

David is HOME - THANK YOU so much for your prayers . . .

I HEARD GREAT THINGS about last SUN

Worship & Message both - We have CD's of Msg - Thank you

Abide 09 – **Abide in Fellowship - PT 2 - 1Cor 12:12-27**

Let's Pray Right up front

Well - It **seems like forever** since I've been here -

Remember – **we're studying** our Critical Need – **TO ABIDE !!**

Today is our **9th msg** in this very cool study

But **it's been a while** since we began it – So **LET'S REVIEW**

1) Abide to Thrive

We looked at **WHAT ABIDING in Christ - IS**

2) Our Need to Abide

We looked at **WHY** it's so important we **LEARN** to **ABIDE**

3) Top Priority – A Love Relationship

We made it clear - ***Our Love Relationship with God is the Single Most Important , Top Priority, in our lives.***

4) If I Rest, Will God Work?

We asked the Question - If I will **FOCUS** on **ABIDING**
WILL God really Work Out the details of my life? (YES)

5) The Holy Spirit in Abiding

Where we looked at **Holy Spirit's** Critical **ROLE** in Abiding

Then **we switched** to the **PRACTICAL** Msg's

6) HOW to Abide in Prayer

7) HOW to Abide in the Word

8) HOW to Abide in Fellowship - PT 1 . . .

But - I just couldn't do "Abiding in Fellowship" in just **ONE** Msg

Really - I couldn't do justice to

Abiding in PRAYER or Abiding in the WORD - in One Msg either

But when it came to Abiding in FELLOWSHIP (Last Msg)

I got to share with you - a Huge Burden I have

& that is - that we live in a Consumer Christian Culture -

& that culture is very Detrimental to ABIDING in Fellowship

Because we are trained by the culture - to always be looking

for something bigger, better, or different

& when that Consumer Mentality comes to CHURCH

It does Tremendous Damage

to what God wants to do IN US, & THRU US - AS A BODY

& so we took (basically) the ENTIRE last message

& looked at ONE KEY Word - in the KEY Fellowship Text

The KEY Fellowship Text is ACTS 2:42 ff - which says;

Acts 2:42 (ESV)

42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

The KEY Word we focused on in the last Msg was - DEVOTED

they devoted themselves to . . . the fellowship

& we looked carefully at WHAT IT MEANS

to be DEVOTED TO a specific group of believers

That is a really important subject

I hope you heard that Msg - or will pick it up at **W-B-M**

There is, however - the **Possibility** of a **Misunderstanding** that **could come** out of **these messages**

These Msg's **COULD BE Misunderstood** as

***“You need to WORK more, or DO more,
For the Benefit of a specific church”***

& **that** would be a really **unfortunate misunderstanding**

Because the **Spiritual Truth** of **ABIDING** in Fellowship

is **SO MUCH DEEPER** than just **WORKING MORE**
or **DOING MORE** - for the benefit of **One Specific Church**

These Messages are **About** the Fact that . . .

If you are **SAVED** today
then God says **YOU** are **PART** of the **Body of Christ**

God says that He has made **EACH** of us to be
FUNCTIONING MEMBERS of the **Body of Christ**

1 Corinthians 12:27 (NLT)

27 All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.

EACH of us - **who** have **put our FAITH** in Jesus Christ
Have been **MADE** to be a **Functioning PART** of the Body of Christ

The Problem is . . .

Our **church culture** has made us **SPECTATORS** & **CONSUMERS**
so we're **always looking** for what we can **GET** from church

But that is the **total complete OPPOSITE** of **EVERYTHING** Biblical about **HOW** the the **Body of Christ has been made** to operate

If you **belong to Christ** today - Then He has **made you** to be a **FUNCTIONING PART** of **HIS Body**

& So - Our heart's DESIRE should be
to **BECOME** what God has made us **TO BE** - &
to be **DOING** what God has made us **TO DO**

AMEN ??

