

Fellowship Matters - why I love church and I love the National Baptist Fellowship Meetings

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[0:00] We're just going to read Acts 2 from verse 41 and of course it's the time of Pentecost and! we see the church gathered Acts 2 and Peter's just preached in Acts 2 41 it says and then they that! gladly received his word were baptized and the same day they were added unto them about three thousand souls and they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine and fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers and fear came upon every soul and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles and all that believed were together and had all things common and sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man had need 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 praising God and having favor with all the people and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved that's the context and we're just going to home in zero in on Acts 2 42 and really to one word fellowship fellowship and just to unpack that thought of fellowship today together and here's the blueprint really there's some things that we're called to as the people of God as you see in this context here and fellowship is my theme today fellowship what is it it's about relationship it's about building relationships it's the relationship that we have with one another as the people of God they had fellowship fellowship was part of the momentum of the early church and we see that the church grew what was it that they had fellowship they met together constantly and it says they continued steadfastly steadfastly notice that word and the word in the context it means a devotion it says they devoted themselves to fellowship they persevered in fellowship they continually gave attention to it they were committed to it there was no giving up they gave fellowship a priority they gave it their steadfast attention and it's got the sense of fainting not not giving up they steadfastly fellowship and consider the power of fellowship of course we know the power of God came from on high the power of fellowship was a part of all that as they got together as there was that collective worship it was powerful there was power and we see where does the power come from it's his presence it's his presence matthew 18 verse 20 we read for where two or three are gathered together in my name there am i he says in the midst of them in the midst of them he's right here now right here right now by his spirit in his presence with us and god calls us to fellowship this power there there's his presence there and fellowship is not an option they gladly received the word of god they were together and they were continuing daily with one accord there's a lot there we could unpack isn't that that there was a blessed fellowship and they had a gladness and singleness of heart praise god and they were doing just that they were praising god there was praise there and what happened the lord added to the church daily daily day after day after day such as should be saved fellowship is powerful isn't it powerful and fellowship we called to that we see many references to fellowship really it's just skipping through a few references and trying to get the whole picture from this biblical

concept of fellowship today 1 corinthians 1 9 it says god is faithful by whom you were called unto the fellowship of his son jesus christ our lord we call to that we're called together ecclesia called out called unto called together to be the fellowship called unto the fellowship of jesus our lord and verse 10 now i beseech you brethren by the name of our lord jesus christ that you all speak the same thing that you all that you all speak the same thing and that there be no divisions among you but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment wouldn't that be something if we spoke the same thing that we had the same mind the same judgment here's fellowship this is how we're meant to function and it's really when you think about it it's spending time with each other we're laughing together we're crying together we get to know each other it's relational and it's intentional it's deliberate and you challenge one another you love one another that's what it's meant to be to have that joining together that relationship koinonia fellowship it's about sharing it's about sharing together in the things of god and fellowship it's about belonging it's about companionship there's a lot to that word underlying the word fellowship koinonia there's a lot to it it's a sharing it's a real joining it's a being together it's our commitment to one another and we see it's our gathering together unto him it's brothers and sisters getting together that's what it is people amen people of god that's who we are brothers and sisters you're my brother my sister even closer than my natural kinfolks really truly that's this the closeness we have and we're told be kindly affectioned one to one another be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love in honor preferring one another wouldn't that be something to have that brotherly love that's what we have isn't it god helping us we can love one another as brothers and sisters and be kindly affectioned knit together as the people of god in a blessed christian fellowship and that we can lift one another up and encourage one another and help keep our eyes on the lord and have that unified fellowship it's when we come together for a common purpose we don't have to see eye to eye on every little thing but we can build relationships i don't know about you but i've got some sisters and uh i wasn't always a good brother to them i was a bit of a tease i was a bit of a bully back then i was a bit nasty sometimes and yeah my mom and dad said amen to that and they and we can we're not not always a good brother we're not always a good brother all right i repent forgive me janet and sue you know we can be a bad brother but we've got helping us we'll be a good brother amen we'll be a good brother and sometimes brothers rib each other and play games and fisticuffs and and have a bit of argy-bargy but that's all part of being a family isn't it and we're in a common purpose together we're in this family together that's a good thing isn't it we're spiritually connected we've got this deep spiritual connections and we can have an accountability with one another too it's interesting isn't it where it says confess your faults to one another have you done that lately i've already told you my fault so it's your turn now we we can confess our faults to one another there's a bit of that isn't that and we can be so honest and raw and open with each other and say hey pray for me i've got this going on imagine living in a country where there was no church wouldn't that be something actually with one of the posts i did on facebook of our youth group we had 30 children there friday night 30 children praise god and someone responded and said i wish we could be there and they are living in a country where christian fellowship is it's not a thing you've got to be undercover virtually you've got to keep it quiet there's no visible church gatherings imagine being in a country like that they would be in awe of all the various meetings and hey there's opportunities galore opportunities galore they'd be in awe of all of that yeah and think wow oh if only we could even

