walk in His light, our heart maintains that love relationship with the Lord, even though the enemy may attempt to bring death in some form. If we are sensitive we will overcome the death that the enemy is trying to bring against the life in us. The devil is totally against any expression that involves the manifestation of Jesus Christ and, therefore, we are to be very serious about this call upon our lives in these days.

Let us take the example of Daniel and the three Hebrew men who manifested a divine life of separation from the world in their dispensation. The enemy quickly brought about the announcement of death through the decree of king Nebuchadnezzar. All the wise men were to be killed unless one of them would interpret the dream. **This was nothing but a ploy of the enemy to get Daniel and his brethren out of the way.** The king's guard laid hold of Daniel and the Hebrew brethren to kill them. They had not even heard about the decree of the king! Daniel was very sensitive and spiritually intelligent to see through the design of the evil one. He asked for time that they may seek the Lord. The Lord in his mercy revealed the dream and also its interpretation (Daniel 2: 12-19). In the Bible, we repeatedly read of attempts of the master-killer to

come against the testimony that saints bore in the midst of a terrible and unrighteous world. There are manifold means that the enemy employs to hinder life and to quench it, but **his main weapon is death. That being an ineffable truth, his main objective is always to come against this life that manifests Christ.**

**Saints, if the life of the Son in fullness is the mightiest force in the world, the enemy will work death against it in every possible way.** May the Lord help us to be sensitive in our lives to the utmost to guard this life against death! May the Lord help His remnant to receive this word into their lives seriously and let this word set right their priorities!

Beloved, God's Word has not lost its power. God's people have to be open. His Word has not lost its power to change lives!





## CHAPTER TWO



# FELLOWSHIP - A MIGHTY WEAPON

**W**E have meditated from God's Word, that every method the enemy uses against us, every means he tries to employ and bring in, are instruments of death in us. Every trick he employs is against the life we have; every conceivable means is directed against the expression of that life; they are instruments of death; they are forces of death. We need to understand this. Many times we are not sensitive enough in our lives. They are like naked forces of death that descend upon our lives, our souls, and our minds.

It is not possible to cover all the ways in which the enemy would come against us or against this life, but as we go through the Epistle of John he gives important hints about some of the

means used by the enemy to hinder the growth and expression of life. **John says that fellowship is a very important thing for the manifestation of life.** John emphasizes fellowship as one of the more important ingredients for manifesting life. Therefore, he speaks repeatedly about the need for fellowship. It is very enlightening to read the first Epistle of John in this light. **Fellowship comes by life and works in relation to life. Or we may say, fellowship comes out of life and works in relation to the progression and expression of the fullness of life. And therefore, one of the things that the enemy always attacks is fellowship. Satan brings in death by breaking up fellowship.**

Look at your own life and notice how prone you are to get away from God's people! Have you experienced a compulsive feeling to get away from God's people? Have you felt inclined to stay away from the place where God has joined you in His will? You know it; how often you have confessed and testified that God has placed you in the body of believers yet **how tempted we are to withdraw from the fellowship of saints! That is the way Satan brings death to our spiritual life.** When something happens to us and somehow we become spiritually low, or whenever we enter some critical issue in our life, there is a suggestion that comes most often to us to stay away from the House of God, from brethren and from the fellowship of God's people. There is a whisper within, "Keep away from God's people. Get away from the testimony of Jesus Christ." And if you have heard that voice in your life, you will know what that impulse has resulted in your life. You may have had many

good reasons to withdraw from fellowship, but if you are honest, you will realize that it did not bring you any closer to God. The final analysis of your actions will tell you that by keeping yourself away from God's people you did not obtain any good. The conclusion would be that staying or keeping yourself away from fellowship only resulted in entering into a closed circle of wilderness wandering! We are all susceptible to such situations. We may have gone through such times, but let us know that God never wants us to stay there. We ought to take this principle into our lives.

The enemy always tries to take us away from the source of life that we find in the fellowship of God's people. **If he can get us alone, then it is not difficult for him to achieve his goal.** Many years ago I used to share a message about different kinds of sheep. There is one kind of sheep that we may call the 'solitary sheep'. Although it is in the fold, yet it is always found alone. Have you seen wild-life documentaries showing the way in which a fox or wolf attacks the sheep that is alone and adrift from the herd? That is death laying a trap for the sheep! If the enemy can lure you away from the fellowship, then he can isolate you and deal with you in detail. **Remember, whatever the enemy does results in death and not life.** We have to be very careful of the enemy's subtle enticements. We need to examine our motives and be earnestly honest with ourselves. To be away from fellowship and from the gathering of God's people is sure to spell spiritual death.

We must immediately get back from any kind of separation



that the enemy has maneuvered us into. **When we return what happens? We are encouraged and strengthened and life comes back to us again.** We need to examine ourselves in the light of this word. Even if we have not withdrawn from fellowship fully, let us at least remember that the enemy is always out to hinder fellowship. The enemy may also take you back into the things of the world so that he can rob, kill and destroy you little by little though that may not be so easy, it can happen. His primary intention is to somehow hinder the expression of this life.

You must know why you are reluctant to attend the gatherings of saints and why you want to keep away from God's people. Why do these desires come to you? Such promptings from the enemy can come, wave after wave, one after another. I have met people who talk a lot about spiritual things and yet they do not have true fellowship with God's people. We see the working of this subtle tactic of the enemy and his way of deceiving God's people from spiritual fellowship. It begins with a slow withdrawing in the heart and then spreads dangerously to a place of total detachment.

## **THE ASSEMBLING OF GOD'S PEOPLE**

Beloved, God in His mercy has given us a Body and many opportunities to fellowship. Paul says we are to exhort one another daily. Why daily?

*But exhort one another daily, while it is called*

*Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. (Heb 3:13)*

*But instead warn (admonish, urge, and encourage) one another every day, as long as it is called Today, that none of you may be hardened [into settled rebellion] by the deceitfulness of sin [by the fraudulence, the stratagem, the trickery which the delusive glamor of his sin may play on him]. (Heb 3:13 Amp)*

The counsel to all of us, whether in ministry or not, is abundantly clear. We need to have true fellowship in our lives. We know that we are prompted to keep away from God's people because it brings death. We are instigated by Satan to stay away from the fellowship of brethren so that death may work in us. So we need to have fellowship to safeguard our lives. That is why we encourage one another to attend as many gatherings as we can during the week. It is to have fellowship with one another and to keep our lives away from the dangerous, cunning stratagem and devices of the enemy. Let this principle of God help us. How sad that many of us take this counsel in a different light! And the result is that they bring death upon themselves! What happens is that death works in them in various ways. This is said not to condemn anyone, but to encourage us to take help from God's Word and His principle. Any thought of staying away from God's people is not a healthy sign in any one of us, even mine.

The writer says in Hebrews 10:24, 25,

*“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (KJV).*

*“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. 25 And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” (NLT)*

*“And let us consider and give attentive, continuous care to watching over one another, studying how we may stir up (stimulate and incite) to love and helpful deeds and noble activities, Not forsaking or neglecting to assemble together [as believers], as is the habit of some people, but admonishing (warning, urging, and encouraging) one another, and all the more faithfully as you see the day approaching. (AMP)*

Fellowship and our gatherings are very important for each one of us. **Remember, the place of fellowship is God’s place of recovery and restoration.** Now we know why the enemy wants to break-up that fellowship we have in the body of Christ. The enemy does not want you to be restored back because if we are kept away from fellowship then it is an opportunity to deceive

us. If any of us have a feeling or a mentality to stay away from the fellowship of saints, it would be wholly unhealthy for our spiritual life. It would work negatively in our lives and deprive us of life-giving sustenance. The enemy's only desire is to bring death. He tries to work this out in many ways and is tireless in his attempts to sever us from fellowship. He looks for opportunities to quench our spiritual lives and to bring death so that we may not be able to express it. Therefore, it is very important to be in a place of true spiritual fellowship.

Let me clarify that it may not always be possible for us to be in places of geographical proximity always. In such cases, we must always attempt to maintain spiritual relationship with others. When we find ourselves in such a situation, we must by all means maintain spiritual fellowship with those to whom we are joined in His purpose, and thus remain under God's governmental order. **It may not be possible for all of us to be found in a place of fellowship geographically always, however we must have spiritual fellowship with those whom God has joined us, it is our responsibility to look after and cherish that spiritual fellowship that God has brought about in our lives.** In the absence of physical fellowship in one place, we must, in such a circumstance, look for spiritual fellowship with like-minded saints, and then make every attempt to cherish and maintain it so that we are preserved in the way of life. The enemy will find it difficult to write-off that life that always looks for fellowship. **We need to value fellowship.** John brings this out so clearly in his letter. That which comes against life will surely bring death, if we do not

watch out. The **enemy's only aim is to destroy us and not to restore us.**

We know that the Body of Christ in the earth today is a spiritual entity, but we must see that it is also something real and practical. It is not something mystical and imaginary. We often hear those who do not value fellowship say, "Of course we are all one in Christ; of course we are all part of this church that God is building". It is true, but what is important is to see the ground reality of that statement? We are to stand on the ground reality of the Word. **It is not enough to say that we are one in Christ; we must enter into the value of that expression.** When people say that they are all part of His church, many may say it in a flimsy way.

Consider a company of saints where there is a vision of the fullness of Christ and God's purpose. Though the truth is being ministered, yet it is not realistic in many lives. We are to enter into the ground reality of that which is ministered through the Word. There is a great challenge to come into the value of the words that we hear. **We need to come into those values definitely and deliberately.** That is the challenge. **Fellowship is not imaginary or unrealistic; it is not just spiritual or heavenly, but it is also real and practical.** We must enter into fellowship carefully and deliberately. The Holy Spirit will bring us into a greater practicality in our lives. Many times people take this as something spiritual in the sense of not being practical, but fellowship is so practical and real that life will flow in through fellowship. Many a time we have

not been conscious of the value of fellowship.

Beloved, many times I have been saved from evil things because of the energizing fellowship of the brethren. I have been delivered from the jaws of the enemy's trickery by the fellowship of the Body. Initially I was not conscious of it, but later on I understood by the Holy Spirit that I was spared the onslaught of evil because of the energizing fellowship of the brethren. If you are sensitive and look into your life, as I am able to do, then you will also be able to see that you have been spared many attacks because of the fellowship and prayers of God's people. Let us not underestimate God's arrangement for us to have true fellowship with God's people. We may not have reckoned or thought or imagined what Satan had for us, but it was that energizing fellowship of God's people that kept us from being swept away by the flood waters released by the enemy. Amen!

Fellowship is not just coming together on Sunday and returning home thereafter but it is something that has to be maintained through the week. Thus the attacks of the enemy upon us often do not succeed because of fellowship of the saints and the prayers of God's people. Let us honor God's counsel in our lives. God's Holy Spirit is there to help all of us to walk this way. The Holy Spirit is the custodian of God's government. He will help and energize and strengthen us. I certainly believe that this word will release us to a greater appreciation of this life that must be maintained through proper fellowship. When the enemy attacks us, the fellowship we have is his primary target.

When one member suffers there is a suffering in the Body. What does that mean? It can be explained in many ways. But let me bring in the burden of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit desires wholeness in the Body. **And therefore, the desire of the Lord is that we should not be found outside the fellowship of the saints and suffer.**

The Lord desires that every member of the Body be related to the Lord and walk in fellowship with the Lord and with one another. **Remember one thing that if there is any injury to fellowship, it is the stroke of the devil to injure the flow of life. It is for us to make sure that there are no injuries.** How often we go through trials in our lives that could cause injuries to the fellowship we have! We may come into a situation and circumstance when we are pressed out of measure, as Paul says, and the deepest longing in our heart ought to be to have spiritual fellowship with the brethren. When I say this it does not mean that we leave the fellowship with the Father, these are all interrelated and form one whole realm of fellowship.

We need to long for the fellowship of the brethren and that will be the place of our deliverance. This has happened so many times in my life, even in the recent past, but the fellowship of God's people has brought me to a place of deliverance, release and emancipation. It could be that we are geographically in different places where physical fellowship is not possible, but we shall find that life rises up as we value fellowship and enter into it specifically and deliberately. We may think that life is coming to an end or that it is difficult to rise up in such

circumstances, but we see that life is provided to us by His grace and we are filled with life again.

To close, our responsibilities are two-fold:

Firstly, **it is my responsibility to ensure that I have fellowship**; I need to be with God's people; I need the fellowship of God's people. The more I can be with God's people, the more will my own life be safeguarded; the more will sin be out of reach.

Secondly, **it is my responsibility to give value fellowship to others; to provide the same valued fellowship, which I have received, to my brothers and sisters in the Lord.** As much as the enemy can attack me, so also is he able to attack them. As much as the enemy wants to quench my life so also is he bent upon quenching the life of my brothers.

We are to look for that valued fellowship from one another, whether we are geographically in one place or separated from one another, and we are to be willing to provide fellowship to many others. Amen!

**Saints, if life in its fullness is the mightiest force in the world, then fellowship is a mighty weapon against the death that the enemy can bring in.** Where there is fellowship there will be an outworking of life; *"If we say we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness we lie and do not have the truth. If we walk in the light as He is in the light then we have fellowship*



*with one another and His blood cleanses us from all sin.”* Let us value fellowship with the Father and the Son and with one another.

May this word deliver and cleanse and emancipate us. Let this word bring His people into a new ground of fellowship with Him and with one another. May the fellowship of God’s people nullify every instrument of death that the enemy wants to bring in and has been trying to bring in to destroy their lives! May the Lord help His remnant to receive this word into their lives seriously and let this word set right their priorities!