Now that **MIGHT** mean - ***for a time*** - that **God** has made you,
to **Sit** Perfectly Still, **Absorbing** His Truth,
& **Learning** to Love Him

& In fact - **IF** we would **all** do **THAT** - - **FIRST - & ROUTINELY**
The Rest of what we try to do for Christ - Would go **MUCH BETTER**

So **YOUR** Functioning **Role** in the Body **MIGHT BE**
Simply Learning **How** to **Follow Jesus** as a **Disciple**

Or **YOUR ROLE** in the Body might be
Serving the Lord **OUTSIDE** of a **specific church**

That is **ALSO** being an **ESSENTIAL PART** of the **Body of Christ**

TOM & CHERYL REES are ***an essential, integral, functioning part***
of THIS group of believers

But they **live** & **serve** the Lord, on the **Other Side of the World**

So - **Whether** in your **PERSONAL** life, **FAMILY** life, **WORK** life, **CHURCH** life, or **MISSIONARY** life . . .

These msg's are about

- 1) Being a **FUNCTIONING PART** of the Body of Christ - **AND**
- 2) About **ABIDING in** (being Devoted to) **FELLOWSHIP** (Koinonia)

(again) **Acts 2:42 (ESV)**

42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Let's Look at One More **KEY THING** about this **Key Vs.**

The **GREEK** Word for **FELLOWSHIP** here - is **KOINONIA**

& one of the **Most Interesting** things about the word **FELLOWSHIP** (**Koinonia**)

Is that - at **the ROOT** of this word is the **clear picture** - of **DOING** things **TOGETHER**

it means **NOT ONLY** to **Share in Common**, or to **Have things in Common**

But at **its ROOT** - it's a picture of **DOING things in Common**, **Participating in Common**

HOWEVER - it's **not** about **DOING** the things **WE'VE** come to know as **fellowship** - - meaning **Recreational Activities**

KOINONIA is about doing the **Things of God** - **TOGETHER** as the **Body of Christ**

The Word **KOINONIA** is used **19 times** in the NT
But **NOT** just as "**Fellowship**" - **ALSO** as;

Making **Contribution**

Joining in **Participation**

Taking **Part** in - &

Sharing your faith, & your stuff

Notice - **ALL** these uses of the Word - **KOINONIA**
have to do with **ACTION** - **BEING PART** of something *happening*

[REPEAT LIST]

KOINONIA is **NOT** the **Greek** word for - **POT LUCK**

KOINONIA is being **PART** of what *the BODY of Christ* is **DOING**

& **THAT** - brings me to the **BIG HOW** of this Msg

In each of these **Practical Messages** I've tried very hard to say;

Here is one - **HOW** . . .

Here's **One Way** that you can actually **DO THIS**

& so - if you ask me - **HOW Dave ??**

HOW do I **Begin** to **ABIDE in Fellowship**

I can easily tell you - **FELLOWSHIP Means**;

TAKING PART in what the Body of Christ is **DOING !!**

Abiding in Fellowship MEANS;

Being **PART** of what the *Body of Christ* is **DOING** - & then;

Being **DEVOTED** to *that* Group of Believers

& that doesn't mean that you can never leave a church

it means that you are Devoted to being a productive part
of what God is doing in a certain group of believers
until God moves you

it means you're NOT a Consumer Christian
Spectating - & Waiting to RECEIVE instead of to GIVE

It means you Seek God for the specific, unique place
that He has made YOU to FIT in the Body of Christ

& then you Commit to FUNCTION in that place in a POSITIVE way

THAT guys - is True Koinonia !! (Sharing in what God is doing)

& Being DEVOTED to THAT
is ABIDING IN FELLOWSHIP !!

I know that doesn't sound very SPECIFIC

but becoming part of the Body of Christ is NOT SPECIFIC
it's a very INDIVIDUAL thing for EVERY BELIEVER

Let's see how it looks in Scripture - -

I'm going to read a LONG TEXT - from 1Cor 12 - From the NLT

Let's try to Grasp the BIG PICTURE Here

Try NOT to Dissect the Text - Let's Read it for the BIG PICTURE

1 Corinthians 12:12-27 (NLT) → →

1 Corinthians 12:12–27 (NLT)

12 The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ.

13 Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit.

14 Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part.

15 If the foot says, “I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,” that does not make it any less a part of the body.

16 And if the ear says, “I am not part of the body because I am not an eye,” would that make it any less a part of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything?

18 But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it.

19 How strange a body would be if it had only one part!

20 Yes, there are many parts, but only one body.

21 The eye can never say to the hand, “I don’t need you.” The head can’t say to the feet, “I don’t need you.”

22 In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary.

23 And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen,

24 while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity.