have a sunday meeting they don't have anything so we can be appreciate that can't we they'd be so glad but we've got so ample opportunities ourselves to fellowship to get together now of course fellowship is not defined as going to meetings but of course it does follow on they go together somewhat but fellowship is first and foremost it's about relationships isn't it it's about relationship rather than activity and look at the many ways we can connect and avail yourself of that take the initiative to be a part get involved with the things in the church there's lots of precious opportunities in human development it's possible to get what they call developmental delay developmental delay i used to work in the disability sector and it's a reality the fact of developmental delay or a failure to thrive syndrome how does it happen it's when a child doesn't get that help to mature to grow they don't have that nourishment of nurture of interaction and that can happen spiritually too it can happen spiritually where we're spiritually malnourished we miss out on the spiritual connection and our faith doesn't grow like it could but god wants our faith to be glowing and growing that's why

fellowship is good for our soul and we can keep our faith growing it's god's plan fellowship how do we help that it's as we meet up with other believers and it's critical for us growth only comes through fellowship so we need that and so i'd exhort you to that spiritual fellowship it's encouraging it's helpful and we can share experiences we can bounce things off each other we can sharpen one another we can have a little jab here and a little jab there you can provoke me oh provoke me unto love oh provoke me onto good works you know that's that sense of it isn't it we need a bit of prodding now and again and that's good it does us good hey let's love one another more let's provoke one another unto some good works there's a value a value in coming together we don't always appreciate as i say we could be living in a country where this is a rare thing this is an illegal meeting that can be true shouldn't we value it i think we should we don't miss that so there's a value in loving one another getting together encouraging one another helping each other to grow and the early church was a close-knit church there's something about they were knitted there was a close-knit gathering they shared time with each other there's different ways and opportunities we can hang out and go fishing together men with brother don's fishing trips you know there's opportunities and it's hanging out together that's a good thing that's a good thing it's a spiritual thing in a way in a roundabout way because we're growing to love one another more we're getting to know each other more and that's a good thing that's a godly thing and the people of god they shared time with each other they supported each other in times of persecution this was a reality and we don't have that maybe a bit of intense persecution would make us closer that might be a good thing who knows what's going on in the middle east lately you know it's starting to ramp up people isn't it friends we've got to get ready and someone has said that the definition of fellowship is two fellows in a ship rowing together imagine that two fellows in a ship in a row boat rowing together and you can picture it if you ever tried to row with someone else in a boat if someone pulls on the oars a bit more than the other you're going to go around in circles aren't you so you've got to coordinate your efforts so we want to be coordinated we want to be two fellows in a ship and rowing together working together loving each other and that togetherness that makes the church function well when you think about it through the word of god there's many references to one another's of fellowship of together the word together of coming together ministering to one another serving one another there's at least 58 times in the new testament where we see the phrase one another for example accept one another receive one another forgive one another greet one another bear one another's burdens be devoted to one another honor one another teach one another submit to one another encourage one another edify one another there's all kinds of one another's and when you see this one another's that's what we want to encourage and foster that and build that and people saw the love of the believers for one another and the care that they had for one another it's an oft-mentioned theme one another and it's interesting describing the first christians to the roman emperor the philosopher aristides of athens wrote to hadrian and he said this quote they love one another they never fail to help widows they save orphans from those who will hurt them if they have something they will give freely to the man who has nothing if they see a stranger they take him home and are happy as though he were a real brother they don't consider themselves brothers and sisters in the usual sense but brothers instead by the spirit of god they love one another this is what the recorder of the day said to the emperor of the day they love one another that was the spirit of godly fellowship that's what marked the people of god of the first century this real sense of belonging we belong together and it comes through fellowship this commitment to one another and we're saying you can count on me i'm on board i'm on the raw oars here this sense of membership of sorts of belonging and it's like the difference between someone who's on a cruise and someone who's a crew member ready to serve a crew member on the cruise or a crew member we can be maybe we can go in between we can enjoy a bit of the cruise now and again but we've got to be part of the crew amen and some are compared to this idea of commitment to a church with what they call the 80 20 principle 20 of the people do 80 of the work are you in the 20 or in the 80 good question be part of the crew and fellowship opportunities there's opportunities to serve to minister and be ministered unto to bless and to be blessed it's great to see there's a few new recruits joining the youth group ministry so we've got some six helpers i think now to bolster the number of those that can serve and the more that serve the more the work is shared and the more it's manageable isn't it think of the opportunities to minister that we all have and to be ministered unto opportunities to worship opportunities to pray opportunities to read the word together to evangelize together fellowship it's a coming together for one purpose and one mind with one goal to honor our lord to lift him high and to serve one another