Beloved, God’s Word has not lost its power. God’s people have to be open. His Word has not lost its power to change lives!



## CHAPTER THREE



# FELLOWSHIP- THE INSTRUMENT OF LIFE

**T**HE Lord has laid a burden in my heart to declare that God's remnant should be sensitive, sober and watchful in these days because the tares and the wheat are growing together. The Lord placed this Scripture upon my heart:

*Mat 13:24-30*

*(24) Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:*

*(25) But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.*

*(26) But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.*

*(27) So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?*

*(28) He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?*

*(29) But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.*

*(30) Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.*

The question is from where did the tares appear? And the answer is that the tares were the work of the enemy. It is the enemy that had sown the tares! So the servants said, “Shall we go up immediately and uproot them?” The householder said, “Don’t do that because it will badly affect the wheat. Let them grow together.” With the kind of mindset we have we would probably have said, “Lord, growing together is bad, is it not? Why not uproot them?” But the master told the servants not to uproot them. That was God’s wisdom. Our wisdom would say, “Lord why allow the tares to grow and cause confusion?” But the wisdom of the Lord was different for He knew that the enemy had done this. Then, why did God not stop the enemy? We must remember that the ‘field’ is the world and not the church. The enemy is the prince of this world. But a day is coming when God will stake His claim

over this earth. And that is the reason that God is looking for a remnant in the earth today. The enemy has done and is doing his work of sowing confusion, but the Lord says, “Let him do it. Let the tares grow together with the wheat until the harvest comes.” What the Lord knows is that a lot of things that will grow together at this time in the world and the tares will seem to be no different from the wheat. It is a fact that today the tares look identical to the wheat. The all-knowing Lord says, “When the time of the Lord comes, it will not be difficult to separate the tares from the wheat. Just leave it to Me! You cannot do anything. This is not your job, leave it to me. When it is time to harvest the crops they will be identified and then they will be totally separated. Until then they will grow together.”

In Matt 24, we read of a great falling away that has already begun. It is already happening today, though not in full measure. Therefore, we have to be very careful today. In the light of what God is speaking, we are to be resolute, to respect and honor God’s wisdom to keep us in the Body. Many things are happening all around. The enemy is trying to deceive the very elect. He wants to intercept and destroy those who want to press-on to the highest in God. These are the days when we must try every spirit, for many spirits have come into this world. This calls for greater sensitivity on our part. One of the best ways to try every spirit is to be a part of the true Body of Christ. This is the way to keep every child of God from succumbing to deception.

## FELLOWSHIP HELPS IN DISCERNING

God in His mercy brought me to this body of believers many years ago to be a part of His Body here. He delivered me out of many things in order to add me to this Body. I was raised up in a CSI (Anglican) church, born-again in a Methodist Church, baptized in water in a Brethren assembly and baptized in the Holy Spirit while yet being in the Brethren assembly (which was rather unusual in those days!). I know that it was God's mercy that brought me out of the denominational systems and the traditions of man. I know that God in His mercy brought me into this Body of Christ. This was undoubtedly the working of the Sovereign hand of God in my life. I am extremely grateful to God for this, for I know that in the Body, together with the saints, I will be able to move on to the highest in God. Many things have come against this joining with the saints in Christ Jesus. Therefore, it has not been easy to be with God's people all these past thirty-five years. This testimony is not very different from that of others here, but I see the Divine hand of God in showing me these things. I came to Delhi as a stranger, having been transferred in my secular job, but God divinely used that occasion to bring me into His eternal plan. God's hand has been upon me from the very beginning; He knew what needed to be done in my life. Therefore, I clearly see God's mercy and faithfulness, and without doubt, I could say the same for most of us. It is the Lord who has called us to fulfill His purpose in our lives.

The other day, after the lapse of several years, one of the

brothers in the local church met another brother who had once been a part of this Fellowship. The brother who had left us asked him, "Where are you going for worship now?" "Of course," he said, "I am going to the Good Samaritan Fellowship as before." The other brother was taken aback and greatly surprised. He asked in incredulity, "Sill going there?" He added, "It is difficult to believe that you are still going to the same group to worship the Lord even after twenty-seven years have past!"

Beloved, in the eyes of many Christians, fellowshipping for so many years in the same church is a strange thing. We are living in an age when men change their wives every couple of years! It is easy for them to do so. It is also no great thing for many believers today to divorce the church to which they were added by God or to leave the church where they were spiritually born. To many it is a small thing to leave the family of God for flimsy reasons and join another church! They forget that **marriage is a covenant relationship and so is the Body of Christ life or church life! Remember, that God's principle for the local church (spiritual family) is no different from His principle for the natural family.** The sad part is that even born-again, spirit-filled Christians who speak about the Body of Christ and about fullness and maturity today, do not mind leaving one group or church and move to another group (though the doctrines are the same). Furthermore, they would not bat an eyelid before leaving the church to which they moved! But remember, it is important to honor God's divine principle after He has brought us into His divine purpose. **There is a spirit**

**of iniquity that is masquerading in the garb of so-called deeper spiritual life and higher purpose of God that is trapping those who are looking for true spirituality!** There is a terrible spirit of deception out there working invisibly to deceive the very elect! Saints of God, be watchful!

As long as it is God's need for us to be here, in this House, for His divine purpose, we need to be a part of this Body. This alone will help us to attain to God's highest purpose. As long as this Body is moving on in God's purpose, we must pursue God's highest here. There is a hidden danger for those in pursuit of spirituality for many are deceived by what appears to be spiritual. We have to be careful and we have to discern the times in which we are living. In the ruse of spiritual progress people are breaking the principles of God and losing the supply of life. I want to encourage every one of us that God in His mercy has placed us in this Body so that together, as one Body, we may pursue His heavenly path. That is why we need to value this celestial arrangement of God to make us a part of the local body. The tragedy is that advancements in information technology are doing more harm than good. The Body of Christ is being replaced with substitutes that heavily draw upon technological aids, such as audio and video props to confuse people. **But let me say that though it is difficult for individuals to 'try every spirit' that attempts to deceive them, it is only in the safety of a true Body that it will be possible to be free from deception.** If some kind of offensive spirit comes against the people of God or the Word then it will only be in the Body that steps can be taken to discern and deal with them.

The Apostle Paul told the Corinthians that he could not share the meat of the Word with them! He could only share the milk of the Word with them because of their poor spiritual condition. In Hebrews 5, the writer says that he had many things to speak about the Christ who learned obedience, who cried with strong crying in the days of His flesh, who fully submitted Himself to the Father and who made the Father His eternal ineffaceable sanctuary. The Christ, who was made perfect through obedience, could only be known through His Word and the Spirit to very few believers.

*Heb 5: 8-14*

*(8) Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;*

*(9) And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;*

*(10) Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.*

*(11) Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.*

*(12) For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

*(13) For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.*

*(14) But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have*



*their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*

*Heb 5: 11, 12 (AMP)*

*(11) Concerning this we have much to say which is hard to explain, since you have become dull in your [spiritual] hearing and sluggish [even slothful in achieving spiritual insight].*

*(12) For even though by this time you ought to be teaching others, you actually need someone to teach you over again the very first principles of God's Word. You have come to need milk, not solid food.*

The writer of the book of Hebrews said that he could not share about Christ to those who had become dull of hearing. The reason is that there was a divine withholding of the depths of the Word. Paul said the same thing to the Corinthian believers who had heard the truth. He withheld from them the deep things of God; he could not share it with them. **The remarkable thing is that today we cannot tell others that the deeper realities of the Word are divinely being withheld from them because they are dull of hearing.** They would be quick to counter by saying that there were many other ways to hear the deep things of God because the use of internet facilities to acquire information was open to one and all. They would even take pride in possessing a faster web connection to make downloading of everything they wanted to know easy. That is indeed a real possibility, but would that really help them? When all is said and done, we need to know that our lives are in the hands of the Living God with whom we have to do! Just because it is easy to access the written truth through the internet or

through e-books, many of God's people are being deceived and confused. They mistakenly think that they can get real spiritual life away from fellowship of the brethren in the Body. Yes, they could gain some mental knowledge of the truth, but there can be no revelation of truth because that has to be a work of the Lord in every life.

The saints in Ephesus heard the Word for three years from the Apostle Paul who said that he had not held back anything from them. He had shared the "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27) with them. However, the intuitive Apostle Paul realized that their eyes had not yet been opened to the riches in Christ which he had shared with them. That is why he earnestly prayed that their eyes of understanding may be enlightened (Eph 1:17-18). **Note carefully that hearing doesn't mean seeing!** Today, we have multitudes of believers who speak and use spiritual terms which are quite strong and deep, but are they walking in that spiritual reality? They live in a world of imagination believing that they have arrived there spiritually! What a victory for the deceiver of the brethren! Though they try to escape true Body life by using modern technological facilities like the internet and websites, these are poor substitutes for real Body life. Today, people are turning to the internet to meet the smallest of needs. For instance, when somebody wants to repair or fix his phone or any kind of home gadget, he turns to the YouTube to find the solution. If someone is sick he looks up the internet to search for details of that sickness and also to find suitable remedies. **In the same way, today many are turning to the Internet Pastor or Web Pastor to fix their spiritual problems.** Many a time,

they are unaware of the actual moral and spiritual life of these so called men-of-God. They do not know how many times they have been divorced and remarried; they do not know if they have a valid ministry and a body of believers who are really walking morally and spiritually in the ways of the Lord. Many young people are affected by this. They can't try the spirits that are at work in these ministries, realizing that they are not able to do that alone. That is why God has given us a Body of believers where we can try every spirit in the corporate environment of the church. No wonder that today we see so much of individualism where people try to justify their desires to move on in the Lord in the garb of spirituality and spiritual pursuits! **People have little value for the true ministries and the local church.** The enemy is so clever! Our wisdom cannot match the cleverness of Satan! He is a genius and we cannot match him. In the great wisdom of God, He has given His people the Counselor, the Holy Spirit as well as the fellowship of the Body of Christ.

In these times when God is sending His word to us, many are confused. They are questioning their own spiritual foundations and are being hijacked out of the spiritual path they had walked for years. The enemy is very active in doing that. Many do not have the eyes and ears to see and hear what the Spirit is saying. They are not able to hear what the Spirit is revealing or to discern the source of spiritual things. This is the reason why the Lord is building His Body and has made us a part of it. That is why the Lord has provided the Body of Christ with some men as leaders, not as those who are perfect,

but men of some caliber, spiritual stature, and humble character. We do not need men of great stature, but we need men of some stature who have the wisdom of God to depend on the Holy Spirit for guidance and direction so that we may move on in the Lord for His sake. May God help all of us!

Usually when people are convicted of the truth in the Lord they readily move in right directions, but after some time when doubts arise they tend to withdraw. This happens because they are exposed to so many other things that they read and hear. As the Apostle Paul says, they are *“tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive”* (Eph 4:14). Many things that they read and hear undermine their spiritual foundations. They begin to question their own experiences in Christ; they question those things which they had been convicted of at one time; they begin to even doubt that for which they had paid a price at one time. Oh! the subtle ways of the enemy!

It is only when we subjectively live in the Body of Christ that we can try these different spirits. I am reminded of the words of Apostle John *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world”* (1 John 4:1). *“My dear friends, many false prophets have gone out into the world. So do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God.* (New Century Version of 1 John 4:1) *“My dear friends, don’t believe everything you hear. Carefully weigh and examine what people*

*tell you. Not everyone who talks about God comes from God. There are a lot of lying preachers loose in the world.”* (THE MESSAGE Bible). It is only in churches where the principle of the Body of Christ is maintained that we can try different spirits to see the underlying motives of the evil one. **The truth is that only where the Body life is a living experience and not just a doctrine, can every spirit be tested and tried.** Saints, what a security there is for the saints in these deceptive times!

## **FRIENDSHIP, FELLOWSHIP AND KOINONIA**

Beloved, we must value fellowship in our lives. We also need to provide fellowship of true value to others. This is very important. John, when talking about life in his epistles also talks about fellowship because they are so interlinked. This suggests that fellowship is vital to maintain life. **The word ‘fellowship’ is one of the most misinterpreted and misunderstood words, but at the same time it is one of the most common words used by Christians.** Now just to highlight a few things that the Lord has laid upon my heart, let me say that in the Old Testament we do not read much about fellowship. In fact, we do not see such a thing as true fellowship except in shadows and types. Some take David and Jonathan as examples of those who had a close, enduring and strong fellowship. But this doesn’t give depth to the true meaning to the New Testament fellowship. In the Old Testament (Psalms 133) we see that the word ‘unity’ is used as a synonym for fellowship. There could be some measure of fellowship in the unity of brethren, but it would be more of an outward unity.

True fellowship, however, is essentially inward. It is related to life within. It is possible to have a certain kind of unity without life. For example, in the world we have many kinds of unions where they maintain a kind of unity. Union comes out of some measure of unity. So we find a kind of unity which is based on an outward agreement of certain principles. **But such groups and unions are devoid of inward life. True fellowship requires life and without life there cannot be fellowship. Fellowship which is an inward matter basically and can best be described as the inter-communication of life.** And the word used in the New Testament for that kind of fellowship is the word 'koinonia'. It means communion, communication and participation.

We need to understand that **there is a great difference between friendship and fellowship. Friendship is a human trait or attribute.** People of the world can have strong and lasting friendship, and believers can also have fellowship with people of the world. A good friend may even be willing to die for another friend. That's what the Bible says in Rom 5:7, "*For scarcely for a righteous man may one die, yet peradventure for a good man ....*". Yes, it is possible in the world for a true friend to die for another friend. There is ample evidence that natural friendship can even be stretched to such an extreme end. Friendship between people can be pure, loyal and very intimate, but it cannot be called fellowship.

