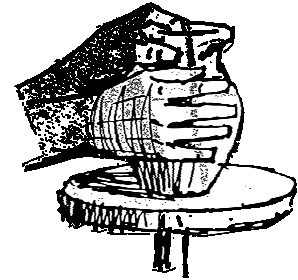


His Workmanship Westside

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."
—Ephesians 2:10*



Vol. XXIII

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No. 13

Isaiah 64:8

Fellowship of the Body, Part 5, Responsibilities of Fellowship 2, from material by

The responsibility of fellowship among believers belongs to us. What is to be our obligation to other believers in terms of fellowship? How do we maintain it with other believers? We have seen over the last 4 weeks that the basis of fellowship is provided by God in salvation—that we first must have fellowship with God before we have true fellowship with other Christians; the nature of fellowship is unity, togetherness, which is designed by God; and the danger to fellowship, what interrupts it, is sin. All these involve vertical fellowship with God. Last week we began to emphasize fellowship with other believers. We saw that our responsibility is to minister, to serve one another. To be able and willing to serve is a great area of importance to God, to ourselves, and to other believers. We discussed four responsibilities towards our brethren (what maintains it) from the New Testament “one-anothers”: to love one another; to forbear and forgive one another; to bear one another’s burdens by holding up and restoring them; and to exhort, encourage, and comfort one another with good words, hospitality, and prayer. Today we discuss the four more individual re-

sponsibilities of fellowship: teach and edify (build up) one another; admonish and rebuke sin in one another; confess to one another; and care for and serve one another.

E. Teach and Edify One Another.

The way we speak to one another is important. Our speech should always be “with grace, seasoned with salt,” Col 4:6. Jesus said well-seasoned words promote peace: “Have salt in yourselves, and have peace with one another,” Mk 9:50. Our words should always be building each other, not tearing down: “Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another,” Rm 14:19. We edify one another in our assembly when we speak to, teach, and admonish one another in songs, Eph 5:19; Col 3:16. We edify one another when we speak comforting words, 1 Thes 5:11. If our aim is always to edify with words of grace, then we will never use harsh words that bite and devour, Gal 5:15; that destroy with malice and hate, Tit 3:3; or that lie: “Therefore, putting away lying, ‘Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,’ for we are members of one another,” Eph 4:25; Col 3:9.

F. Rebuke Sin in One Another and Admonish One Another. “Have no

fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but, rather, reprove (or rebuke) them,” Eph 5:11. If you see a believer sinning, what should you do? Not say anything to him? Not embarrass her? “Who am I to talk to him?” No, no, no. “You shall not hate your brother in your heart. You shall surely rebuke him, and not bear sin because of him,” Lev 19:17. Paul rebuked Peter to his face because he was to be blamed, Gal 2:14. The Spirit-filled Christian is under the mandate of God within the framework of fellowship to rebuke and reprove sin in the life of another believer. In fact, it’s a responsibility of fellowship to go to a Christian who is in sin and tell him that he is sinning against God. We owe it to each other! If you see a brother who is sinning you have the spiritual obligation to tell him in love: “Reprove [convince], rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching,” 2 Tim 4:2. “...rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,” Tit 1:9. To rebuke means “to reprimand, show strong disapproval, criticize sharply (in order to turn back or check).” Reprove means to “disapprove, call attention to sin.” Both are done “with the kindly intent to correct or assist.” Reproach, censure, and hide are synonyms.

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“Receive them, that we may become fellow workers for the truth,” 3 John 8