fellowship it means praying for one another fellowship it's spirit layer bear with me while we look at a few different references to fellowship and just unpack more about what the scriptures tell us about fellowship philippians 2 if there be therefore any consolation in christ if any comfort of love if any fellowship of the spirit if any bowels and mercies fulfill you my joy that you'd be like-minded having the same love being of one accord of one mind that love there is there's a strength there of being around other believers of encouraging each other of having that ways to grow and increase our faith it's a relating to one another it's a special connection you see that the same love of one mind there's a love there there's a compassion

talks about bowels and mercies that's the innards it's the innermost man of each one of us we can be of one accord of one mind there's so much there and this concept of fellowship is very precious i need your relationship to me and we need our relationship to each other to encourage one another in our walk for the lord i'm human and i'm faulty i often get reminded of that as i get emails saying things about me and seriously i've let some people down i feel really bad about that there's someone that took offense to some way i interacted with them i spoke about something that that hit a nerve and their partner passed away and and i felt bad about that we want to be careful how we word things how we say things how we respond to each other we can make mistakes i can and so it's wonderful if we can have that sense of family of fellowship of encouragement that that's our focus that's not to say we don't speak the truth in love and that the honest truth that can be is necessary must be done but how can we love one another as like-minded believers in that godly fellowship that truly god-blessed thing that is godly fellowship and i've got to say i'm looking forward with great anticipation to the national baptist fellowship meetings i'm looking forward to that now some have criticized even the very concept of this as though it's some kind of a compromise i do not see that at all the concept of fellowship is a good and godly thing and it's something we ought to aspire to and not to be limited or exclusive in some man-made way and some people don't like the idea of like-minded churches getting together for fear that it will be some kind of a mixed multitude when you look at the scripture that talks about a mixed multitude it's in the context of the people the non-hebrews joining the hebrews as they left egypt we see that there is the there was a conglomeration of people that there were some likely egyptians other foreigners got together they become disenchanted with egypt they developed connections with the hebrews yet we see provision was made for them they were likewise able to take shelter under the covering of the blood under the shelter of the blood some of them were saved and delivered and they saw god work as they crossed the red sea together they were included in god's salvation plan so diversity within a community of believers is not necessarily a bad thing a diversity is a recurring theme through the scriptures of course god saved many who are gentiles thank god i'm one of them and god created a unity despite people coming from many different backgrounds now that's not to deny that the people of god and those who left egypt with them they had some serious flaws many times the people of god strayed there was a time that this mixed multitude hankered after the fish and the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic rather than the provision of god and there was some complaining and fleshliness and so of course there is that danger when there's a mixture of people now of course we come from many different languages backgrounds cultural backgrounds country different skin color thank god we're a mixed bag and that's a good thing because we're brothers and sisters who all love the lord and so a mixed multitude is not necessarily a bad thing here's what spurgeon said i quote spurgeon the mixed multitude who came up out of egypt with israel might not have fully known the god they followed but they were attracted by the visible display of his power and the evident truth of his promise they are a symbol of those who though once far off are brought near brought near by the sheer compelling force of god's grace they were brought near by the grace of god oswald chambers likewise