In Christianity, fellowship is a term (translated from the Greek *koinonia*). The word 'koinonia' means communion,

participation and communication. It refers to those who are joined in communion, participation and communication because of a life. Thus, fellowship is more than a matter of loyalty; it is more than being true to one another. We need to understand by the Holy Spirit that Christian fellowship is a matter of a life in the Spirit. Human friends can come together and talk about a lot of worldly things; they can even talk of unrighteous things; they can also talk ill of others. Worldly friends can talk about a wide variety of subjects, be it sports, education, politics or art. They can sit and talk for hours, and even continue through the night; they can even scheme to harm others, murder someone or plan evil things. **So there can be a kind of unity even in friendship!** Many things can be done under the banner of friendship. But, fellowship is based upon an inward life.

**One of the prevalent deceptions of Satan is to call the ‘friendship’ that believers often have as ‘fellowship’. Common friendship between believers is often mistaken for fellowship. There can be a lot of friendship between brothers but it cannot be called fellowship!** So we have to be very careful. Many mistake friendship for fellowship today. And it is the truth that will keep us from falling into the enemy’s trap. Christian friends may come together and engage in a lot of “spiritual activities”, such as singing, sharing and eating, but that does not amount to fellowship. **It is a cheap counterfeit of true fellowship!** That is where we need to have discernment or a discerning spirit. **Many gatherings and times of interaction for spiritual activities do not touch upon true**

**life.** If such gatherings and assemblies fail to promote life then they cannot be termed as fellowship meetings. **Fellowship is not the ultimate objective of coming together; the ultimate goal is to have life in Christ Jesus, but fellowship is the instrument to obtain the life of the Son.**

The life that the Spirit of God has deposited in us must come into its full expression. To attain to that purpose, God has given us 'fellowship'. The Lord in His great wisdom has ordained 'fellowship' for that purpose. May God open the eyes of our understanding! This is the way we need to see, evaluate and examine the times we gather together. Let us allow the Holy Spirit to register this deep within. Alas, there is plenty of friendship between believers that is mistaken for true fellowship. We need to be saved from the flood waters of deception which the enemy is spewing out today. It is very necessary for all of us to be aware of what the enemy is attempting to do to destroy the church. But we will be saved if and when we are open to the Word and to the Spirit. It is life that we need to focus on in these days. It will be a great tragedy if, on the Last Day, we who had been members of a church for many months or years, come to know that we did not have the life of the Son!







## CHAPTER FOUR



# FELLOWSHIP IN CHURCH LIFE

**T**HE Lord has been helping us to see the true meaning of fellowship through the help of the Holy Spirit in these chapters. Fellowship is not the ultimate objective of our coming together; the life in Christ and its full manifestation is the ultimate goal of fellowship. However fellowship is the instrument to obtain that life in fullness.

## FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER

In the New Testament the first time the word fellowship is used is given in chapter 2 of Acts. It is very interesting to see this.

*Act 2:40-47*

*(40) And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.*

*(41) Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.*

*(42) And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

*(43) And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.*

*(44) And all that believed were together, and had all things common;*

*(45) And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.*

*(46) And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,*

*(47) Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

*Act 2:42-43 AMP*

*(42) And they steadfastly persevered, devoting themselves constantly to the instruction and fellowship of the apostles, to the breaking of bread [including the Lord's Supper] and prayers.*

*(43) And a sense of awe (reverential fear) came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were performed through the apostles (the special messengers).*

We need to consider the sequence of events mentioned in the above Scriptures. These people repented and received Christ into their lives and were born from above. Then they were baptized and added to the church, not only to the universal church, but also to the local church at Jerusalem! The saints that were added to the local church at Jerusalem then “...continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine and fellowship”. The Lord had birthed the New Covenant fellowship amongst them that was based on the life of the Son. These ones with the life of Christ within them persevered and devoted themselves constantly to fellowship with the Apostles. The Spirit and the Word (teaching) brought them into fellowship. They longed for fellowship and received it by the Spirit and the Word (the teaching of the Apostles). There was a flow of life in them. That was the commencement of a very important thing—it began when there was a flow of life in them. Then they also desired to be together. The life within the believers created a longing for fellowship and that is what they received. The Spirit and the Word brought them together and life flowed in and through them.

When true life flows into us then there will also flow out of us a true longing for fellowship with other like-minded brethren. Fellowship is communion, communication and participation of that life amongst God’s people. That is what

we read in Acts 2:42. The meaning of *koinonia* is participation. We come together as participants of life. We come together to participate in His life in us in greater measure. It is important for us to know that the first century believers did not just meet together for social needs or personal necessities or for any other worldly motive and purpose; they met to jointly participate and share in the life of Christ.

When the Lord opened my eyes to see the Church of Jesus Christ, the Lord showed me that **all other reasons for getting together are nothing but cheap substitutes and counterfeits of the real thing. *Koinonia* is not a superficial social gathering!** Today in Christian circles we notice that spiritual fellowship is abused in many ways by organizing meetings with like-minded professionals and calling them doctor's fellowship, nurses' fellowship, students' fellowship, engineers' fellowship, armed-forces fellowship and so on. Christians fail to understand that true fellowship is not based upon our careers, our pursuits or our education. Such organizational fellowships are based upon occupational backgrounds and not on the spiritual principles of the Apostles. As such, they are held contrary to the principles in God's word. The saints in the local church at Jerusalem (Acts 2:42) continued in the fellowship of the Apostles, whereas these organizations which are based on the strength of human credentials and professions are contrary to the true fellowship that the Scripture speaks of. Today, people rely on a lot of human logic and reasoning to justify continuation of their own desires to socialize!

Some of us have participated in evangelical activities shortly after receiving the life of Christ. I was part of such a man-evolved organization in the early days of my spiritual life. But the gathering together of people in many of these organizations was not life-related. We may wonder and ask, "Were they not doing good things?" Yes, it sounded so good, but the question is what was the focus and goal of their meeting together? Was it for the purpose of self-satisfaction or was it for the increase of life as per the teaching of the Apostles. This is where man's wisdom overtakes God's wisdom and ruins the very basis of meeting.

**In the early church, Peter was not asked to establish a Fisherman's Fellowship, nor was Matthew asked to initiate a Tax-Collector's Fellowship!** Over the years, intellectual Christianity has put an end to the simplicity of a believer's life in Christ. The Peters of today would be told by intellectual believers that he was not learned enough to evangelize cultured Jews, who are so well versed in the law, and therefore, he could only reach out to the simple and the uneducated gentiles! On the other hand, Paul who had a doctorate in theology and who was a Pharisee of Pharisees, would have been asked to meet with the religious and the elite class of society! See and be amazed at how man's wisdom comes in to dictate divine things, but **God's wisdom sends Peter to the Jews, and Paul, the Pharisee of Pharisees, to the Gentiles. This is God's wisdom.** This is where we find a confused Christianity today attempting to evangelize the world with the power and zeal based on man's intellectualism. The sad thing is that today the soul of man has

usurped the place of the spiritual man and come to dominate the things of God! Very few people have spiritual eyes to discern and discriminate these things.

*Eph 2:14-15*

*(14) For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;*

*(15) Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;*

The Word says that God has broken down the middle wall of partition to make two into one new man, which is the Lord Jesus Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek nor Gentile there, so why do men build new walls today? Para-churches and para-organizations are creating fresh walls of separation between believers. They restrict the Christian life and they bring in confusion. We need to be delivered from all such superficial things. There are innumerable Christian gatherings, but most of them are not based upon true fellowship or *koinonia*. They will never be able to reach the level of fellowship that is embraced by all that *koinonia* means. They will never meet the need of the participation of His Life. Their activities may be pleasant and they may be doing well, helping others to some extent, but they will not be able to provide true life. Spiritual gatherings for the sake of some kind of Christian fellowship will never meet the need of a true life in the Spirit. These can provide a limited support, but in the end it will hinder the spiritual growth

that is designed by the Lord. It is no doubt disastrous, but that is what we see all around.

## FELLOWSHIP MEANS PARTICIPATION

Many times when we talk about fellowship, people take it to be abstract and mystical. Spiritual things do not seem to be tangible and real to some people. Hence, let us understand and accept that true fellowship is not mystical fellowship; it talks of coming together in a definite locality. Fellowship is not abstract; it is something visible and something positive that takes place in a geographical sphere. Thus, fellowship is spiritual, but at the same time, it is also real. Some believers may limit themselves to an abstract 'form' of fellowship, as though it is something automatic that will bind the saints together. But such abstract fellowship is hollow if it is without the actual assembling together of believers at a particular point in time and space. We cannot overlook this principle that is spelt out very clearly in God's word.

The Lord Jesus Christ Himself very clearly laid down this principle, "*Where two or three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them*" (Mt 18:20). Saints, we can have fellowship with God alone, but we cannot have fellowship with one another who are not present! *Koinonia* requires being together in one place at one time under the direction of the Holy Spirit. Many can talk about fellowship ignoring this truth, but that is meaningless. It will, at best, be a poor substitute that does not result in the progression



of life. For true fellowship physical proximity is an absolute necessity.

Saints should meet together regularly in an atmosphere conducive to the working of the Holy Spirit because our participation in fellowship with others impacts our lives as well as that of others. Close, intimate fellowship is important; it affects our daily lives wherever we may be. Where the commitments are so real through the working of the cross, there can be a participation in fellowship with brethren though we may not be together geographically always. There is a participation that brings about spiritual reality in fellowship even though we may be physically apart for a season and time where commitments are not abstract but real and tangible through the working of the cross among such saints. Fellowship in the light of the word is inevitable for the growth of the saints and the body of Christ.

A Scripture portion that gives more light on this is 1 Cor 1:9. Paul says here that we have been called to have the fellowship of the Son.

*1Co 1:9-11*

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

*(10) Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

(11) *For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.*

The word fellowship means participation. In other words Paul says that we are called to participate in the life of the Son. Immediately after that he says that let *“there be no divisions among you”*. **Divisions are contrary to true fellowship!** There are people with different minds and opinions. There are people of a different mind-set. **There can be differences amongst us, but not divisions.** The Apostle Paul would like us to have the same mind and the same judgment. So we see how fellowship in the Son can be affected by our minds, our opinions and our reasoning. In other words Paul says that we are divided because of our choices and preferences; we forget that we are called into one fellowship, one choice, and one preference. He implies that, unfortunately, we have different choices, selective approaches and likes and dislikes. Saints, Paul reminds all of us that we are called into one fellowship, into one participation and into one appreciation, one preference, one choice and into one enjoyment!

Beloved saints we need to take God’s calling very seriously in this hour. God needs a remnant on the earth and He is sending His Spirit and His Word to secure His people. This is His burden and He is sending His word to us in this hour because there is a need for such a word in us. We must not forget that. We have to set aside our appreciations, preferences and spiritual enjoyments which affect our participation of that One Life. The choices we make can work against our possession

of true fellowship; they can affect our participative calling. That can seriously damage our fellowship in the Son.

We need to take care and receive this truth into our lives. Our concentration must be upon the participation of Life, which is the foremost thing. If our spiritual eyes are open to see this precious calling things will fall in line. Then we will be of the same mind and judgment and our fellowship will be dynamic and life-giving.

## TRUTH MUST BECOME LIFE

We thank God for the Word He is sending us and for the truth He is giving us, but remember that truth in itself is not Life. We can speak the truth, declare the truth and love the truth, but that is not sufficient. Truth must become Life. We know that we have been talking about the truth, but how much of that truth has become life? We all have a struggle in this area and we need to take note of this. The enemy has tricked many people into believing that it is sufficient to know the truth. The spiritual growth of many people have been adversely affected because of deception. The enemy has been able to ridicule and deride them because though they possess the truth, they appreciate and are occupied with the truth and doctrine, but that does not mean that they have Life.

**Saints, we must not substitute truth for life!** And this is a great deception that gives the enemy an advantage. While we must have the truth, we must have light and we must be in

possession of all the revelation that God can give to us. We must ever remember that true light is not something to be taken hold of as mere truth and to be occupied with as teaching, or as doctrine, or even as truth. If we do so, the enemy will obtain an advantage over us. **Beloved, doctrine is not the basis of the testimony of Jesus Christ; declaration of the truth is not the testimony of Jesus; appreciation of the truth is also not His testimony.** These can only be vehicles or instruments and means of obtaining Life. Therefore, it is essential that we should not have a false interpretation of Life. This is very important. It is a great challenge before the remnant church.

We need to know that the Father has given us the Holy Spirit to interpret the Life of the Son. It is important that we accept our true spiritual condition, not before the enemy, but before the Holy Spirit who is Lord. He takes the confessions that we make and judges them. He is faithful and righteous. Let us make the right confessions before the right people and the Holy Spirit. Many a time people make confessions before wrong people and that is dangerous. May our hearts be convicted that teachings and doctrines are not the testimony of Jesus Christ. Doctrine is needed for God to bring forth the testimony of Jesus Christ; **truth is also essential, but ultimately it must bring forth life. God desires truth and revelation plus life in us.** Many people of God have a lot of light on the word, but they are lifeless and as dead as anybody else. The testimony of Jesus is absent in them there though they talk about it. **The testimony is that extra something for doctrine to provide life!** This is very searching, beloved. Testimony is that which is

beyond teaching and doctrine. It is always related to life. May we realize the challenge that is before us, as members of the Body of Christ! We are not sufficient for this but as the Apostle Paul says, "Our sufficiency is of the Lord". That is why we need to run to the One who sits at the right hand of the Father.

