

A Disciple's Handbook

CHAPTER 5

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Expectations and Guidelines for Christian Fellowship & Worship

The form of Christian fellowship and worship which I describe here may be very different from your traditional religious experiences. It is mostly absent in contemporary denomination churches. It is nonetheless entirely scriptural, modeled after the teachings of Paul in his epistles.

Koinonia (fellowship) is the hallmark of apostolic Christian gathering.

Biblical koinonia is best suited to home meetings. Traditional church experience that is common to denominational Christianity lacks any substantial participation among the body of believers aside from hymn singing and responsive readings. The familiar form of denominational Christianity is guided by credentialed leaders or overseers or priests who determine an order of service. An order of service replaces the moving of the Holy Spirit who has a fresh agenda of Christ's concern for the people, place and time.

The Ek-kles-si'-a is the Greek word for church. It translates to "called out assembly." The term generally consists of a group of professing Spirit-empowered believers. When such a body of believers gather they share and participate in active worship and interaction with God. Such sharing is exercised with openness and liberty.

The essential aim of the gathering consists of transacting matters particular to the Kingdom of God. As in the book of Acts, there is sharing food, making prayer, offering praise, bringing forth teachings and communion. There are testimonies about what God is doing with his people. There is shared music as psalms, spiritual songs. (Colossians 3:16) Prophetic revelations are encouraged. (See 1 Corinthians c. 14) Koinonia gatherings are mostly democratic but always with appropriate order. There is generally a

good deal of freedom to express whatever the Holy Spirit is pleased to do in that time. Since there will be individuals with varied amounts of experience and maturity there needs to be oversight by a someone who knows the scriptural authority The Way and discerns spiritual matters. Oversight is based upon experience and Spiritual experience and not credentialing as is common today.

We can know from the truth of Scripture that each believer has a place, a gift and a essential role to play in the Kingdom of God.

1 Peter describes that each believer has a gift that should be employed and welcomed in the "Body" of believers. (1Peter 4;10-11)

For more understanding of "Body of Christ" see also; Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and 1 Corinthians 14. No one is excluded as a necessary member that has an honored placed in the Body of the *called out believers*.

The Lord Jesus is the rule and the authority of any Ekklessia. When and where the body gathers Christ Jesus is always the invited guest and most welcomed participant.

WHY GATHER AS A BODY? SOME GUIDELINES AND EXPECTATIONS

1. To be: United in Spirit and purpose - knowing the reality of Jesus as Savior; and having fellowship with God our Father through Him and giving glory to God. After any person is reborn spiritually, they become part of one heavenly family who share the "gift of God." To continue to be United in Spirit - The same Spirit that is in Christ Jesus.
2. For the body in fellowship to continue to grow (be edified) in knowledge of truth (Holy Bible is the guide)
3. To be bound in mutual love and acceptance. The spirit of Love denotes we are Christians.
4. To seek God's manifested presence corporately. (Seeking and activating His kingdom to be manifested on earth)
5. To recognize and invite the Holy Spirit to empower, lead and guide; to reveal Jesus.
6. To value and build from the unique gifts and abilities that the Holy Spirit of God has given to each believing disciple. (our brothers and sisters)
7. To follow the "Gatekeeper", shepherd, or the head of the home, who is practiced in following the Holy Spirit in an orderly way.
8. For all to discern and guard against spiritual pitfalls, against against disunity; To guard against the expression of any wrong spirit -- anger, prejudice, suspicion, jealousy that will "grieve" the Holy Spirit.

9. To see to it: That all things serve to edify and build each believer kindly with liberty in the Holy Spirit.
Doctrinal purity must employ the whole counsel of God, The Word of God.
(Scripture) Scripture is used for instruction in Godliness, correction and reproof thus it is the proper authority when contending for correct doctrine.

The Scriptural model of intimate corporate fellowship (Koinonia) is found in 1 Corinthians, Chapters 12, 14; 1 Peter 4:10-11

MODELING JESUS' SPIRITUAL PATH

The Spiritual Life-Learning Christ
"Be Ye Imitators of Christ as dear Children."

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