[20:25] says the journey of the mixed multitude with the israelites symbolizes the possibility of change and redemption for all it highlights that anyone can become part of god's people through faith and commitment so of course there's different ways of seeing this there's pagan ways and a mingling of these at times in the gathering of believers obviously that's something we must constantly guard against the people of god we must constantly guard against worldly compromise doctrinal compromise we're definitely against that we stand firmly against that we're going to set the bar high for all who participate in the fellowship meetings to come so we pick the preachers that are what i would say is the cream of

the crop they're they're godly men who are going to stand for truth and they'll be preaching the word of god and we can trust that of course we are definitely against ecumenism and compromise we won't have a bar of that i'm not part of the local ministers fraternal nor will i ever be we would not join party with those who would worship a golden calf or abandon fundamental doctrines we stand firmly and squarely on the king james bible on holiness on godliness on truth on sound doctrine we're against any compromise of bible versions of charismaticism of false doctrine of hillsong of women preachers and the like we're against the wishy-washy and the flim-flam so i'd say that soundly and loudly to any of our critics so these gatherings that we are hosting are based on a godly purpose a godly biblical foundation of course there is such a thing as bad fellowship and sour fellowship we want sweet fellowship amen sour fellowship we're against that talks about such things as how you know bad company corrupts good character we see evil communications corrupt good manners we want to have a separation from that which is evil that which is harmful that which is wrong and so this is the truth that we stand for we cannot compromise we dare not and that nothing bugs me more than to be called a compromiser because that's the last thing i want to be by the grace of god we cannot walk together except we be agreed we're not going to go with those who are going the wrong way and we must oppose that the word of god is very clear can two walk together except they be agreed so we're against any compromise of doctrine of wishy-washiness of cozying up to rome of any falsehood any watering down or dilution of holiness and of truth we oppose that firmly soundly squarely there's no question of that there's some things clearly that do limit fellowship and that we must reject and steer away from turn away from for example 2 corinthians 6 14 we read be you not unequally yoked together with unbelievers for what fellowship of righteousness with unrighteousness and what communion hath light with darkness there's things that obviously plainly and clearly they will not yoke together with unbelief or unrighteousness and we cannot we dare not join with unbelievers we cannot have fellowship with darkness so just want to make that very clear in in respect to fellowship have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them stand against them clearly we cannot go along with that yet it's sad that some would divide believer against believer on some nitpicking grounds that's divisiveness that's sowing discord that's separating brothers over narrow interpretations and splitting hairs and god hates that bear with me i'll just say a couple more things god's against that he says it's one of the things he specifically hates here that soweth discord among the brethren he hates that and it says now i beseech you brethren mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned and avoid them avoid that that divisiveness and then 1 corinthians 3 for ye are yet carnal for whereas there is among your envying and

strife and divisions are you not carnal and walk as men friends it's very clear there is a necessary division but there is a discord that's just fleshly and carnal and not biblical it's strife it's destruction and it's not fitting so let's understand the biblical model this i'd like to put my emphasis more on how can we be biblical with our fellowship it talks about the unity of the faith the unity of the spirit endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace it says that we're going to come to the unity of the faith of the knowledge of the son of god unto a perfect man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of christ so this idea of good fellowship is where i'd like to put my emphasis today now bear with me on all of that that i just said there's there's no separation among ethnic lines you see in some countries they've got a black church and a white church now that's really quite wrong isn't it and maybe they don't mean to be like that but we want to be a multicultural church where we all come from every walk of life from every direction from across the train line and in the