If the enemy can get us to be wholly occupied with the truth and the doctrine he will be very happy. That is where some of us get embroiled. How true it is that believers can be fascinated with the truth and yet not have real life! Yes, we were also fascinated by end-time truths at one time. And we felt excited with the truth we had received, but God came to our help and enabled us to choose life instead of doctrine. If we remain fascinated by doctrine and truth alone the enemy will be at an advantage and will rejoice. The enemy's strategy is, "If we cannot beat them, then join them". That is the enemy's ruse! Satan lays down elaborate plans to get us to be fascinated and absorbed with the teaching of the word. We begin to feel that we are exclusive, getting something that everybody else could not get! And we can even begin to think that we have arrived at maturity and fullness. But, beloved, we would still be far from the reality of true life. How many of us have been deceived? People read about some wonderful truth in God's word, and it is true that they are wonderful, but the deception is that we begin to think that this is Life. But that is not yet the testimony of Jesus. We have to give ourselves to the working of the truth in us. That is where the struggle lies. Some of us can quickly grasp things in the mind, whereas others could take time, but if the enemy can keep us occupied with the doctrine

and the fascination of the truth he will keep us there!

If the enemy can keep any one of us occupied with the fascination and excitement of truth then he will not hesitate to do so. His victory lies in compelling us to dither on these paths. Personally, I once walked those dangerous streets for a short time as a young believer, but it was God's great mercy to bring me out. Doctrine is not the testimony of Jesus Christ. Countless people have missed the mark because they have limited themselves to the truth. **They got caught up with kingdom preaching, but missed the kingdom life. They missed the kingdom growing within them!** That is the greatest danger. Thus, we began to comprehend that true fellowship demands life, not just the truth. It is not enough to say, "I am going on to maturity as a part of the church. I am a part of it. I am there." It is not about having a doctrinal fellowship, but a fellowship in the Son's life, which is within. **Today many are happy with doctrinal fellowship! It is like a half-baked cake!** Truth and doctrine are essential to reach life, but something more is needed. Light is good, but it is not enough. Walking is required. We are to walk in the light as He is in the light and then we can have fellowship, one with another. Light is given so that we may walk. Truth is essential, but that in itself is not enough. Life is the basis of the testimony of Jesus. What is important is to know what the truth is doing in us. Is it bringing life in us?

With the increase of light in us there must be a corresponding desire to walk according to the light. This is the

challenge. It is not easy, but that does not mean that we should withdraw, for then God shall not be pleased with us. That is what the Word says. It must bring us into a walk with the Lord and with one another. The life of the Son progressing on to maturity in His people will be triumphant over death! **Beloved, the tiniest bit of truth or light, in the power of the eternal life in Christ, can work miracles, while a lot of doctrine without life will achieve nothing! With the increase of light in us there ought to be a corresponding life; and it will speak and this will be highly effective.** When people come into our midst they hear the truth, but what will strongly register within them is not just the truth they heard, but the life found in meeting members of this assembly. **It is not doctrine or teaching, but something more that will engage people. People will be touched and moved by the expression of the life of the Son in us in some tangible measure!** When God's remnant will submit itself to walk in the way of truth and light, it shall be visible in some measure. They shall touch the life which true fellowship will bring about, even the manifestation of Christ's life. That is the testimony of Christ. True fellowship will result in the manifestation of life and the expression of the testimony of Christ!

Amen and Amen!



## CHAPTER FIVE



# FELLOWSHIP - A TESTIMONY OF LIFE

**O**UR fellowship with the Father and the Son also draws us to fellowship with one another. Our fellowship with the Father and the Son is very precious and it also involves union, participation and communion or communication with one another. That is God's desire. We are called into fellowship with the saints in the church. The Corinthian church was divided by their choices, their preferences, their partialities, and their natural inclinations though they were called into a participation of the life of the Son. We are to be different from them.



## THE PARTICIPATION OF LIFE

*1Jn 1:3-7*

*(3) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

*(4) And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.*

*(5) This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*

*(6) If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:*

*(7) But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

Saints, may God open our eyes to see the need for the participation of life with one another. This is very important for manifestation of the life and the testimony of the Lord. Let us look at the example of our Lord. We have to keep our eyes upon the author of our great salvation, even Jesus Christ our Lord. When He came into this world as the Son of Man, notice how submitted he was to the fellowship of the Father. We have seen that in our past meditations. He maintained the ground of a living relationship with the father. And in Chapter five of the book of Hebrews, it is said that He was made perfect.

The Son of Man grew into perfect stature and maturity. That is what it meant for the Son of Man to be in fellowship with the Father! Many a time, people see only the life resulting from His relationship with the Father. But how about the fellowship that Jesus had with His disciples? **It was not enough for the Son to have fellowship only with the Father! It was necessary for Him to have fellowship with the disciples, whom the Father had given. It was not an option He exercised but it was the Father's will! Jesus learned obedience and was made perfect through the fellowship He had with the disciples as well as with the Father.** Had I been in the Lord's place, I would have washed my hands and separated myself from them very quickly! **Look at their blindness; look at their foolishness, their dullness and their blunderings!** Yet the Son maintained close fellowship with the disciples. **Most of the things they did were quite contrary to His perfect mind and heart. It is one of the most amazing things!** Yet most of them had a heart to follow Him and love Him, though some left Him and walked no more with Him. **They were a hard and difficult company of people!** The Scripture says, "Having loved His own, He loved them to the uttermost." Oh what a challenge He has left for us today!

Though everything the disciples did was so contrary to His mind, Jesus knew that the Father had given the disciples to Him for a purpose. He did not leave them knowing full well that they were given to Him by the Father. This is the example of the Lord that we must hold before us in these present times. **Saints, we cannot do away with one another. Many a time**

we are very quick to cut off others because we see their weaknesses, their problems and some other things and we have no place for them and have no time to be with them!! May God cleanse us and deliver us from such mentalities! As He is so must we be, beloved saints of God. We must have a heart to be in fellowship with one another. Firstly, the Father had given the disciples to Him, and secondly, He had a heart for them. How blind Peter was when he said to the Lord “God, forbid it Lord! This shall never happen to You”. However, Jesus did not withdraw fellowship from him. He knew Peter would change. This is the attitude we should maintain in the body of Christ. The Lord corrected Peter and he did not get offended with him. Beloved, we are called to walk on the same ground as our Lord, with the same law of life governing our relationship with the Father, the Son and the saints. We are to obtain the same results in the outworking of the Spirit in our lives. Oh may the Spirit of God really open our spiritual eyes!

The apostle John says, “*And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.*” (1 John 1:4) What is that joy? It is the joy we experience when we enter into fellowship with the Father and the Son and with one another. When we participate in that kind of life then we shall experience the same joy in our hearts.

Beloved, fellowship in the Body is not a matter of having an understanding of many truths. It is primarily about participation of life. So the test of everything is how much of

the Lord is coming forth in our lives. That is going to be the test of everything. The amount of the life of the Lord that is growing and coming into an expression within each one of us will determine everything. That is the test, the discriminating thing. The test of everything we hear, we teach, or we see, relates to how much we have come into an expression of the life of the Son in us. Fellowship is always linked with life. Let us remember that. It is not a matter of teaching, of hearing some things, but of laying hold of life and of receiving that life in measures into us. It is not a matter of knowledge or of more mental apprehension. It is not even a matter of agreeing to certain doctrines in our lives. But it is a matter of the participation of life that will bring us into a closer fellowship with the Lord and with one another in fellowship.

There is a great challenge before God's remnant even at this point of time. We can have the truth in our midst; the truth of the church; the teaching of the house of God; and these are good. We can emphasize truth as truth, but the important thing that God wants to see is whether the truth has produced life in us. The real issue is what is coming out of all that we have heard or read. **Is that Word giving place to God in us? Is He being invited to a place in us by our obedience and sensitivity to the Lord?** This is the challenge before all of us. We can have the truth, but how much of Him is coming forth in us through all that we have received? **If the Lord is not found there, it is meaningless, it is valueless. All must be related to one important issue – that God has a place, that He has a place without margin, right to the edge of our lives!**

If the LORD is not coming forth in us or not found livingly within us; if His worth is missing in us, then surely we are missing something! So fellowship speaks about a giving in, a walking in the light and it speaks about participation of life in all of us.

## THE INCORRUPTIBILITY OF HIS LIFE

Paul says in 1 Tim 1:8, *“Be not therefore ashamed of the testimony of the Lord”*. What is His testimony? It is the life of the One “who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel”. The testimony of the Lord is His incorruptible life. It is found in His own life of incorruption. In other words it is the testimony of His life, the testimony of His death and the testimony of His resurrection. **Corruption must give way to incorruption; the earthly must give way to the heavenly; the temporal must give way to the eternal.** This relationship, this fellowship, this life in Christ Jesus is one of incorruption. The testimony of Jesus is incorruption. **His incorruptible life must be reproduced in us in a progressive way.** That is the ultimate burden of the writer in the epistles. The burden is that the life of the Son, which is incorruptible, might be reproduced in us. In the end it will bring us to the consummation of all that the Father has purposed in the Son. The church without spot and wrinkle is not the ultimate end of God. The full expression of the Son in His church is not the end. God must have a bride, He must have a church, He must have a people who will bear His testimony so that He can move on to have all that He has

intended from the beginning of creation. This life of Christ is what the Lord desires to be reproduced in all of us—it is a life of incorruption. The temporal must give way to the eternal; the corrupt must give way to the incorrupt.

*2Ti 1:8-10*

*(8) Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;*

*(9) Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,*

*(10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:*

The testimony of Christ is in life. **Our meetings and our gathering together will come to an end, but the most important thing is what will remain.** That is the issue. Let the seriousness of this Word come into our lives. **What will remain in us after we have given ourselves to the Word will be the measure in which the Lord has come forth in us.** Has our relationship with the Lord grown over the years because of our attendance in gatherings? To what measure has the Lord become our sanctuary? Has He found an abiding place in me? Has He found a love relationship? Has He found unity? These are very important questions that we ought to answer. Can we honestly

say the Lord is within us intrinsically, essentially and in reality? Saints, that is the issue, the Lord has to be there! That was the life of the Son. **He provided the place for the Father and there was no other place in His life for anything else at all! Oh! may we come to that realm!**

Let us turn to the epistles of John once again. John says that the disciples had seen and heard the Messiah. They had touched and handled Him. His life was manifested in their presence. They were witnesses to show us the life of the Son in them. That is more than just talk. They showed unto us that eternal life. It is not a matter of doctrine. They showed forth His life by the measure of their own lives that had been given to the Lord. That is what John wants to express to the saints of this day. That was the burden of John.

*What we have seen and [ourselves] heard, we are also telling you, so that you too may realize and enjoy fellowship as partners and partakers with us. And [this] fellowship that we have [which is a distinguishing mark of Christians] is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ (the Messiah). (1Jn 1:3 AMP)*

When we look at John's writings, whether we take them from the gospel, or his three letters or in what he declared in the Book of Revelation, we find that they were professed at a critical time in the history of God's people. It is important to know that we are living in times of much greater confusion than they did. What was the confusion in their time? The believers, the

New Testament saints, were going into things that were different from Christ. They were turning to things that were lesser than Christ. They were getting involved with certain interpretations of faith and they were being drawn to certain understandings that were not of the Lord. As a result, they were being drawn away from the person of Christ to other things which were lesser and different from Christ. They had doubts and questions in their heart that caused them to give their ears to other things. In other words, the testimony of Christ was losing its power because of their disunions. **As various aspects of truth divided the Lord's people, the certainty in Christ's salvation and the purpose of God almost disappeared. The majority of God's people did not know where they were in Christ! They were filled with doubts, questions and misapprehensions.**

Beloved saints, we witness the same things in our times. **The only difference is that it is much worse now than in the times of Apostle John. So many leaders and denominations are occupied with different interpretations of Christian reality! People are hovering and circling around a particular aspect of the truth; they are unable to see the broader and larger issues. This has mutilated the church and scattered it. God's people are out of focus. They are in great confusion and are being tossed about by every wind that is blowing! Doubts and questions are reigning in the hearts of the majority. The testimony of Christ is lost. Many do not know the purpose of their salvation and what the testimony of the Lord is in these present times. May the Holy Spirit open your eyes to see the condition that prevails among God's people today!**



## GETTING BACK TO CHRIST

When we look around the Christian world today, we see that the testimony of Christ is hardly spoken of or heard about. **The testimony of what God has done for them is being heard, but the testimony of Christ is missing.** The incorruptible life of the Son is hardly being heard or seen today. The challenge before each one of us, individually and corporately, is to have the testimony of Christ. The testimony of Jesus Christ is the incorruptible life of the Son. In this corruptible world, we are to uphold to the incorruptible life of the Son. As the church of Jesus Christ, this is our challenge! The testimony of Jesus Christ was getting obscure in the days of John, and realizing it, he was inspired to write the gospels, the epistles and passages in Revelations. We see that the writings of John were God's answer to the situations they faced. The burden of the Spirit through these writings was to bring God's people back to the original state of His testimony.

There are certain expressions that are repeated many times in John's writings, such as, "we know" and "this is" and "fellowship". These speak about a ground of absolute certainty and assurance of things in Christ for His people. They also reiterate the confidence in a solution that is divine. John says that God's people had diversified in different directions; they had veered from the original. As mentioned in the book of Corinthians, people had made their own choices and preferences to go another way. The result was that the true testimony of the Son was missing. They were all called into one thing, but

then they went another way clinging to their own preferences. They went into many other extraneous and unnecessary things. John's burden was to draw them to a place of fellowship and union. He wanted to show them a single solution that would meet all their needs. It would be a sure and certain solution.

