

**We Are Family!**  
**Acts 2: 42-47**

I. "Fellowship" is the spiritual family relationship of God's people.

- A. Before seeing what this means, we need to see what it doesn't mean.
  - 1. Devoted to the fellowship doesn't mean regularly attending services. It is much deeper than that.
- B. Fellowship is koinonia: partnership, participation, communion.
  - 1. It comes from koinonos: "a sharer."
    - (a) Which comes from koinos: "shared by all, common."
  - 2. So, koinonia fellowship begins with commonality.
    - (a) That commonality is the indwelling Holy Spirit.
    - (b) The Holy Spirit was the common denominator in them.
    - (c) That is true of us also.
    - (d) All who have trusted in Jesus have the Holy Spirit.
  - 3. We only have koinonia fellowship with those born of the Spirit.
    - (a) You might have great social times with people who do not know Jesus, but that is not koinonia.
  - 4. Koinonia is the relationship between followers of Christ.
    - (a) This relationship needs to be maintained.
    - (b) It's not, "Yay, we're Christians and our fellowship is always perfect."
- C. They were "devoted... to the koinonia..."
  - 1. Last week: Devoted: to give yourself to something with constant and careful attention. Putting values into practice.
  - 2. They are not just committed to gathering.
    - (a) Committed to the health and vitality of their relationships.
  - 3. Our culture stresses independence. Koinonia is interdependence
    - (a) Jesus' way is interdependent love. (Acts 2:44-45).

II. Koinonia is a continuation of the Old Testament concept of covenant.

- A. Remember what Jesus said at the Last Supper.
  - 1. He spoke of "a new covenant in his blood."
    - (a) His sacrifice made a new covenant available.
    - (b) The old covenant was a covenant of Law.
    - (c) The new covenant is a covenant of grace.
    - (d) We enter the covenant by trusting in Jesus.
  - 2. The breaking of bread was a sign of the covenant.
    - (a) It symbolizes that we are at peace with each other.
    - (b) We are like family.
    - (c) We will be faithful (not betray one another).
  - 3. This is what they were devoted to.
    - (a) They had become children of God through faith in Jesus.
    - (b) Now, they were brothers and sisters in Christ.
  - 4. The Spirit of God in each of them was their unity.
    - (a) These things are true of us also. We are family!

- B. Covenants are holy because God is part of the agreement.
  - 1. So, covenants have both vertical and horizontal commitments.
  - 2. God says to us:
    - (a) I will love you.
    - (b) I will help you (rescue you).
    - (c) I will be faithful to you.
  - 3. We say the same to him.
    - (a) We don't rescue God, but we join his mission.
  - 4. We make those same commitments to one another.
    - (a) Marriage is the deepest human form of this.
    - (b) But it is also true in the Church.
  - 5. This is what they were devoted to, to each other.

III. Covenant relationships need to be maintained.

- A. What threatens the quality of relationship with God?
  - 1. Our tendency to enter into sin and rebellion.
  - 2. When we fail, does God abandon us?
    - (a) No, he calls us to turn back.
    - (b) He offers us grace and mercy.
- B. What threatens our relationships in the body of Christ?
  - 1. Our tendency to enter into sin and selfishness.
  - 2. Are we supposed to respond by abandoning each other?
    - (a) No, God says we are to be like him.
    - (b) He has extended grace to us.
    - (c) So, he commands us to extend grace to each other.
    - (d) If we are to be faithful to him, we have no choice.
- C. Devotion to covenant relationships in the body.
  - 1. We are to give ourselves with "constant and careful attention."
  - 2. Who are we?
    - (a) We are God's forgiven people.
    - (b) We are God's forgiving people.
    - (c) Together these values form the core of our identity.
- D. Being forgiven people who forgive is central to who we are.
  - 1. At the pivotal time in his ministry Jesus illustrated it.
    - (a) He washed their feet.
    - (b) He explained that it illustrated being washed from sin.
    - (c) He commanded, "I've done this for you. Now do it for each other."
- E. Is it ever okay to say, "I could never forgive that."
  - 1. Only if that's what God said to us. But he didn't say that.
    - (a) God says there is nothing too big to be forgiven.
    - (b) Then he says, "Now that I've done this for you, do it for one another. Extend grace!"
  - 2. Being unable to forgive may be a sign of unresolved history.
  - 3. Is the thing you are unable to forgive similar to something that has been done to you in the past? Something that was painful?
  - 4. If so, the issue may be unresolved trauma.