this side of the train line from those who come north south east and west from every country of the globe that we can be a church that's multicultural that's a good and godly thing there's no cultural divides in the kingdom of god you know fellowship allows for different backgrounds and there can be wonderful oneness amongst us even though we might fight each other about which soccer team we barrack for we can still love one another amen because all of that's flesh isn't it and we bear witness to that in our own number this wonderful oneness that we can have that we all come from different backgrounds and yet can have a strong unity in christ that's the beauty of fellowship isn't it that's the beauty of it this bond and it's a deep bond and it's a god-wrought unity it's a god thing not a compromise but a biblical unity that's a good and godly thing and friends i urge you i employ you let's strive for that let's that be our ambition our aspiration as per the words of david as he penned them in psalm 133 behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity it's like the precious ointment upon the head that ran down upon the beard even aaron's beard and went down to the skirts of his garments as the jew of hermon that as the june that descended upon the mountains of zion for there the lord commanded the blessing even life forevermore so it's saying there it's good it's pleasant to get together to dwell together in unity it's a precious thing it's like the precious ointment it's like the precious jew upon the grass that honors our lord it's like the jew on the mountains of zion that's where calvary is amen on the mountains of zion that's where jesus bled and died and laid down his life for us that's the calvary love that is the mountains of zion it's where calvary is and there's blessing there people there's blessing there's fellowship there's godly unity that's a good thing that's a righteous thing that's what we want that's what god wants something commended to be sought after to be yearning for then that will see the glory of god will see the blessing even life forever more that's a righteous thing the glory of god and friends we can strengthen one another and so much the more as we see the day approaching to get together every every chance we can it's like we're making a cake and this is one of the the things when you're making a cake you need all the ingredients don't you when someone's not here there's an ingredient it's going to make that cake not taste so good you know let's be all together it's a good thing all right we want to make a good cake amen every one of us plays our own respective part and it's possible to have a godly unity not a compromised unity we're absolutely not absolutely not in the camp that would say we want a compromised unity but the other side of the coin it's possible to have order an organization without life and there's some churches so controlled and isolated that they lose the heart for people it's so regimented that its members are cookie cutters no difference is accepted no shade of difference that's not biblical we're called as a local church to live and fellowship with one another it's like brothers and sisters don't always see eye to eye that's okay it's a right fellowship with the right attitude the right spirit we're told to speak the same thing we call family we're called to love having the same love what is that love it's the love of christ it's his love now i'm not saying preach a lovey-dovey gospel where it's all airy-fairy and anything goes but that the love of christ is that cement it's that glue isn't it it's that blessed strength that is when we bond together in a good godly way having the same love it's the love of christ that's what it is we're like-minded that we can have the attitude of christ that is the culture that prevails we see different scriptures that talk about this kind of thing philippians 2 if there be therefore any consolation in christ any encouragement he says if any comfort of love if any fellowship of the spirit if any bowels and mercies fulfilling you my joy that you be like-minded having the same love being of one accord of one mind let nothing be done through strife or vain glory but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves and says look not every man on his own things but every man also on the things of others so the sense there is this fellowship of the spirit it talks about this humility this community of god's people not doing things out of strife or vain glory not a fleshly striving or taking offense not a dividing or a high-mindedness but a mutual esteeming a preferring of one another a mutual regard a consideration can that be that we can consider one another that we'll love each other such that we find something to argue about but will actually love one another and that doesn't dismiss this need for sound doctrine there's a balance here i'm trying to uh explain we're not saying excuse false doctrine not at all but that we can be a community of joyful praise we can look out for one another look not on every man on his own things don't be so self-centered that it's all about what you want but what is the benefit of others and what can i give there's a serving together because we're family and we're a loving family of blood-bought believers that's a good thing and we can be of the same mind what is that mind it's the mind of christ it says be of the same mind one toward another mind not high things but condescending to men of low estates be not wise in your own conceit so it's saying there this fellowship is is the same