We often find printed advertisements proclaiming the efficacies of some medicine that would cure all their problems. Invariably, we reject their claims and find their claims to be suspicious and uncertain. Often their claims are found to be false. Saints, let us not look to the Word of God with the same distrust, but rather trust the Lord's Word and believe that it will provide a solution in our circumstances; and that it will certainly cure all our maladies. John very clearly reveals the answer to the prevailing confusion in their midst; he provides the cure to the situation that existed then. What was John's solution? He emphasizes the reality of Jesus. In the first chapter **what John says is "what we have seen and heard and handled, that which is from the beginning" is the cure for the troubles and confusion in Christianity!** He says this with words which are so full of mercy and conviction. In other words he says, "Here is the answer to the confusion which is among God's people." That is why he says, "His life was manifested and we have seen it and showed it unto you." He is speaking with full assurance in his own heart. He is witnessing and declaring the life with assurance, certainty and sureness. In other words, he said that he had proved the reality of His testimony. John had a long life and when he wrote this he was about 95 years old. He had lived longer than any of the other disciples. He was the last

of the apostles; unlike others, he had died a natural death. Having lived a long life he could say that he had proved it. Paul who was also old said, in Phm 1:9, “*Yet for love’s sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now also a prisoner of Jesus Christ.*” The Scriptures show us that John was older than Paul and he had lived a longer life than him. He was the last of the apostles. As one who had faced many storms and had fallen into many harrowing, difficult situations, John knew better than others what the solution was to the problems of the believers in his time. This man says that he has the solution. What is that? It is Christ Himself. The solution is none other than Christ. In other words he says, “You need to get back to Christ.” Such a man writes “we know” and we need to take heed to what he says. Saints, we must listen to a man like him.

The Spirit is telling us, in no uncertain ways, that we have to get back to Christ, to leave all those extraneous things in our lives and to focus on the Lord. Many things which are not related to Christ have been occupying the lives of God’s people. This has drawn many into much confusion. Many groups of God’s people are quarreling, arguing and even fighting. There are plenty of conflicting teachings as well. Let us take heed to what the apostle John said in no uncertain terms, that Christ is the answer, and that we are to make Christ our exclusive focus. **John’s advice in his letters may appear to be very simple on reading. However, it may not be so simple when it comes to putting it unto practice!** What he says as the remedy and cure is that we must get back fully to the Lord. This is true for our personal lives as well as our body lives.

We often get caught up in many superfluous things that bring confusion, doubts and uncertainties. God's people are to leave behind all those things which are mere things. They must free themselves from superfluous things which occupy their time and their energy! As the apostle Paul says in his letter to the Philippian church, we have to leave behind anything that causes one to questions and doubts. How often people have questions about whether they or others are right or wrong! We must leave the questions aside and get back to Christ Himself! This is the ground that will bring about the testimony of Christ upon the earth. This is the burden of the Lord for His people in these end times. Beloved, we are called to have the same results and outworking as it was in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ! We are called to bear His testimony, even the incorruptible life in a corruptible world! Oh may the Spirit of God open our spiritual eyes!





## CHAPTER SIX



# FELLOWSHIP - AN EXPRESSION OF KINGDOM LIFE

**W**E have seen very clearly that from the epistle of John that in all things and situations, Christ Himself was the solution. His emphasis lay in getting back to Christ. God's people are called to leave everything which is merely 'a thing'. Primarily, we have to be concerned about Him, His presence and His purpose.

## THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD

When the Lord was in the world, it was the presence of the Father that provided Him the answer in all situations. Wherever Jesus went, the Father's presence went with Him. The presence of the Father's person gave Jesus Christ the answer in every

circumstance He faced. We need to understand that the presence of the Lord brings the answer to us, always and on every occasion. The presence of the Lord changes the situation and this applies to us today in all the areas of our lives. **The presence of the Lord Jesus always has an effect upon us.** Something happens when the Lord enters our situations. **That is the difference between the presence of the Lord and the teaching about the Lord.** Many times we want to apply a principle from the word of God to our life situations, but we have to learn that He is the principle that we should apply to every situation. That is where we normally miss Him and bring in other things in His place. One thing is sure. When He is present, things will begin to happen, our situations will change. May God help us to accept this reality!

Saints, what we need is the presence of the Lord rather than the teaching about the Lord. Many times we come to a place where we have all the teaching about Christ, but there is no place in us to have the person of the Lord. If it is so then His presence may not have any effect upon us! It is not just a matter of coming together and sharing the word! Of course, we need to come together, we need to hear the Lord's word, but the reason we hear the word is that His life may be brought forth in us. That has got to be the emphasis or burden in our lives. It is His presence in our lives that matters. That is what the Lord is looking for in our lives in these crucial times. You may have the deeper teaching of Christ, but if the Lord is not coming forth, there may be no effect upon you inwardly. Don't let His word become mere teaching and doctrine. The burden

of John was that we may have life. John said that they had heard and seen Him so that we could have eternal life. **Finally, what we need is LIFE, not knowledge or information of life, but His very life. Amen!**

The apostle John exhorted the people to reach out for more life. He had seen and touched and experienced life, but he said, “this was said so that we may have life”. **We can take up many things about Christ that could be just a teaching on the church, on maturity, on overcoming life, or on any other subject related to Christ, but what matters is whether it has a positive effect upon our lives or not.** If there is no place for His life to grow in us, then those very good things that we have are of little value! So remember saints, our coming together is not a matter of doctrine or teaching but of LIFE, of giving place to the Lord in our lives.

This brings about the difference that you are the remnant of God in the earth! **It is not the matter of doctrine or truth but life!**

Beloved saints, **the effect of teaching is that it makes you tired of teaching!** That is why many believers say, “I have heard this word before. It is nothing new. I have been coming to this church for the past thirty years. I have heard all that has to be heard!” Therefore, they close their ears; they are not keen to hear any more. All they want to hear is what they have not heard before. Their constant refrain is to ‘give us something new’! They liken the word to an old shirt that can be replaced



by a new one when it becomes old. Some spiritual people are always on the look-out for a new word, a new truth!

**Beloved, every new thing becomes old one day. Every new truth we hear will become an old truth one day. And people will say give us something new again. That is where we wear out everything!** How often people say that they have become weary of hearing the same things over and over again. **That is the effect of teaching! It does not transform life! It does not make a difference in the situations!** That is what happens when we receive mere knowledge. Its effect is to make us worn out and weary spiritually. The reason is that what we have heard does not bring life; it does not bring any change. This specifically shows us that we have separated the teaching about Christ from the presence of Christ Himself! Therefore, if we receive Him in the word and if His word is not separated from Him, then we will never be worn out. May the Holy Spirit open our eyes!

I am reminded of the apostle Paul and how he met with the Lord on the road to Damascus. *“And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.”* (Acts 9:4-6).

Paul not only heard a voice, but he saw the Person whose voice he heard. **Others with him only heard a voice but saw nothing; they did not see the person behind the voice!** *“And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man”*(verse 7). **Therefore, nothing happened to those of them who merely heard the voice!** Later on Paul says in His letter to the believers in Galatia, *“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen;.....( Gal 1:15-16).* **Paul did not teach some truth or subject from the Bible, but he preached Christ for he said that it pleased God to reveal Christ that he might preach Him, not just truth or doctrine or some subjects, but His very person!**

The apostle John in the book of Revelation says, *“And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle”*.(Rev 1:12-13). **The apostle John here “turned to see the voice.... and he saw in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man”.** It is not enough to hear the voice; we are to behold the person of Christ!

Therefore, saints, when we receive His word and His counsels, we must take Christ into our lives as a person and not as some knowledge. We must allow that word to bring forth Christ in us. **The teaching and the principle are not apart**

from Christ, but it is in Christ that the substance lies. He is the Word! When we receive the Lord's word in the presence of the Lord, it is His voice that we hear, and we must let Him come forth in that word. It always refreshes and it will never wear us out. There will be an effect and we will experience a transformation of life and deliverance from our predicaments. The effect will be that we will remain in a state of spiritual freshness of life because He is the fountain of life. There is always freshness in His presence and in His word. The presence of the Lord makes all the difference!

### WHERE HE IS WE MAY BE ALSO

Now let us see the difference in the emphasis that John brings in the gospel and in his letters. At the end of John's gospel we come across the following important verses,

*And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.*  
(Joh 21:25)

*But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.*  
(Joh 20:31)

John said that whatever was written in the gospel of John was written with one purpose—that we would believe and have

life through His name. It was written not only to show us the great miracles and wonders that Jesus Christ did. Rather, the one purpose of recording and writing those things was that we may believe Him and have life. This was the great burden that John had. The spiritual words we read and hear are not given just for our information and knowledge; they are given to us that we may believe them and lay hold of life. That is the burden of the Spirit even today. The things of Jesus are written that we may come into life by believing!

The apostle John wrote somewhat differently in his letters. He sums up his letter in 1 John 5:13 with these words, *“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life.....”* So whereas the gospel says that the purpose was that you may believe and in believing you may have eternal life, John’s epistle says, *“that you may know that you have eternal life”* **In other words, what Apostle John says is - what is true in Him in the gospel is to be true in you!** What he wrote about believing in the Lord and about receiving life must be true in each one of us. It is all directed toward the possession of His life. The ultimate purpose of hearing His word is that we may come into the fellowship of the Son with His life. This is the burden of the Holy Spirit concerning His remnant in the time in which we are living.

Saints, in terms of life there is so much more that we have to come into. There is much that we can read and take in; there is also much we are exposed to concerning His kingdom, His

ways, and His purpose. But the important thing is to realize why the Lord is ministering this word to us at this time. It is because God is in need of a remnant people and He wants to bring them IN to that place of life in Him. God desires that we may believe His word, open our lives to His word, so that we may have His life, and that we may come forth and bear His testimony.

The Lord said in John's gospel, verse 14, "*I go to send you a Comforter and He will be in you.*" We can understand, therefore, that John's letter was written to people who had experienced the fulfillment of this very word. The Lord had said that He would abide in them and would be with them and in them. And what was spoken in John 14 was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. John, in his letter to those saints said that the Holy Spirit had come and that they were living in the day of the Holy Spirit. He says, "**The Spirit is supposed to be in you. Now what is true of Christ must be true of you and it can be true of you!**" And the apostle John would tell us even today that we are living in the age of the Holy Spirit. And we know that He is in us. Why is He in us? He has given us the Spirit that what is true of Christ may be true of us and in us. The Holy Spirit is given to us that where HE is we may be also. The Lord Jesus went to the Father to send the Holy Spirit to us that where HE is there we may be also, that we also would come into that relationship and fellowship with the Father as He had. That is very important. The Comforter has come to bring us into an intimate relationship with the Father. Often we only have a partial understanding of this; we don't realize it fully.

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS COME NIGH

I feel it is very important for us to know the time in which we are living. **Saints, we need to realize the season, the particular time, in which we live!** The Scripture says, “*In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*” (Matt 3:1-2). When John the Baptist lived he said that the kingdom of God was at hand. Jesus also said, “*.....and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you* (Luke 10:9). And again, “*But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.*” (Luke 11:20). John the Baptist said that the kingdom was going to come and Jesus said the kingdom had come. This was a reality in some measure because the King Himself was in their midst. Greater reality took place when the kingdom of God came upon this earth on the day of Pentecost.

Are you still looking forward to a day when the Kingdom will come? Dearly beloved, the Kingdom has come! The kingdom of God is here and now! **If you are born again, you are in the Kingdom. We are living in a day when the kingdom of God is here. We are NOT looking for the kingdom to come. We are only looking for the kingdom of God to be consummated and fulfilled or accomplished.** But there is no doubt that the kingdom of God is here and now. This should really mean much more to God’s remnant in these end times. May the Holy Spirit register this in your spirit!

After the resurrection of Jesus Christ and before His ascension, the disciples asked Him, “*Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*” (Acts 1:6). They could not understand or remember what the Lord had taught them and they were looking for a literal kingdom that would bring deliverance from Roman rule. It is very significant to note the reply of the Lord to the disciples. The Lord said to them, “*But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*” (Acts 1:8). In other words, the Lord said that when they would receive the Holy Spirit, the Kingdom (of God) would come, and they would be witnesses of the Kingdom in the earth!

We should understand that from the time the Holy Ghost came, the Kingdom of God had come upon the earth and it (the kingdom) shall not be taken away. It shall not happen now as it happened with the Jews, to whom the Lord said, “*Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.*” (Matt 21:43). **The nation (to which the Kingdom is given which would bring forth the fruits) is the church!** So let us not forget that the Kingdom has come. Where is the Kingdom? It is here, in us. May we realize that the Kingdom has not been taken away from the earth or from us! The Holy Spirit is here and the Kingdom came with the coming of the Holy Ghost. His Kingdom will grow. His Kingdom will be consummated. It is already here and will grow. In this hour and time we are here to demonstrate the testimony of the King. We are His

kingdom. Where the King is there is the Kingdom also. Amen!

Saints, do you realize that we are living in a day that all the prophets of old prophesied about? John the Baptist was the last of the Old Testament prophets who also prophesied about our day. Jesus said, *“But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.”* (Luke 9:27). That scripture was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. The Kingdom of God came into this world in all reality on the day of Pentecost and the kingdom shall never be taken away. Saints, we are living in that day concerning which all the prophets prophesied. What a wonderful day we are living in!

