Fellowship

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INTRODUCTION

- No matter how long we've been Christians, we can never stop studying and learning.
- We're going to talk about both the extending of fellowship and the withdrawing of fellowship.

1 Fellowship Involves a Close Mutual Relationship

1 John 1:6–7

- To be in fellowship with someone involves a close mutual relationship.
- James, Cephas, and John extended the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and Paul.
- If we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.
- One person may desire fellowship with another, but they cannot have it without mutual consent.

2 Should We Welcome Anyone Who Wants to Identify with Us?

- If a congregation could refuse to extend fellowship to Paul, who among us would be exempt from having our character checked out before being welcomed into fellowship in a congregation.
- Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.
- We don't need to invite trouble.
- We're trying to find out to the best of our ability what their standing with God is.

3 Is Withdrawing Fellowship a Scriptural Term?

- Every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which you received from us.
- Note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed.
- You cannot remove something that does not exist.
- While the term withdrawing fellowship is not found in the Bible, isn't that what we're doing when we withdraw ourselves? We're severing the relationship.

4 Deliver Such a One to Satan

1 Corinthians 15:33

- The person concerned should be put out of the church and forced to live in the world, which is ruled by Satan.
- What we have to do is let everyone know that he is under Satan's influence.
- The reason we're to withdraw from people is that a little leaven leavens the whole lump.
- One purpose of that is to avoid giving the appearance of the church approving of that behavior.

5 Withdraw from Those Among You

- The elders can only have oversight of those that are among them.
- If the elders are supposed to shepherd the flock among you, how can we withdraw from someone who is not among us?
- There's no passage that I know of that suggests we withdraw from someone not in our midst.
- There's no record of any congregation in the New Testament contacting another congregation about their internal affairs.

6 When Christians Sin and Refuse to Repent

Luke 3:8

- By apostolic command, we have to withdraw from them, no longer associate with them or even sit down and have a common meal with them.
- That doesn't mean that we shun them, that we ignore them, that we're in any way nasty to them.
- Our goal and the whole goal of withdrawing someone is to get people to come back to the Lord.
- Saying you repent is not repenting. You have to show it by your actions.

THE CHALLENGE

If you're here today and we can help you with your walk with Christ, either to get started or to get back on track, please come to the front as we stand and sing.

MY NOTES