mindedness not minding high things in other words don't be so high-minded that you're looking down on other people all the time being so wise in what you know that's wrong let go of pride let go of it it's not right to be prideful but rather to have the mind of christ to have the mind of a servant and here's where godly fellowship is strong and we can be such a church that we can have a mind a mind that is the servant mind and heart of our lord that vital function his heart his tenderness his compassion and that with all loneliness and meekness with long suffering for bearing one another in love think of it friends one of the hallmarks of the church of god of the church of this fellowship of holy oneness is this lowliness this meekness and forbearing now i think forbearing needs to be one of the courses they teach in bible school forbearing 101 how to consider others how to be a servant of god forbearing i think that's missing sometimes it's missing because this world doesn't care about forbearing look out for number one woe be tied anyone who disagrees with me i've got it all right and you anyone who differs from me his heretic no we don't want that that's flesh that's flesh at the heart of it it's flesh there's a forbearing a forbearing with one another and endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace there's one body one spirit even as you're caught into one hope of your calling one one one fellowship we're unified we're together that's a good thing and we're to work together and share life together colossians 3 tells us put on therefore as the elect of god holy and beloved bowels of mercies kindness humbleness of mind meekness long suffering now when we see this phrase bowels of mercies it's almost a bit hard to get your head around that in the as an aussie bowels of mercies but what it's talking about is the innermost heart it's the innermost heart and it's literal it's the innards it's your guts if i could use such a phrase it's your intestines that you would so love that you would have the innermost parts of you would be in alignment with the heart of god that the very innermost parts of you the heart the affections the seat of the emotion of compassion i like this definition about bowels of mercies it suggests a profound internalized kindness that comes from the very core of a person's being it's kindness that comes from the very core of a person's being paul says cultivate that put it on a deep genuine compassion be merciful do we exercise kindness and patience towards others think of it in the on the home front if you've got a brother or a sister you need a bit of bowels of compassion you need a bit of kindness and patience don't you otherwise families don't last and that isn't there isn't it forbearing one another friends that's what we need isn't it forbearing one another forgiving forgiving one another if any man have a quarrel against any even as christ forgave you so also do you here's the model isn't it that we need to aim for this template and we see above all these things put on charity which is the bond of perfectness let the peace of god rule in your hearts to the which also you are called in one body and be thankful here's the template the model the bond of perfectness it's charity love god's love agape and there's a bond here and it says let the word of christ dwelling you richly in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs singing with grace in your hearts to the lord our hearts have been set free that's why we can sing that's why we can sing these words of praise of doctrine and our hearts are knit together in love i love that in colossians 2 2 that their hearts be comforted that being knit together in love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding to the acknowledgement of the mystery of god and of the father and of christ that their hearts might be comforted encouraged that they might be knit together in love what a picture that is actually you don't do church you be church be church it's not what we do it's what we be it's what we are yeah by the grace of god that we can have that common relationship that common bond and it's not to mean we're still going to have some niggly things that can happen but our love for the truth for sound doctrine it's accompanied by a love for the brethren so that's that we can forbear one another in love

and we see it tells us 1 peter 1 22 seeing you purified your souls and obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently i love that that unfeigned love so you can feign a punch the boxes feign a punch or the the actors when they swing their fists they feign a punch it's not real you can have a love that's not real or you can have a love that's real a genuine love that's the picture here it's not it's a genuine love it's not pretend it's not a pretense it's not a pretended love it's not a pretend punch a feign punch it's not a pretend love a feigned love but it's an unfeigned love it's genuine it's real and so let's aim for that to be that genuine people of god a holy ghost led people that will have that love that's true it's real it's not put on it's not a pretense they would have that heart finally be all of one mind having compassion one of another love as brethren be courteous be pitiful be courteous be pitiful it means be tender-hearted it's be kind show mercy we're brethren we're family and so it's that's a wonderful thing that we can be family even though we're different we can have compassion and it's not a

