

# Fellowship Halls, Kitchens (Part 3)

## INTRODUCTION:

1. In two previous lessons, we've talked about how the church should not be burdened with "fellowship halls" and kitchens, that the work of planning and providing for social activities is an individual responsibility.
2. Last week, we looked at some passages some use to justify eating "fellowship meals" in these "fellowship halls."
3. One argument we haven't considered centers on the word "fellowship." Since the church is supposed to have fellowship, and since the eating of meals together constitutes fellowship, then the Lord must approve of them (that's the argument made by some).

## BODY:

- I. So let's begin by looking at the occurrences of this word fellowship in the N. T.
  - A. It is found 15 times in 14 verses (using the New King James Version). Note: The Greek word is listed in parentheses.
    1. (Acts 2:42) "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and **fellowship** (*koinonia*), in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."
    2. (1 Cor 1:9) "God is faithful, by whom you were called into the **fellowship** (*koinonia*) of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."
    3. (1 Cor 10:20) "Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have **fellowship** (*koinonos*) with demons."
    4. (2 Cor 6:14) "Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers...what **fellowship** (*metoche*) has righteousness with lawlessness...what communion has light with darkness?"
    5. (2 Cor 8:4) "implored us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the **fellowship** (*koinonia*) of the ministering to the saints."
    6. (Gal 2:9) "and when James, Cephas, and John...perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of **fellowship** (*koinonia*), that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised."
    7. (Eph 3:9) "and to make all see what is the **fellowship** (*koinonia*) of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God"
    8. (Eph 5:11) "And have no **fellowship** (*sugkoinoneo*) with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them."
    9. (Phil 1:5) "for your **fellowship** (*koinonia*) in the gospel from the first day until now"
    10. (Phil 2:1) "Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any **fellowship** (*koinonia*) of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy..."
    11. (Phil 3:10) "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the **fellowship** (*koinonia*) of His sufferings, being conformed to His death..."
    12. (1 John 1:3) "that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have **fellowship** (*koinonia*) with us; and truly our fellowship (*koinonia*) is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ."

13. (1 John 1:6-7) “If we say that we have **fellowship** (*koinonia*) with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. {7} But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have **fellowship** (*koinonia*) with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”

B. Notice that in all but three of the verses, the word fellowship is translated from the Greek word *koinonia* (koy-nohn-ee'-ah). Let's look quickly at how this same word is translated in other places:

1. Sharing or share (2 Corinthians 9:13; Philemon 1:6; Hebrews 13:16).
2. Communion (1 Corinthians 10:16; 2 Corinthians 6:14; 13:14).
3. Contribution (Romans 15:26).

C. Now, let's look at the exceptions—where some other word is translated fellowship.

1. 1 Corinthians 10:20, where a very similar word is used—*koinonos* (koy-no-nos). Here is how that word is translated in other places:
  - a. Partaker or partakers (Matthew 23:30; 1 Corinthians 10:18; 2 Corinthians 1:7; 1 Peter 5:1; 2 Peter 1:4).
  - b. Partner or partners (Luke 5:10; 2 Corinthians 8:23; Philemon 1:17).
  - c. Companions (Hebrews 10:33).
2. 2 Corinthians 6:14, where the word *metoche* (*met-okh-ay*) is used. This word is not used anywhere else in the N. T., but the verb form is used in Hebrews 2:14, where it translated “shared.”
3. Ephesians 5:11, where the word *sugkoinoneo* (soong-koy-no-neh'-o) is used. This word is found in 2 other places: Philippians 4:14 (shared) and Revelation 18:4 (share).

II. Let's answer a few questions based on this word study.

A. What do these passages tell us about the meaning of fellowship?

1. Agreement, partnership, partaking together, sharing together, acting together.

B. Where does the Greek word *koinonia* or other related words refer to purely social activities?

1. I can't find the passage myself.
2. But let's suppose we did find a passage where fellowship was used in connection with social activities, such as eating a meal? Would that prove anything? One would still have to prove that it's an activity assigned to the church. Whatever one may find, it cannot contradict the plain words of 1 Corinthians 11: “Do you not have houses to eat and drink in?” (v. 22); “But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home” (v. 34).

III. Now, to something we talked about in a previous lesson.

A. In reality, the Prattmont church of Christ does have a fellowship hall.

1. We're sitting in it right now (this auditorium). We're having fellowship with one another and with God, and the kind of things we're having fellowship in today are certainly more in keeping with how the word is used in the New Testament.

B. We also have a “fellowship meal.”

1. It's certainly not a stretch to refer to the Lord's Supper in this manner.
2. Read 1 Corinthians 10:16-17 (communion is from that same Greek word, *koinonia*).