We ought to be conscious that the kingdom of God is here and we are part of it! When we talk about a kingdom it is assumed that there is a king. **You cannot have a kingdom without a king!** That is what Jesus meant when He said that He is in the midst of them. Where the Lord is there is His kingdom. Our mentalities have to change and we need to live in the reality of this truth in our lives. Many have separated the truth from Christ and the kingdom from the King. John said that he wrote about those (true) things that we may believe and that we may know we have life eternal. This is what the Lord is saying to us today. He is bringing His word to us that hearing it we may have life and come into fellowship with the Son and into the life which is in His Son.

That is the message of God to us. It is that we may manifest this life. Unless we are seeing, hearing and touching this life and



this kingdom, it will be difficult to share it to others. Saints, we are called to bear the testimony of Christ. The incorruptible life of Jesus Christ is the testimony of Christ. We are to come into this fellowship with the Father, with the Son and with one another. It is related to life. Where there is life there will be fellowship. Where there is a fellowship there will be true life. It is so inter-connected. Let the Lord help us to manifest His kingdom life. There is no use of teaching the truth unless there is a coming forth of the reality of His life. **The testimony of Christ is not in the doctrine, it is in life. Nor is there fellowship in the doctrine; it is in life.** The testimony of Christ is in life. It is not merely in the declaration of truth.

## BEARING HIS TESTIMONY

As we heard, God is in need of people who will bear the testimony of Christ. What does that mean? It means that there will be a people who will believe and give the Lord a place in their lives and His life will be manifested through them in the world. Surely there will be a remnant people who will bear the testimony of Christ, the incorruptible life of the Son on the earth. Let us realize that we are living in a time when this word will have to be fulfilled. **Saints, the kingdom of God is here; let us not look for it.** The kingdom is to grow and it is to manifest itself. **We are to live in anticipation of the consummation of that kingdom in these end times.** And then the kingdom shall be established on the earth. Our lives must be related to the testimony of Jesus Christ. Let us take this word into our lives and let us be delivered to bring forth

His testimony. What a challenge this is in these confusing times. It is not a matter of just religion and of being content with forgiveness and some blessings in Christ! It is a matter of life and the manifestation of that life. The emphasis and burden of Apostle John was that God's people must believe that they have life and manifest that life. But today many leaders do not have that burden for the saints. People spend their time acquiring the knowledge of things mentally. Saints, these things are brought to you and to me by the Holy Spirit that we may believe and so have life and manifest the life and the kingdom, here and now! We need to ask ourselves to what measure are we giving place to the Lord in our life. Is His kingdom growing in me? Is His kingdom growing on this earth through me?

The Holy Spirit is here to reproduce the life of the Son in us. Jesus said, *"I will go to the Father and send you the Comforter so that where I am you may be also—that is, in fellowship with the Father, that you may also come into that love relationship and union with the Father and that you may bear the testimony of Jesus Christ and His incorruptible life."* May we take this word into our lives and really look to the Lord that we may be those who will bear His testimony.

So many winds are blowing in these days. It is easy to get fascinated by some teaching and lose the life He has given. Spurious teaching about this life in Christ is one of the great deceptions of these days. Many are getting influenced by this, while some are getting attracted to weird interpretations of the Scriptures! These people ask tricky questions to believers and

if they are not able to answer them then they hold them to be in wrong teachings!

Saints, the emphasis of the Holy Spirit is life through fellowship of the Son and of the saints. And God takes the responsibility that we may bring forth life by His Holy Spirit. Apostle John said, *“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life.....”* The end is that we may come to life. Progression in the direction of life is all that the Father is looking for. He is looking for His kingdom to grow; He wants His remnant church to be instrumental in consummating and ushering in the fullness of God’s kingdom upon this earth. **As in the days of Daniel, the kingdom of God is spiritual and moral now; it shall be literal when the Lord will consummate all things.** Surely Daniel and his brethren manifested the kingdom morally and spiritually as overcomers in their generation! For they knew in their hearts that *the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.*” (Dan 5:21). What a challenge for us in these end-times. *“And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.”*(Dan 2:44). That is God’s need in this hour. God will have His remnant church to fulfill His plan in these end-times!



## CHAPTER SEVEN



# TRUE FELLOWSHIP IS IN THE LIGHT

**G**OD's word is able to change our lives, but we need to be open to the Holy Spirit at all times. The burden of the Holy Spirit is to bring His remnant to a place where He can fulfill all that He has purposed in His Son. The Lord is looking for a people who will move on to the fulfillment of His purpose in their lives. We have to be careful not to lose this burden of the Spirit. The Lord needs to secure a people for Himself so that He could bring His plans and purposes to a consummation or fulfillment. We need to realize what God is after and give ourselves to that. This calling in Christ is something very special and precious.

Chapter Eight of the Book of Isaiah tells that the Lord

wants His remnant to make the Lord their sanctuary. He wants His remnant on the earth to come into a deep, intimate, love-relationship with their heavenly Father. The emphasis of the Spirit is upon life and fellowship through that life of the Son.

## LOVING THE LIGHT

Nicodemus was a man who thought he knew everything, but when he came into the Lord's presence (John 3:1-3), then the areas of his darkness and blindness were made known to him. Beloved, only when we come to the Lord and draw near to Him will we be able to discover the extent of the darkness within our lives. We have to live by this principle. We have to always see our lives in relation to the light in the face of Jesus Christ. If we see our lives in relation to the light in another person's life, we may think our lives are better or higher than theirs. That is not the way to judge our lives. The true darkness in our lives will only be revealed and made known to us in the presence of the Lord. This is not only true when we begin our spiritual lives, but this is also continually applicable as we grow up spiritually. Therefore, it is vital that we are always unreservedly open for spiritual light to enter our lives. Unfortunately, we often have a false feeling that we are in the light just because we have acquired some knowledge by reading books and hearing messages! But remember that the Lord is primarily interested in life, and not the knowledge of things!

In Chapter 9 of the Gospel of John, we read of the blind man's delightful statement, "Once I was blind, but now I see".

We need to have such an experience, not only at the start of our spiritual lives, but throughout our growth, so that our spiritual seeing is progressive. That is very important. Many a time, we are quick to read and grasp things that do not provide us any spiritual light. It is a reality that God's people in this day and age are more deceived than people of the past because they make-believe that they have come into a greater knowledge of the Lord. Though we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are more prone to deception than those who lived in times past. Just because we are more technologically advanced today than saints in the past, we think we are able to come into the light quicker, but the spiritual poverty and depleted life of believers today clearly shows us that most of us are far away from true spiritual light. Beloved, we have to be people who have the REAL light. **It is not a matter of being a group of people who come under a doctrine or teaching. Remember, that the remnant talks of a people with a certain quality of life – a people who pursue the life of the Son Himself.** We are to be those who demonstrate and testify of having the incorruptible life of the Son. The Lord gives us light so that we may walk in the light and possess life.

The blind man said, "Once I was blind, but now I see." He came to a place of seeing and so he said, "Now I see." **There can be nothing that is second hand in our spiritual life.** This is basic to our spiritual life; **life must be a first-hand experience!** **In the blind man's life ,everything he received was second-hand up until he received sight from the Lord! Somebody had to tell him who his uncle or who his neighbor was; he had to hear what others said to know where he was at every**

moment of his life because he was absolutely blind. Everything was told to him and he acted upon it. But after his eyes were opened his life, was so different. This is true even in our own lives. We need to understand this basic tenet of Christian life. That is why Christianity cannot be taught as a subject, it cannot be received through some class-room teaching. Every disciple of Jesus Christ should know this very important basic principle.

**Always remember that Christian life comes by conception and not by teaching!** It is like a woman who conceives a child. There is a life that grows within her by a process of conception. There is a conceiving work that has to take place by the Spirit and the Word of God in a person. In other religions, some knowledgeable person will take novices through a protracted time of teaching and instruction. Then they will be asked if they agree to the faith of that religion. If people are willing to obey the initiating teachings, then they are accepted into that religion. But true Christianity is not like that; it is not like the traditions of other religions. The Christian life is not a matter of instruction; it is not a matter of attending some classes on the foundations of Christianity; nor is it a matter of Bible studies. Some missionaries and church workers may have done this in the past since most of them were eager to baptize people without really bothering to see whether their lives had been changed. **The truth and the reality is that Christian life comes by conception and not by instruction.** This is the basic difference between Christ life and other religions. And this is precisely what is brought out in Chapter 1

of John's Gospel.

*Joh 1:12-14*

*(12) But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*

*(13) Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

**This Scripture makes it clear that we are born by the will of God and by the Spirit of God.** The life that we have is conceived by the Spirit and the word; it comes by conception. All that we have in Christ comes to us by the Spirit and the Word.

Jesus said unto Nicodemus, “*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.....Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* (John 3:3,5). Nicodemus had his own doubts as to how a man could be born again and the Lord made it very clear that it is by Spirit and the water. Many people teach and preach that the water speaks here about water baptism and the Spirit speaks about the Holy Spirit baptism. However, that is not what the word of God tells us. The following Scriptures tell us very clearly this work of God is done by His Word and Spirit.

*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth*



*and abideth for ever. ( 1 Peter 1:23).*

*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; (Titus 3:5).*

*Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. (James 1:18).*

(For further insight on this matter, refer to the author's book, 'A Sure Foundation', page 50)

Christian life is something that is wrought by the work of God within every being. That is why it is so different from all other religions. Remember, **Christianity involves having a certain kind of life; it is not a religious system; it is received by conception and not by teaching.**

The blind man, in Chapter 9 of John's Gospel, could not see until Jesus touched his eyes! **Until Jesus touches us we also cannot really see! But when He touches, we will also be able to say, "I was truly blind; I thought I could see, but now I know I was blind. The way I can see now, I never could see before."**

Beloved, that is the effect of a living touch. **This is the effect of Jesus, and not of the teaching.** Teaching does not open people's eyes. **Teaching is useful and is very important,**

but if the Spirit does not touch our spiritual eyes, we will remain utterly blind! Our eyes have to be opened in order to see the things of God. That is what the Lord said to Nicodemus.

We thank God for the initial work of God upon our lives, but there is also a continual experience and work of the Spirit that we all need to have. Don't ever forget that! **It is not enough to be born-again by the Spirit; there must be further progression and increase by the Spirit.** Our spiritual life has to grow into maturity. That is the burden of the Spirit. **It is not that we are born-again by the Spirit and afterwards the increase of this life can be by other means.** Yet, this is what we see happening today. **Spiritual life is seen by many in terms of activities and services to the Lord, and NOT in terms of the increase and manifestation of that life.** Oftentimes we hear people remark, "This brother (or sister) came to the Lord only two years ago, but look how he has grown. He is so good in the Word. His prayers are very touching and impressive. He is always seen helping in the work of the Lord!" Everything is judged in terms of activities. Beloved, this is a wrong understanding of spiritual life. The growth of our spiritual life lies in the expression and manifestation of this life that comes by the same principle by which we have begun this born-again life. We received this new life by the Spirit and the Word and it must progress and increase in the same way. Our spiritual life comes by conception and it is brought forth by the power of the Spirit and the Word. Growth must also come by the Spirit and by revelation or spiritual light.

Nicodemus was humbled as soon as he came to the light; he understood the areas of his darkness. That is the preciousness of walking with the Lord. Consider the life of the apostle John. Even at the ripe old age of 96, he heard the Spirit tell him that He would show him something John had never seen! In John's encounter with the Lord in Chapter one of the Book of Revelation, we see that this is what the Lord conveyed to John, "John, I will show you what these spiritual things are. Though you have been in ministry for over sixty years, I will show you yet what these spiritual things are in My eyes. Your eyes are going to see things as I see them." (Rev 1:9-17). John's inward eyes were opened in a new way by the Spirit of God.

## LONGING FOR THE LIGHT

None of us can afford not to have the eyes of our understanding opened. That is where humility comes in! That is the kind of walk saints of God experienced through the ages. They humbled themselves and walked in the light. History shows repeatedly that the saints who were called of God were humble people because they walked in the light.

*And this is the condemnation, that light is come  
into the world, and men loved darkness rather  
than light, because their deeds were evil.  
(Joh 3:19)*

*The [basis of the] judgment (indictment, the test  
by which men are judged, the ground for the*

*sentence) lies in this: the Light has come into the world, and people have loved the darkness rather than and more than the Light, for their works (deeds) were evil. (Joh 3:19 AMP)*

These verses show us that the basis by which men are judged by God depends on whether people love the darkness more than the light or not. Even though the Light has come into this world, people's deeds are evil. Again verse 20 says,

*For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. (Joh 3:20 )*

*For every wrongdoer hates (loathes, detests) the Light, and will not come out into the Light but shrinks from it, lest his works (his deeds, his activities, his conduct) be exposed and reproved. (Joh 3:20 AMP)*

*All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed. (John 3:20 NLT)*

Many people do not want to come to the Light because they do not want to be delivered from their evil deeds, activities and works. **They do not want their lives to be exposed; they do not want to change.** They shrink back from exposure to the reality. We know this was what happened in most of our own lives as well at one time! We did not want anyone to know

of our evil heart; we hesitated to change and confess our evil deeds. We know how prone we are to withdraw or shrink from the light!

When the Lord was here upon the earth, the Jews, the Pharisees and the Sadducees saw the Light and their darkness was made manifest. And yet they chose not to go to the Lord, again and again. Why did they refuse to go to Him? It was because their deeds were evil. They chose to stay away from Him lest their deeds were exposed and they would be corrected and rebuked. This is the reason why many do not want to come to the Light even today. They want to stick to their own lifestyles; they want to remain in the darkness; they prefer to honor their own choices, their own decisions, and their own desires. Many do not like reproof and correction in their lives, and so they do not like the light of God's word!