fleshly thing a divisive thing to clash with one another but to love as brethren and it tells us about this love we know that we pass from death unto life because we love the brethren the love of the brethren he that loveth not his brother abideth in death so think of it friends i urge each one to think how can we be more joined together how can we be more loving to share life with one another that's when the edifying happens we see it tells us in ephesians 4 verse 16 of this picture of this body of this multi-element construction that is a body and the church is compared to that and it says of christ from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplied according to the effectual working in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love so it's got the picture of christ being the head of this body the body of christ being the church and that each one of us have got different parts with different elements fingers and thumbs and noses and ears and eyes we're all different parts of this one body but we're fitly joined together fitly joined together you're not going to do very well if you're an eye sitting over on that table over there on your own or a hand over on this quarter a hand that's sitting on its own we've got to be together that's the sense of it so being together is a good and godly thing it's fellowship and we're one body and it tells us in the word that those members of the body that seem to be weaker are necessary so we might think oh so-and-so is a bit weak you know a bit they're a bit so-so they're not very strong well the weaker members are still important the weaker members are still necessary so don't think of yourself oh i'm not going to be missed if i miss church or if i opt out of fellowship no every member is important every member has a part to play and even the weaker members are necessary and so the word tells us about the body the spiritual body of which christ is the head and it tells us how we being many are members one of another every part has a role to play and whether it be ministering let us wait on our ministering whatever it be if you've got a ministry a service to render then wait on that ministry take the humble place of the lowest servant serve one another that's ministry and the members should have the same care for one another if one member suffers we all suffer with it it tells us that they have the same care that there should be no schism in the body god doesn't want his body to be malformed and to be divided but to be united as we see the unity of the spirit and the safety under the authority of

[40:46] pastors and teachers the safety in the domain of a local church fellowship that's a local church assembly there's a good accountability there we can look out for each other we can meet together around the word we can grow together we can exhort one another you can exhort me i can exhort you and as the local church it's where we serve we can be good stewards of the manifold grace of god so get plugged in get plugged in don't get unplugged don't miss it the opportunity to feed your faith where there's opportunity where you humanly can be where you can and fellowship be in the fellowship where you humanly can and there's no i'm not putting a yoke on you but i say if you can then fellowship don't miss it be engaged and bear one another's burdens find that opportunity to serve if you if you're not here you can't serve if you're not here you can't minister because it's twofold it's two way we give and we receive we bear one another's burdens we forgive one another we increase that fervent love that that care for one another if we're not together we can't care for one another there's a need to be scriptural we have to be together there's a heartfelt affection and there's opportunity for interaction every time we gather there's opportunity i love it on a wednesday night we get there from the from we we have the message time from seven to eight and then there's people hanging around to 9 30.

what is that fellowship that's it yeah you can hear the whoever's presiding and giving a message that's the instruction time and then an hour and a half of fellowship afterwards you know that's even more blessed and that's how you know i know i kind of joke when some people hang around and i've got to kind of kick them out uh sort of gradually nudge them towards the door after the meeting but that's a good thing that's a good thing let's not fly off and shoot through and miss the fellowship because hey there's more fellowship to come when we say the meeting's closed actually no the meeting's finished but the fellowship begins don't miss that those opportunities to get to know each other hey there's some people near you that you don't know their name yet there's some that there's some new faces here maybe you haven't had a chance to say g'day take that opportunity

there's brothers and sisters you can meet and you haven't had a chance to say hi to yet so prioritize fellowship when you're deciding how am i going to use my time hey think about fellowship as one of the big things to think about first we need a fellowship and i want to thank you as paul thanked the philippians he says that he thanks god for the philippians he says grace be unto you and peace from god our father and from the lord jesus christ i thank my god for your fellowship for your fellowship for your fellowship your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now and it's precious isn't it of course we need to know the savior to have the fellowship we need to be saved to be a brother a sister to be a part of the family but thank god you can call god your father by faith in christ you can trust him he paid for all your sin the exceeding sinfulness of your sin that your sin can be forgiven the great debt of sin that you owe can be wiped out by the grace of god as you trust him as you turn to him by faith as you receive his forgiveness by the virtue of the shed blood the finished work on the cross you can know forgiveness of your sin you can know a home in heaven you can know that you're a son of god as many as received him so then gave you power to become the sons of god even to them that believe on his name so i trust you know him today and as you know him you've got a whole big family here to support you and encourage you in that walk with god let us pray well we thank you for the fellowship of the gospel we thank you lord for the fellowship of the saints thank you lord for the unity of the faith the unity of the spirit thank you lord for good fellowship the godly fellowship for blessed fellowship where there's a unity where brothers and sisters can get together and dwell together in unity as you bring that oneness that is only by faith lord that will grow together in love in jesus name we pray amen