The Greek word *epitimaō* means in addition *forbid* and *strictly charge*, see Mt 12:16; 19:13; Mk 3:12; 8:32-33; 16:14; Jude 9. An elder who sins is to be rebuked before all, 1 Tim 5:20. But this is to be done very, very carefully, see 5:1; Gal 6:1; Neh 5:7. If a person is teaching—or believing—false doctrine, rebuke him so he will be sound in the faith, Tit 1:13-14; 2:15. What would happen if we lived in a fellowship where we were aware that rebuke was a possibility? It'd tend to shape us up. Most of us are so afraid when we see somebody doing something wrong that we just gasp and hide so he won't see that we know what he is doing. Instead, we go to an elder and say, "I don't know if you've heard, but so-and-so drinks." He should say "Have you talked to him about it?" Mt 18:15-17. "Me? I've got my own problems." If we see a brother in a sin, we rebuke him, but we remember that he has the mutual obligation to do the same for us. The whole point of this is to get us to open up, be honest to each other, and really share what/ who we are. I need to be rebuked. And so do you sometimes, don't you? I need someone to say to me, "You shouldn't do that. That doesn't please God." I need it. We should be willing to rebuke the sin in each other. The person who will not receive rebuke is called a foolish scoffer in scripture, Pr 1:23-30; 9:8; 13:1, 18; 15:32; 17:10; 19:25; 29:1, 15; Eccl 7:5. "Those who rebuke the wicked will have delight, and a good blessing will come upon them," Pr 24:25. We should accept rebuke as a kindness, as excellent oil, Ps 141:4-5; cf. Pr 27:5. We are to admonish one another: "Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another," Rm 15:14; cf. Col 3:16. A rebuke from our brother is

rebuke from God, so that we may partake of His holiness and produce the peaceable fruit of righteousness, Heb 12:5-11; cf. Ps 6:1; 80:14-16; 119:21; Rev 3:19. "Learn to do good; seek justice, rebuke the oppressor; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow," Is 1:17.

G. Confess to One Another.

"Confess your faults one to another," Jas 5:16. A *fault* is brokenness (like the geological San Andreas *fault* in California); it is the Greek word *parap-toma*, translated as *sin*, *trespass*, *offense*; also *slip*, *error*, *lapse*, *fall*. We are to be open and honest about our sins, shortcomings, faults, defects, failures, flaws, errors, slips, blemishes, and imperfection—to God, 1 Jn 1:9, and to one another, Lev 5:5; Josh 7:19.

"Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him," Luke 17:3

It is interesting that Roget's Thesaurus gives the opposite of *fault* as *truth*; thus confession is the way we get back to truth. We're all on the same ground, we've all sinned, and we all have the same struggles, weaknesses, and afflictions. That is fellowship, isn't it? We can have an amazing breakthrough when we're open and honest. All Christians ought to have somebody with whom they can bare their heart, someone who can pray for them in their areas of weakness. What a depth of honesty, beauty, and understanding would be brought to our fellowship if we could openly share our sins! We would not only confess our lapses, but the person who hears us could know he shares that problem. If we knew another person had that problem, how much more intelligently we could pray and serve each other. But instead we put a little glass bubble around ourselves. We're not

even willing to share openly, to expose our sins and temptations to one another, and to say this is my problem, this is my need, this is what's going on in my life, and this is where Satan is beating me down. What a relief to have someone put his arm around me and say, "That's the same thing I'm going through in my life. You pray for me, and I'll pray for you. Every time you sin, whenever you start to see that temptation, call me." When we think of the people to whom we've confessed who have the same problem, it gives us power to withstand the temptation of Satan, 1 Cor 10:13. James knew what he was talking about. Confessing faults to one another is the greatest psychological therapy there is. It's also a tremendous preventative to sin to know that everybody knows our weakness. Somewhere along the line we need to break through the isolation, crucify our egos/selves, and begin to share and confess our faults one to another. Notice that there's no priesthood here except the priesthood of believers. You simply confess your faults one to another.

Particularly if you've wronged a brother in Christ, then it's strategic that you go to him. "Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift," Mt 5:23-24. In other words, don't worship God until you've made everything right with your brother. Whether you're confessing your sin or going to a brother who has wronged you, find somebody who doesn't like you and make it right. Isn't that interesting? Confession of sin to each other maintains fellowship, maintains unity of the body and oneness with

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Let your faith be seen in 2014
 "I rejoice to see your good order
 and the steadfastness of your faith
 in Christ."
 —Colossians 2:5

One-Anothers, from p. 2

God. The purity of fellowship at this level will be exciting and thrilling to build a common bond of people who know and love each other, who understand each other's needs, anxieties, temptations, and sins. We would find that we are all cut out of the same mold. What strength we'd find in that community!