25 This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other.

26 If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.

27 All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a part of it.

Man, I **Hope** you **SEE IT**
Because **THAT** - is **TRUE Koinonia** !!

That's **THE BODY** - Working Together - **AS ONE** !!
That's **Koinonia** !!

FUNCTIONING Together - In **Unity** - **AS** the Body of Christ
& THAT - is a **Beautiful Thing** !!

The Question is . . . ***ARE YOU A PART OF IT ??***

In **the BIG PICTURE** - Can you say
I am a **FUNCTIONING Part** of the **Body of Christ** ??

Don't get me wrong - I'm not asking if you serve
in the **Children's Ministry**, or the **Ushers Ministry**
(tho I'd appreciate it if you would)

I'm **asking** you - if you **consider yourself** Part of the **Body of Christ**

Can you say - "I have an idea what it is God has made **ME** to be
at least AT **THIS TIME**, & IN **THIS PLACE**"

Do you have **SOME SENSE** that you **KNOW** (to some extent)
what it is God would have you **DOING** Right Now *(as part of His Body)*

What is it that your **ROLE in the Body** might be - **RIGHT NOW ??**

Let me give you some **ideas/suggestions**
& **you see** if the **Holy Spirit** causes any of these to **JUMP OUT**

- 1) **Becoming a Disciple**
Greatest Role - Prerequisite Role - OK as SOLE Role
 - 2) **Becoming a Christian to Your Spouse, Children, Family**
If you bypass this Role & try to move on - you become a Hypocrite
 - 3) **Becoming a Christian to Friends & Co-Workers**
God disguises Christians as co-workers to spread the Gospel
 - 4) **Helping/Supporting other Believers**
*Gal 6:2 (NLT) - **Share each other's burdens, and in this way obey the law of Christ.** - Help out those that are next to you*
 - 5) **Becoming a Discipler**
*Helping others become followers of Jesus -
Generally those who God puts in your life*
 - 6) **Serving in a Specific Role in the church**
*Helping make church happen - physically and/or spiritually
dozens of options - everything you can think of*
 - 7) **Becoming an Evangelist, Pastor, Administrator**
The price is high, and so are the rewards
 - 8) **Becoming a Giver**
*Since the days of Abraham, God's ministry has required Givers
I put it last, because it's usually the last thing Christians figure out,
even tho it's one of our greatest possible blessings*
-
-

EIGHT General Categories

of where you might **FUNCTION** in the Body of Christ

& Notice - **All** the Roles are about **BECOMING !!**

It's funny to me how people say:

*Well I can't really do anything -
So I guess I'll never do anything . . .*

**Just think if your child had that attitude
when they were learning to WALK**

Well, I can't really do that - so I guess I never will

Guys - If you feel DRAWN to something in the Body of Christ
It's Very Possibly because God has
COMPLETELY EQUIPPED you for it

**Unfortunately - sometimes people desire certain positions
out of PRIDE & EGO**

But God has a WAY - of "Working that Out"

So as long as it's NOT your PRIDE drawing you to a certain position

Then it is PROBABLY the Holy Spirit
Who has Gifted You, Is Drawing You, & Will Equip You

1 Corinthians 12:11 (NLT)

11 It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.

The Holy Spirit ALONE
Decides where you should be functioning in the Body of Christ

**Then He puts THAT Desire in your heart
to Match the Gift that He's given you**

THAT is how you are "Drawn" to a particular Role in the Body

The **ONLY** Role that is **NEVER** given by the Holy Spirit is the **ROLE** of **SPECTATOR** !!

If you got **Saved** **YESTERDAY** - then your **ROLE** is to **learn** how to **Follow Jesus** as His Disciple

So **EVERY** Believer has **SOME Role** in the Body

Amen??

So - **WHY** is this **SO IMPORTANT** - - -
Why is "**Abiding in Fellowship**" **So Important** ??

WHY is it **SO IMPORTANT** that we become
a **FUNCTIONING PART** of a Local *Body of Believers* ??

