

What's all this talk about fellowship and joining a church? **It's about relationship!** Remember the '*tower of Babel*' (Gen. 11:1-9). It was man's attempt to reach God under a corporate venture. You can't reach God as a group. You can only reach Him as an individual and any distance in the relationship is attributed to self-interest, self-indulgence and self-determination which translate into sin.

What's your expectation of the relationship? Is it based on someone else's relationship with God - as it was framed by man, or is it based on a "*one-on-one*" relationship with God, as it was authored and framed by God? Remember, man is capable of distorting the message. As an observer, he is bound by his experiences which have an influence on his interpretation.

A relationship 'in-self' can translate into an insecure relationship in Christ, which can affect your relationship with others. The '*imperfect people obstacle*' emerges which does prevent some from an intimate relationship with God. Imperfect people are constantly studied (*by the unsaved*) for evidence or proof of change and when fault is found, they [*unsaved people*] get their justification to move further away from a relationship with God. They blame an infinite, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent God for the short-comings of a finite frail creature like man.

***Seek God first...***

**Relationship:** Close encounter of three kinds; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (John 14:1-31).

**Friendship:**

An appointment with Jesus gains direct access to God and the ability to communicate with Him. Prayer is our way of communicating with God, and bible study is God's way of communicating with us. The ongoing sanctification process involves awareness of sin, confession,

repentance, conversion and deliverance. One important thing to remember is that "God has always required a blood sacrifice. Only the blood of Jesus (*flowing from the cross*) can meet His requirement, and not by works or animal sacrifices." Faith is required to believe that Jesus paid the price once and for all times.

**Courtship**

(Intimacy, a passion) with the Holy Ghost (personhood of God, an indwelling, a symbiotic relationship) communicates in term of the word of God. (2 Timothy 1:7-14) He convicts, guides, comforts and empowers us. Personal adoration, praise, worship and devotion to God is the results of His unconditional love.

**Discipleship to His Lordship**

Followership and servitude to God. A covenant with God where we receive our commission: 'The Great Commission of Christ' and Compassion and reverence for God. (Matthew 25:1-46)

**Kinship**

(Family ties to the vine and the generational lineage or connection to the source. Rightful inheritance. A sense of belonging. Becoming more like Christ (John 15:1-27)

**Stewardship**

Recognizing where all our blessings come from. Giving unto God that which is His through tithing. Being responsible for what He has given us. (Malachi 3:10) Seek union with likeness...

**Partnership/Comradeship**

**Companionship**

Marriage is the first institute – Genesis 2:21-25 & Ephesians 5:21-33)

**Church** (commitment to the organization, post and/or ministry) Seek fellowship with likeness...

**Fellowship/Friendship**

**Transitional/situational** (the church is within each of us. It goes where we go "24-7".)

**Congregational** (corporate worship, praise and devotion.)

**Organizational** (body of Christ) anatomical relationship; gifts in the living body of Christ (Romans 12:1-21): If the relationship is solely based on fellowship and/or partnership, it is not built on solid ground. However, one of the most difficult things to do is to convert Christians over to Christianity (or Christ-likeness.) The former is about title or position, the latter is reflective of Christ-like values, beliefs, expressions and conduct; a transformation that can only come about through an intimate relationship with God (a close encounter of three kinds: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit). Differences in how we communicate with each other are indicative of how we begin early on to communicate with God. For example, men typically approach others from an independent (*positional*) standpoint, while women typically approach others from an intimate (*relational*) standpoint.

This observation may very well account for the increased membership of women in the body of Christ, and the occasional falling away of men from the church. Getting to know God through the eyes of a friend is not the basis for a solid foundation. If the friend slips, how does that impact on the relationship with God? With God, it's not about independency and position; it's about intimacy and serving on a post.

**Fellowship Dilemma:**

How can you expect anyone to have a trusting, loving-kind fellowship at the interpersonal level (with each other), if they don't have it at the interpersonal level with Christ? Loving Christ is to have love on our minds -- the same mind of Christ. (Romans 12:1-21). Having confidence in our relationship with God is knowing who we are, what we are, why we are, where we are, and how we have come to be there. It's about being all that you can be in the army of the Lord. "It's not about a million men and women marching, but a few godly men and women marching for

the Lord; doing the work of the Lord, unto and for the glory of God.” Yes, some folks do approach church fellowship like it’s a social club, and their commitment to God doesn’t extend beyond that. However, **“...when you fall in love with God, it really will be forever...”**

### **Matthew 6:19-34**

19: Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:  
20: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:  
21: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.  
22: The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.  
23: But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!  
24: No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.  
25: Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?  
26: Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?  
27: Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?  
28: And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:  
29: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.  
30: Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?  
31: Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?  
32: (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.  
33: **But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.**  
34: Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (KJV)



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## **Begin Your Personal Relationship Here!**

### **John 15:13**

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.(KJV)

### **John 3:16**

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (KJV)

### **John 14:6**

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (KJV)

### **Romans 10:9-13**

9: That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

10: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

11: For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

12: For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

13: For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (KJV)

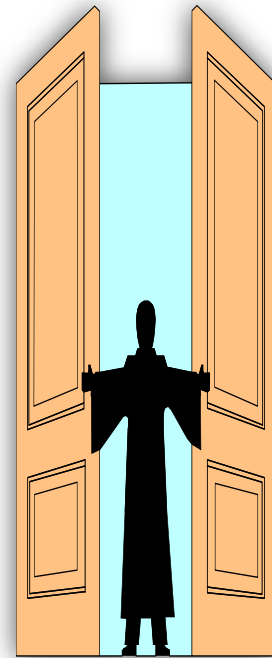
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*“When you fall in love with God, it really will be forever.”*