H. Serve and Care for One Another.

(1) Service and ministry. Jesus continually taught us to serve. At His last supper with His disciples, He demonstrated service by washing their feet, Jn 13:1-17. His service to them was to show His love for them, v. 1, to show humility, vs. 3-5, to signify spiritual washing, vs. 6-11, and to give us an example of service, vs. 12-17. He had called those He loved into fellowship with Him, conversing as a friend, allowing them to be free with Him, bearing their weaknesses. He loved them to the end. He said, "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them," Jn 13:14-17. How astonishing for the Lord of Lords to humble Himself and put honor upon them as if a king would serve his servants! This quiet service is the way we are to love one another. To have a part in Christ, or to be partakers of Him, Heb 3:14, to share in those inestimable blessings which result from a union with Him and relation to Him (listed in Eph

Discipleship Here At Home

1), we must submit to His cleansing, grace, and authority. It is necessary for Him to wash us. Christ justifies and sanctifies every one He owns and saves. We cannot partake of His glory if we do not partake of His righteousness, His Spirit, and His grace. Our firm assurance of heaven and joy will keep us humble instead of puffing us up with pride. If we would be like Christ and partake of His Spirit, we must become servants. "For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another," Gal 5:13. Serving one another is, like washing one another's feet, to offer comfort and to help make presentable. It is a *mutual* service, both giving and receiving, offering and accepting. We must sorrow for the failings of our brethren, wash our brethren's feet in tears, reprove them faithfully, do what we can to bring them to repentance, and admonish them, to prevent their falling into the mire—this is washing their feet.

(2) Care and concern. Romans 14 tells us that we are to care for the weaker brother. We must be sure we take special care for the weaker brother, especially not to offend him or cause him to stumble or fall. (a) One sign of this care is not to judge one another in non-essential matters and not to cause a weaker brother to stumble or fall, Rm 14:13. Other negative actions we should refrain from include suing our brethren, 1 Cor 6:7; speaking evil or gossiping against our brethren, Jas 4:11; and grumbling against our brethren, Jas 5:9. (b) Another sign is to prefer our brethren above others, but not to show partiality—to honor and respect each one, elevating our likenesses over our differences. "There should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another," 1 Cor 12:25; Jas 2:8-9. We are to be unified, of one

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PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here and away

Letha Fink's husband **Ed**—prostate cancer; current treatment for brain tumors
Tyler Huelsman's teacher, Mr. Hitchens—father is dying of cancer; **Noah Hadders's** teacher, Mrs. Bauers—recovering from brain surgery
David Hull, a friend of **Randy Reames**—stroke; leukemia relapse; pray open to gospel
Randy's mother, **Una**, in her 80s—cancerous colon tumor removed recently
Megan Aki's friend **Christine Martella**—recovering from liver tumor surgery
Sandra Perry's sister, **Sharon Rupinen**—upper GI tests; surgery expected
Judy Sartin's aunt **Vallie Ek**, age 87—uterine cancer, heart, kidney failure; hospice; pray she returns to Lord in her last days; also **Judy's** cousin's wife, **Lynne James**, breast cancer
Josh McDonald, a friend of **Kory Tope**, and daughter **Casey**—unwanted divorce
Mark Campbell—unstable health and housing situation due to addiction; **Forrest Corray**, Jordan's brother—addiction

CHRONIC CONDITIONS

Logan Corray; **Rocco Sangellino Jr**;
Addison Tope; **Pat Wilkes**—asthma
Bill Dennis—heart issues
Autumn Hadders—epilepsy; celiac disease
Jonathan Hadders—RA
Danielle Huelsman—vertigo, CV syndrome
Kirk Johnson—worsening MS; needs help
Menards—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak;
Virginia, macular degeneration; high BP
Sandra Perry—neuropathy from diabetes
Cheryl Reames—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia
Nell Free—pacemaker, heart; back pain
Judy Sartin—spinal stenosis; severe arthritis
Judy Sartin's grandson **Tristen**—autism
Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung weakness

Traveling **DeWayne, Kim, and Ethan Howell** will return from AZ Mon. **Larry Campbell** in south FL for work 3/31-4/11. **Pat Campbell** to AR 4/2-11 to see dad. **Terry Smith** will be away another week.