In Chapter 4 of the Gospel of John, we see the life of the woman at the well as an example of one whose evil life was totally exposed by the Lord. All the darkness in her life was shown to her by the Lord, but unlike many religious people of her time there was a true desire in her to somehow come out of that kind of life. **She had a heart that longed for light though she was in darkness!** If she had hated the light, she could have chosen to discontinue her conversation with the Lord. She could have left Jesus' presence on one pretext or another. She could have excused herself, withdrawn from the Light and lost her one opportunity to be restored forever! But when she came in touch with the Light and all her evil works were exposed, she saw in Jesus the answer to her own predicament. She confessed

that He was the Christ. She persevered despite the reproof she received in the light, and then her eyes were opened.

Consider this: she was free to walk away. Many of us in her situation would have left saying, “Sorry sir, I have some work and I must go, but I will come back,” and then not bother to return. We are quick to manage our escape routes; we cannot stay in the light too long because we do not want our deeds to be reproved and made known. It would have been easy for this woman-at-the-well to have made a choice to stay away, to get rid of this Christ and walk away from that place! But she saw the Light, all her evil deeds were exposed and she was able to turn a new leaf in her life. The reason is that she desired in her heart to come out of her evil and unrighteous life-style. She realized that she had met a man who could free her and deliver her wholly. She knew in her heart that the Light was the answer to the darkness in her life. The light she received not only removed her darkness but opened her eyes to behold who was speaking to her, even Christ the Messiah! **The eyes of many religious people were blind and could not see the One who stood before them, but this hapless woman could see and confess that He was Christ!** What a work of God when one is open to the light!

We all must have a heart that longs to come into the light! Only then can God change our lives! To be in the Lord is to be in the light. That is the calling of the remnant in these darkest of times. In the darkness all around, God’s light is coming upon His people. His light is coming upon His remnant! This is not

just a concept or doctrine, but this is the reality. The Lord, who is the Light from whom many have turned away because their deeds were evil, is drawing His remnant to His very presence. People have even left this calling and gone away because they did not want their deeds to be exposed. But that woman-at-the-well testified of that Man who had met her. She went to the city to tell the people to meet Him. And the people saw the Light and desired Him to stay with them in that city. What a tremendous and wonderful work takes place when we walk in the light!

Beloved, our safety lies in coming into the light. Do not draw back from the Light. Though the enemy will do all that is possible to stir our flesh and our natural man, we must resist him. Let us not draw back or shrink from the Light under any circumstances. May God help us to receive this practical word in our lives!

*But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. (Joh 3:21)*

*But he who practices truth [who does what is right] comes out into the Light; so that his works may be plainly shown to be what they are—wrought with God [divinely prompted, done with God's help, in dependence upon Him]. (Joh 3:21 AMP)*

*But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants.” (John 3:21 NLT)*

*But everyone who lives by the truth will come to the light, because they want others to know that God is really the one doing what they do.  
(John 3:21 CEVD)*

If we love the truth, we will walk in the light. We will want to do works according to the light, so that our works may be plainly seen for what they are and that they are done by the help of God. Yes, sometimes the Lord shows us that our works are not of the Lord, but we are also able to see what is of the Lord.

Saints, are you doing things by the promptings and workings of the Lord in your lives? When we really love the Lord, there will be a desire to walk in the truth, to practice the truth, to do the truth, and to live in the truth. Then, when we walk in the light, our life is plainly shown to us. At times, there are things which are yet darkness within us, but that which is of the darkness or blindness will be made manifest to us. It is not to condemn us, but to change us and to show that the change has taken place by the hand of God. The things done by us which are in the light of the Lord will also be revealed so that He may have the glory. He will make manifest that which is wrought by the Spirit in our lives.



There are people who are convicted of certain things, but after some years they question those very experiences in Christ. The enemy comes in and sows seeds of confusion. But when we come before the Lord, Jesus Christ, we will be able to see what the Spirit has wrought concerning which we will have no confusion or doubt in our lives. So saints, let us take this word to heart.

The remnant church in this hour should long to come into the light as He is sending the light to His people in these end- times. As we read in Isaiah, *“Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.”* (Isa 60:1). Saints, may the Lord help us to come into the light and walk in the light, as He is in the light!



## CHAPTER EIGHT



# FELLOWSHIP - GOD'S DEEP PURPOSE

In the epistle of John, the apostle reveals his burden about light, life, and fellowship. My prayer is that the Lord will open the eyes of our understanding so that we may see the *light*, experience the *life* and come into a *fellowship* that flows from the life we have received.

## LIGHT, LIFE AND FELLOWSHIP

*1Jn 1:1-6*

*(1) That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;*

*(2) (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)*

*(3) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

*(4) And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.*

*(5) This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.*

*(6) If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:*

John uses the word ‘fellowship’ again and again in his epistles. The apostle’s concern for fellowship is closely linked to light. He also uses of the word ‘light’ again and again throughout the epistles. Life and fellowship are closely knit together. While we are able to understand the burden of the apostle Paul regarding fellowship, John is used by the Holy Spirit to link it with the progression and manifestation of life.

The apostle John places great emphasis on life in his gospel. This is the reason we encourage people to read the gospel of John rather than other gospels after experiencing new birth. When we come to the epistle of John, we see that his burden is not only that we have life, **but to know that there is also a**

**need to be conscious of possessing this life.** So it is not a matter of just having life, but to be conscious of having this life. That is the burden that John carries in the Spirit in the epistle of 1John. Life and fellowship are divinely intermingled in this epistle. They are brought together and presented as virtues that cannot be separated.

In these verses it is wonderful to see how John links fellowship with life. He says, in no uncertain terms, that fellowship is a matter of life. It is emphatically clear that John means that **there can be no fellowship in the absence of life.** Beloved, the Lord is bringing these two things together, and it is as though **life is a matter of fellowship and fellowship is a matter of life.** We are to walk in this and come into a deeper fellowship with Him as His remnant. This will have the effect of sustaining us in the days to come. God always sends His word to His remnant people in advance. In several verses from John's epistle we can discern the call and the need to have true fellowship in Christ. There are some aspects about fellowship and life that are high-lighted therein which we may have never seen, so let us be open to the Spirit as we proceed.

Now let us read 1John 1:3 as expressed in various Bible translations:

*That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. (1Jn 1:3)*

*What we have seen and [ourselves] heard, we are also telling you, so that you too may realize and enjoy fellowship as partners and partakers with us. And [this] fellowship that we have [which is a distinguishing mark of Christians] is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ (the Messiah). (1Jn 1:3 AMP)*

*We proclaim to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. (1Jn 1:3 NLT)*

*We saw it, we heard it, and now we're telling you so you can experience it along with us, this experience of communion with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. (1Jn 1:3 MSG)*

See the emphasis is on “fellowship with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ”. This struck me so deeply! John says, “Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” This is very encouraging and enlightening. **The Holy Spirit has helped me to understand that this is all about being a family. John speaks about “our fellowship” as if it is all about a family relationship.** This is the nature of our fellowship! **This is evidently a family fellowship! It is “our fellowship with the Father and with His Son . . . my little children”.** Saints, if our spiritual eyes are open to see this precious truth about true fellowship, it will revolutionize our lives!

As we turn to Chapter 2, John talks to 'little children'. It is all about a family fellowship. **How precious it is to see the Body of believers in this light! That is what a local church is to be. It is to be a family fellowship.** May the Holy Spirit open our spiritual eyes! This is how we must view the local church wherever we may be. Beloved, I am not only talking about the local church in New Delhi, but also about the family of God's saints in every place. May the Lord help each of us to see this!

John writes about "little children" in 1John 2:12 & 13. That brings a totally different light to fellowship. What a precious thing it is to see these verses in this light. This is the kind of local church God has upon His heart. This encompasses the togetherness, the family-sharing, one life the closeness and the inseparableness that we ought to have in a local church. Fellowship means participation, as we have meditated in earlier chapters. How precious this thought is! May the Holy Spirit touch our eyes and illuminate our minds afresh!

## FELLOWSHIP IN THE FAMILY

Beloved saints, let this not be just a pleasant idea, an encouraging word, or a nice word. Let us come into the truth that John is revealing by the Spirit. **Today fellowship is a very cheap word amongst God's people. It has lost its significance and true meaning.** It is everything other than what the Lord meant it to be! However, God is restoring His people and His Spirit will help us to see the true meaning of fellowship.

The burden in this epistle is not just about receiving the life of Christ, but about being conscious that this life needs to bloom into fellowship progressively till its ultimate end of oneness with the Father and the Son. It is a matter of the family – of sharing one life. Imagine a large family where the life of the head of the family is transmitted or passed on from one generation to another generation. That is what the scene here is. The life of the Father is now shared by every generation. Just think about this! The head of the family gives up His life that it may be released in others of the family. **In other words, the Head distributes His life so that others, generation after generation, may also possess that life. All the generations sharing a single life!** Praise God! That is what the family of God is. We possess His life as one family. Our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son; we possess one life. We have received life from one Source.

In a large family with many members, there are sons and daughters of different temperaments and different make-ups. Even so it is with us. We may look different, speak different languages, come from different backgrounds and have a great variety of viewpoints, but **we possess one life and share a single life, despite these differences!** And that family-life separates their life from other things that are contrary to that very life. We may not be exactly like others in our outward appearances, nor does God want us to be carbon copies of one another, but He wants all of us to have the same life and character of Christ. Our outward appearances will be different, the natural life we have will also be different, but the spiritual life we possess

will increasingly become identical or similar to the Source, even Christ our Lord. We all are to manifest the same life!

A man of God once said, "Don't pray and tell the Lord to remove your baldness, but pray to the Lord to change your temperament and anger!" The Lord wants to bring changes to our inward lives so that as a family we would be one and the same! As God's children we may not be alike in many aspects, but there are changes that ought to happen in us and we ought to know where we need to change. We need to see that God wants to bring about life-changes in us so that our lives in Christ will show that we belong to the same family, and manifest that single life. If we yield to His Spirit, we all will be changed into His likeness. Remember the local church is a family-fellowship. **By the grace of God we should be able to say that we share the life of the Father through the Son and we are His little children!** God forbid that we should ever be more than "little children" in the family, in the spirit.

In the year 1984, a dear brother and his wife from another country came and stayed with us for a couple of days. One of the things he told me was that as a church we were remarkably close to one another, but he went on to suggest to me that it should not be so, that we should not be so close. I told him that the Body is required to be fitly joined together according to Eph 4. He was not able to understand this fully though he ministered and taught about the Body of Christ as an end-time truth. It is easy to appreciate a truth; however, to live the truth, day after day, in fellowship with one another requires a deep



work of the Spirit. When we live in close proximity, we stand exposed in our weaknesses. Others are able to see our weaknesses, and that is seldom pleasing to the flesh! No wonder many believers have grave difficulties in this matter of fellowship!

*But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. (Eph 4:15-16)*

When we walk in the light, there will always be an increase of life. Growth and increase imply change! Walking daily in the truth is a family matter. We are all ‘little children’, as John puts it. **Although we are growing into maturity, we must see ourselves as little children.** We may be learning many spiritual things in our lives, yet there is so much more truth that we have to come into as light enters our lives. We are only at the start of our walk together as God’s people. And that is the way we are to maintain ourselves, as “little children”. **If ever we come to a place where we feel that we know it all, it will upset our family-hood and our lives as a close-knit entity. It will upset the family.** If we come to a place where we have to learn no more, where we feel that we have got it all, then the family will be stressed and tensed. We need to maintain a humble spirit and be like little children in the family of God. **The attitude that says “I know it all” has ruined many local churches!** We must be careful that pride does not enter our

lives. **Spiritual pride has been the cause of many divisions in the midst of God's people.** So let this realization come upon us that this life in Christ is a matter of sharing and participating of this life with other members of the family.

## **GOD'S PRISTINE FELLOWSHIP**

God's deep desire is to share His life with us. **The fellowship the Lord speaks about takes us back to God's eternal and primary desire to share His life. That is the purpose of the fellowship that God had at the beginning between man and Himself.** His primary desire was to share His life with man and to fellowship with His creation. **A clear, pure and open fellowship is what He wanted. He ached for an unblemished, unsullied, untarnished fellowship between Himself and the man that He created.** That is the picture we get from the book of Genesis. Pristine fellowship is the fellowship that the Lord had with man in the Garden. This is the kind of fellowship that the Lord wants to have with His remnant. It was to be a pure, love-based relationship between God and man! **The Bible says that God and man walked together in the cool of the day in blessed fellowship-God and the man whom He made!** There was intimate communion between God and the man! **That kind of fellowship was very precious to the living God.** It is difficult for our human minds to fathom this. **Here is a God who is all self-sufficient, so full, so mighty, so wonderful in Himself, so sovereign and absolutely independent in Himself and the wonder of wonders is that such a God should have a**

**heart-desire to fellowship with His creation, as a Father with a family! *Hallelujah!***

We fail to understand the scope of pristine fellowship in all its depths: this is something outside the parameters of human intellect. But that is it! That is what Bible reveals as God's desire from the beginning!

**Saints, the fellowship of which Apostle John speaks about takes us back to that beginning!** The apostle John reiterates that our fellowship is with the Father and with the Son. The emphasis is on OUR FELLOWSHIP! That was God's desire at the beginning of creation. The apostle John linked fellowship in the church with the fellowship that God had in the beginning with man. He takes us to that eternal thought and desire of God and says this is what God is looking for – to have His creation with Him in fellowship, as a natural father with a family! The apostle John by the Holy Spirit brings expression to that thought so that God's children could experience it now! O how precious!