Let's **turn over** to **EPH CH 4**
& we're going to **answer** that **question** - **TWICE**

In **EPH CH 4** - we see **TWO HUGE REASONS**
Why we must **Abide in Fellowship** with other Believers

I'm using **the NLT** a lot today

Because we're doing a **BIG PICTURE** / **SURVEY** style study -
which the **NLT** is **so good** for

So - To **GET** to the **FIRST** Reason - - We've got to **1ST SEE**
WHAT the **JOB** of the Church **LEADERSHIP IS** . . .

Ephesians 4:11–12 (NLT)

11 Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers.

(in general, the leaders)

12 Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

This **often comes** as a **shock** to people -

But the **Job** of the **LEADERS** - is to **Equip YOU** - to do **GOD'S** Work

Look carefully at **Vs 12**

OUR Responsibility is to Equip **YOU** to do God's Work

But our Responsibility **doesn't end** there

Not only are we **Responsible** to Equip you to do **GOD'S WORK**

We're also **Responsible** to Equip you to **BUILD UP** the **CHURCH**

Do you see it ??

Our JOB - is to Equip YOU - to FUNCTION together

For **YOU** to **ACCOMPLISH** God's *Purposes*

For **YOU** to **BUILD UP** the *Church*

& **THAT** - is True **KOINONIA**

THAT - is the **True Meaning**, of **Koinonia** . . .

To Share together, in DOING God's Work

& **THAT** is Truly **HOW** God **DESIGNED IT**

In order to **MAKE DISCIPLES** of all the Nations

& **THAT** - is the **FIRST Reason** - why **EACH** of us

have **GOT to be PART** of the *Body of Christ*

Now - I said the **FIRST REASON** why ***Abiding in Fellowship*** is so important - **often** comes as **SHOCK** to people

Well - the **SECOND REASON**

Sometimes **comes** as even **MORE of a SHOCK**

Why is it so important

to be a functioning part of the BODY of Christ ??

The **2nd Reason** is because;

True Spiritual Growth CANNOT happen

OUTSIDE of being a functioning part of the Body of Christ

Now - **Everybody** who **refuses** to be

a **FUNCTIONING PART** of the Body of Christ

would quickly **Disagree** with me . . .

Which **Further Substantiates** my claim

Guys - **True** Spiritual Growth **CANNOT** occur in a **VACUUM**

Our **Spiritual Maturity** Requires

that we **be CONNECTED** with **other Christians**

Because anybody can be **Christ-Like** in a **MONASTERY**

It's a **little harder** around a bunch of **sinners** in the **CHURCH**

Look at the continuation of our **Eph 4** Passage

Let's **start over** at **Vs.11** - Again from the **NLT**

Ephesians 4:11–15 (NLT)

11 Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers.

12 Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

13 This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

14 Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth.

15 Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.

This is such a GREAT PASSAGE !!

The **REASON** we are ALL called
to **Abide in Fellowship** together

Is because THAT is how we ALL will GROW;

In **UNITY**

In **KNOWLEDGE**

In **MATURITY**

& then we will **NO LONGER** be **Immature** like Children (vs.14)

We **won't** be **tossed** & **blown** about by **every wind** of teaching

We **won't** be **influenced** when **people** try to **trick** us

INSTEAD - We'll **Speak the Truth** in Love

Growing in every way, more & more like Christ

Who is the HEAD of His Body - the church - - **AMEN !!!**

THAT is the **FINAL REASON WHY** - - We **MUST** become
a **Functioning Part** of the **Body of Christ**

Our **TRUE** Spiritual Growth - **VITALLY** Depends on it

Guys - **God designed** the **Body of Christ**
so that it **NEEDS** - **EVERY PART**

& **God WILL** make us "**Fit Together**" - even *perfectly*

& **IF** we will **EACH** do our **PART**
then we will **HELP** the other parts **GROW**

Until the **Whole Body** is **Healthy** & **Growing** & **Full of Love**

Doesn't sound like a **GOOD** Idea ??

Doesn't that sound like a **GOD** Idea ??

Let's read the **LAST VS** of this Passage in **Eph 4** - to close

Ephesians 4:16 (NLT)

16 He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

THAT'S what happens - when we are **ABIDING in Fellowship**

& **if** you need **HELP getting** started -
start talking to **people** about it,

& **don't stop** until you're **IN** the position God **created you** to be in

Let's Pray