Job concerns **Linda Szymanski**

Expecting **Christina Adams's** daughter **Kayla**, will be induced 4/17.

REJOICE! **Liz and Zibby Kosik** are the proud parents of a baby boy, **Frank**, 7 lbs. **Liz** and baby **Frank** are home.

Responsibilities of Fellowship, continued from p. 3

mind concerning the gospel. Paul told the Romans, "Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another... Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion," Rm 12:10, 16. "May the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus," Rm 15:5, with compassion, tender hearts, courtesy, and blessing, 1 Pet 3:8-9. (c) A third sign is to submit to one another. "Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble [Pr 3:34].' Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time," 1 Pet 5:5-6; see Jas 4:6, 10; Mt 23:12. The Holy Spirit helps us in exhorting and teaching in psalms, in singing in our hearts, in giving thanks always, and in "submitting to one another in the fear of God," Eph 5:18-21.

To maintain the fellowship of the body, we love one another; confess our sins to one another; forgive and show forbearance; teach and edify one another; encourage, comfort, and admonish one another; rebuke each other; and after we've rebuked, restore and hold up our brothers and bear each other's burdens; and then we watch out to care especially for our weaker brothers and serve one another. All these are individual responsibilities. To these must be added the responsibility of the entire church:

I. Discipline. This is a corporate (body) responsibility. When a brother is continuing in sin, the church has the duty to turn away from him, no longer keep company or have fellowship with him. Paul told the Corinthians to "deliver such a one to Satan...that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.," 1 Cor 5:5. Paul told Timothy that he was delivering Hymenaeus and Alexander to Satan that they might learn not to blaspheme, 1 Tim 1:20. A believer who is in sin should be noted and avoided, so that he might be brought to repentance—so that God might deal in his life and so that he does not corrupt the fellowship. First, the wronged Christian is to go to him; if he doesn't repent, then the offended one goes to him again with two or three witnesses; if he still won't acknowledge his sin, then they bring him before the congregation. If all that fails, the church is to follow the other principles of discipline and treat him as an unbeliever. The members of the body are not to eat with him or greet him (perhaps symbolic), but to mark (take notice of) him, reject him, turn away and withdraw from him, and separate themselves from him, 1 Cor 5:6-7, 11; Rm 16:17; Gal 2:12; 2 Thes 3:6, 14; 2 Tim 3:5; Tit 3:10; 2 Jn 10, until the time he repents of his sin. So the church has a responsibility in maintaining fellowship to maintain discipline. If the fellowship has been intimate by means of the other eight responsibilities of fellowship, this separation should cause him enough hurt to turn him back to God in repentance from his sins. Then the church renews its eight responsibilities, confirming its love and forgiveness many times over, see 2 Cor 2:5-9.

Our responsibility is to minister to each other, to serve each other. God takes care of the basis of fellowship, which is salvation; God takes care of the nature of it, oneness; and God even takes care of the danger to it, sin. But the responsibility of fellowship among believers is ours. May we ever strive to keep the unity of the Holy Spirit in the bond of peace with all meekness, humility, and lowliness, submitting to one another with long-suffering, forbearance, forgiveness, and love.



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Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 246-8810
DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning:

• **Adult Bible study, "Come out from among Them" Series, 2 Cor 6:17:**

"Thousand Year Reign of Christ on Earth,"
Larry Campbell

• **Sermon: "Deciding What You Want,"**
Jim Reingrover

Sunday afternoon theme for March—**CONNECTION**

• **Sermon: "The Wisdom of Mentoring,"**
Jeff Wilkes

Gospel Meeting April 18-20 with Scott Kercheville. Building work day April 12.