But when the Lord gives us light to see this, it shall be made manifest. When Paul's eyes were opened by the Spirit his excitement knew no bounds. In Chapter one of Ephesians, observe how he could not stop re-counting and describing heavenly things, such as God's purpose and plan! He was so excited about the truth and the light. He was able to see the fellowship of the mystery. He writes in the third chapter,

*And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: (Eph 3:9)*

Saints, the fellowship we know about is so limited and shallow compared to this pristine fellowship that God desires. There is much to be learnt about such a fellowship, union and relationship that God is looking for from His remnant at this time. May God open our eyes! May God really shed light into the heart! There is no way we can see this with our natural faculties. Though we still have not come into the full knowledge of such a pristine fellowship, let us realize the heart of God is to have such a fellowship. What a tremendous endowment God has for His people! It is no wonder that this kind of primal fellowship will always come under heavy attack of Satan!

**Saints, this pristine fellowship is the foundation for everything spiritual!** We have not yet touched the tremendous scope and horizon of such a fellowship, but with some measure of light we are able to see that this is the foundation for the presence of God. Praise God! **When we come into the participation of this life through fellowship, we shall discover that there will be no more strain and struggle in worship, in our relationships in the church, or in our union with the will of the Lord.** The strain will have gone, the breach will have disappeared, and the usual distance or gap that we feel exists between the Sovereign King and His people will have been mitigated. We will see that everything that separates God and us has gone!

What happened when we were born-again? We were begotten of God and born of the Spirit. We came into special relationship with the Father and the Son. The tension and strain between the “incorruptible” Lord and the “corruptible” man was removed. The isolation and inaccessibility that kept us separated and apart from God was driven out. We came into a peculiar relationship with Christ. When we were begotten of God, by the will of God, by the Spirit, and by the Word, we were brought into a unique fellowship with God. That was the foundation of our lives. **Saints, that was not only an act of God that was finished there and then, but it was something that became the basis and foundation upon which God is going to do everything.** Just like a foundation on which the building stands becomes the substance on which everything else is built upon, so also is our fellowship with God.

## GOD’S GREAT INVESTMENT PLAN

Traditionally we look at our spiritual foundations in terms of water-baptism and baptism in the Spirit. We do not see this fellowship in Christ as the very foundation upon which everything else stands. Our foundation in fellowship is so different! This foundation of our pristine fellowship with the Father and the Son, and with one another, is something which we have been brought into by new birth so that our growth to maturity may be realized. It is on this foundation that everything else in the body of Christ is going to stand. Saints of God, as we have seen from the book of Genesis, everything for man depended upon the relationship that God had with man and

man had with God. What happened through man's disobedience and severance was tragic, yet here we see that in and through Christ Jesus we were brought back to experience that pristine relationship. It is this fellowship in Christ that is the basis or the foundation of all spiritual things. Amen!

All of God's hopes are bound with that fellowship! All God's intentions and plans are bound up with fellowship. All of God's purposes are bound up with our fellowship with Him and His Son. **All of God's interests for now and eternity are based upon this fellowship between God and His children. And that is why there is such a prolonged battle around this His children and Himself. It is so because God has vested in this very fellowship everything that He hopes for. It is God's great investment, saints!**

When Jesus was on the earth, the enemy wanted to always drive a wedge between the relationship and fellowship that Christ had with His Father. The plain reason behind this antagonism was the fact that God, the Father, depended heavily on the closeness of their fellowship. Everything that God purposed and planned rested on their fellowship. He has also rested all things on the fullness of our fellowship with Him, which is through life. **Saints, in other words, fellowship proceeding from life is God's great investment plan to secure His inheritance in us.**

In the Old Testament, we find that the prophets were in a state of divine distress because God had 'lost His family'.

The concern that governed their prophetic utterances was that God was robbed of something! God was greatly grieved because of His loss of that one thing on which God placed so much importance. The Lord sorrowed about the loss of His relationship with man, on which all His purposes and plans depended. God felt robbed when the pristine fellowship with man was stolen by the enemy. That primal relationship was broken and came to a place of utter devastation. Saints, looking around us we could even go so far as to say that God's purpose is still in a state of desolation because of the loss of fellowship with His people. **Until that original relationship is recovered, restored and re-established, how will God bring about the desires of His heart?**

God has brought us into close fellowship with the Father and the Son, but it does not end there. All God's investments and endowments rest upon the fellowship between Him and His people. He has invested all His purposes, expectations and interests there! God has invested every spiritual thing in fellowship. May we walk in the light to see this!

We normally ask the Lord to bring us into His full purpose; we pray that He may fulfill all that He has for His people in these days. How will the Lord answer our prayers? Remember, He has invested His purpose, His plans, His interests and His desires in fellowship. If we want God to answer our prayers, we will have to depend more on our fellowship with Him and His Son. Fellowship is the foundation of God's destined things. He has centered every higher thing upon one aspect — fellowship.

All that we are ever going to come into, dear saints, of those great purposes and desires of God for His people, is based upon our fellowship with God and the continual maintenance of that fellowship with God! Unless His remnant will come into an exclusive, pristine fellowship with the Father and the Son and with one another, there is no way He will be able to fulfill His purpose. Beloved, God works on that basis.

If we come out of fellowship with God, everything concerning His purpose will come to standstill. We could pray as much as we want to and we could meditate 24x7, but we would not be able to come into His full purpose without fellowship. God has invested all things into a life-flowing-fellowship between Himself and His people. If we want to enter the great plans He has for the remnant of His people, it has to be on the foundation of a life-building-fellowship that the world has not seen. The fulfillment of His purpose will have to be on the basis of that pristine fellowship. **If anything cuts across our fellowship with God, well, all is gone! It is as though everything is lost! And we will know for certain that there will be no moving on, no increase, no hope, and no reality until we get back and that fellowship and relationship is put right! May God help us! May God open our eyes! Oh, how much is bound up with this relationship and fellowship!**

John therefore tells us, "If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another". Our fellowship is with Him, of course. "Our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son.....". If we walk in the light.....we have



fellowship”. **Beloved in the Lord, our fellowship rests, then, upon walking in the light, “as He is in the light”.** John further says, “This is the message.....that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.....if we walk in the light, as He is in the light..... we have fellowship”!

What a challenge! What a calling! What a destiny!

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches in this hour!







# BOOKS BY JOY THOMAS

## **I AM THE ALPHA AND THE OMEGA**

*As the title suggests, Jesus is the Alpha, the Beginning and He is also the Omega, the End or the Finisher. In the Book of Genesis, we see Him as the Beginner and in the Book of Revelation, we see Him as the Finisher....If we know Him as the Beginner then in these last days we need to know Him as the Finisher as well.*

## **THIS IS NONE OTHER THAN THE HOUSE OF GOD**

*To-day, many in the Christian world do not have a clear understanding and revelation of the house of God. The common understanding is that of a physical or a natural house. The house of God represents a divine order where the working the cross is central and supreme.*

## **THE NEW GENERATION ARISE! (SECOND EDITION)**

*In the history of mankind there have been many generations. But there is only one particular generation that the heavens are interested in. Which is this generation? Is there another generation that inhabits the earth in this hour?*

## **COME OUT OF HER MY PEOPLE**

*There are many Jonathans today, who could either continue to remain a part of Saul's house (the organised church) which is decaying and dying day by day or they may arise, separate themselves and be a part of David's House (the body of Christ) which God is establishing by His Spirit. This book is a 'sign-post' to many in the valley of decision.*

## **MY TIMES ARE IN THY HANDS (SECOND EDITION)**

*While many are keen to know the happenings in the natural, few know how to determine the times in the spiritual. If one does not know the times in the spiritual, one will seldom know what to do or what not to do.*

### **THE PURSUIT OF A HEAVENLY PATH**

*'Heaven' is not merely a location but a rule, an order, a system and a realm, which is the true one and the ultimate one. Church, the masterpiece of God is of heavenly origin, of heavenly calling and of heavenly destiny.*

### **THE DESTINY OF THE CHURCH**

*The book brings out valuable historical background of the Church to portray its ordination, deterioration, restoration and the church's ultimate destination. The Church means more to Christ, than all the wealth of the universe. The Lord loved the Church and gave himself for her.*

### **THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE SON**

*The word 'Fellowship' is one of the most misquoted and misunderstood words which carries a very shallow meaning to-day. We are called to know the Eternal Son and to have fellowship with Him, without which we will not be able to progress spiritually.*

### **"YE ARE COME UNTO MOUNT ZION" (VOL I, II)**

*For many today, Zion means a mountain or at best a city in the natural. But Zion is a people in the complete and perfect work of Christ.*

### **I KNEW A MAN IN CHRIST (VOL I, II)**

*The great Apostle Paul, expressing his deepest yearnings from a Roman prison near the end of His life worded it thus: '...that I may win Christ, and be found in Him...' (Ph.3:8b,9a). What does it mean to be IN CHRIST?*

### **THE RECOVERY OF GOD'S ORIGINAL THOUGHT.**

*The Church has lost its primal and original character and nature. God's people need to know what is God's original intention for mankind and for the Church.*

### **GOD'S MANIFEST PRESENCE.**

*If you are hungry for the Lord and nothing but His fulness will bring you satisfaction, then here is a message that will accelerate your steps in the*

*direction of His presence.*

### **PURSUING GOD'S PRESENCE**

*By showing the way to enter into the very presence of the Lord this book is a signpost for the famished soul in the painful trail of God's presence. It reveals the secret that can unlock the door to His presence, even a broken heart and a contrite spirit.*

### **DISCOVERING GOD'S PRESENCE**

*God's people have become too familiar with the pleasures of His provisions; they have become too familiar with the blessings from His hands that they have discarded tears of repentance. This book shows how passionate desperation and dependence upon God enters His church, you will discover God in the folds of time!*

### **THE GLORY OF GOD**

*Here is a gripping 2 part book that unveils the secret of David's tent which the Lord says He will rebuild in these last days. Ezekiel the prophet too was shown a temple not made with hands in which the glory of God descended. Learn more about it in this book.*

### **A PECULIAR PEOPLE .**

*The calling of God in our lives is to be "His People" and also to be " His Bride ". Like Queen Esther of old, the church of God is to prepare herself and do that which pleases the king.*

### **CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH**

*The apostasy of the last days is now in full boom. The false and the counterfeit abound in every nook and corner of the world. We have not only to contend with other religions, new age promoters and cults, but also with countless perversions that are mushrooming within the very ranks of so called believing churches. A must read to know and discern the times.*

### **A SURE FOUNDATION**

*Spiritual growth demands the provision of strong, solid and stable foundations. You cannot hope to progress spiritually with weak and insecure foundations, however hard you try. This book could not only help you lay*

*a sure foundation but also enable you to examine whether your spiritual growth is according to His pattern.*

### **THE NEW JERUSALEM**

*The majority in Christendom believe that Holy Jerusalem or the City of God is a literal place. The hungry and searching heart of a true child of God has to be open to the Holy Spirit for a fresh input. It is my prayer that your spiritual eyes may be opened to behold Holy Jerusalem, the City, of God as you read the pages of this book.*

### **THE TRUE REMNANT**

*This message on God's True Remnant is released in printed form so that those who have deviated from God's revealed purpose may hear God's corrective word and be aligned to His thought; and those who are discouraged by the moral deterioration and declension in the Church may be encouraged; those who are confused may hear a clear voice in the midst of many voices; and those who are hungry may be fed by His Word to be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord!*

### **A PROPHETIC VOICE FOR THE END TIMES**

*The prophet and his ministry is the focal point of God's recovery movements. This means that such a ministry is brought in at a time when His people have departed from God's full intention. God brings a voice in the midst of His people when things have departed from God's full intention.*

### **THE UNVEILING**

*The thoughts shared in these pages are based upon the first three chapters of the Book of Revelation. The word 'revelation' means unveiling – the unveiling of something that is hidden or unknown. This is a sovereign act of God.*

### **THE SCRIPTURAL STAND ON DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE**

*We can believe whatever we want on divorce and remarriage, but on the*

*Great Judgment Day, we will be judged by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for what we have done and what we have encouraged others to do. Each person is entitled to have an opinion on divorce and remarriage. However, having an opinion, even a very strong opinion, does not make it a truth or make it right.*

### **ENTERING BEHIND THE VEIL**

*In Acts 3:2, we read of a lame man who sat at the temple entrance for 40 years. If he knew anything about what was happening inside the temple it would only be a second-hand knowledge. Like this lame man, the church has been waiting before the veil of the Most Holy Place for several years. Now is the time for the church of Jesus Christ to enter in, leaping and praising, to know for herself what the Lord has wrought for her. This booklet is presented to throw some light on the pathway to God's purpose in Christ Jesus. God's purpose is a vast subject, but it is offered here in a condensed and abridged form*

### **GOD SHALL BE FOR A SANCTUARY**

*The burden of the prophet for Israel, the people of God, was that the Lord shall be sanctuary and a sacred and indestructible asylum to those who reverently feared and trusted in Him. In these perilous times, the Lord Himself must be our sanctuary. It is the Lord Himself who must be our defense, our deliverer, our sanctuary and our security. However, this is not rightly understood by the majority today. The thrust of this book is to clearly bring this home to the remnant of God. This is not so much a matter of confessing that God is our sanctuary and asylum. But this speaks of an intimacy and a union with the Living God. It signifies a relationship and intimacy established by the Holy Spirit to which we must come into experientially these days.*

### **WRITE TO**

**Good Samaritan Fellowship**  
H2/22, Mahavir Enclave, New Delhi - 110 045 India  
Or  
**joythomas@oilnwine.org    www.oilnwine.org**