

Sam Baker - Christian Fellowship

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Very happy to be with you, friends. We bring you love and greetings from South Bend, where we were last night, and Muncie and Indianapolis and a lot of places all the way back to Rutherford. My friends there send their Christian love and greetings up through New England State, through New York State. I started this trip at Saginaw, Michigan on the 15th of February, so I visited a lot of places and they all send their love.

The topic Christian Fellowship we think it's important for us because as Christians we do have fellowship together, and we're going to read a few verses from the first Epistle of John. That is, first John, first chapter. That which was from the beginning which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life. For the life was manifest, and we have seen it, and bear witness and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifest unto us that which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us.

And the speaker here, we suggest, is John, and he's talking about fellowship that he has had with the other brethren of his day, and he says also that we may fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ, and this is recorded here for us so that we too can have fellowship with the Father and with the Son and with John and the other apostles whom John was talking about in his day. But we suggest that there is something else in the Scriptures if we go far enough back that we will find a fellowship between the Father and the Son long before there was any human beings upon the earth, and before the earth was created.

We go back to a scripture that you're well familiar with, I think in Proverbs, the eighth chapter. We suggest that here is a time when the Father and the Son were together, and they had a wonderful fellowship in the far, remote past. This fellowship is spoken of in the eighth chapter, 22 30th verses of Proverbs. The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old, I was set up from everlasting from the beginning or ever the earth was when there was no depth, I was brought forth when there was no fountains abounding with water, before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth while as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world, when he prepared the heavens, I was there. When he set a compass upon the face of the depth.

When he established the clouds above, when he strengthened the fountains of the deep, when he gave to the sea his decree that the waters should not. When he appointed the foundations of the earth, then I was by him as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. A different translation of this 30th verse says, I was by him as a master workman, and we know that Logos, who afterwards become Jesus, was a master workman for the Father in that all things were created by him, and without him was not anything made that was made, and so there was a fellowship here before the earth was created.

That's what it says, and if it was before the earth was created, it was before man was created, and there is something else suggested here that we'd like to call your attention to. That is, it's a thought that has been running through my mind that the Father and the Son had a wonderful conference together before the creation of man. I think they had a fellowship at all times together in all matters of creation.

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But there would seem to be perhaps a special occasion for the Father and the Son to have a discussion about the creation of man. For this reason, the Scriptures show us that God knows the end from the beginning. The Bible shows us that God.

Some things God cannot do, such as the Bible says, God cannot lie. He cannot deny himself. The foundation of God's throne is justice, and if God should sentence the human race to death, that will be the end of a whole matter so far as man is concerned, unless there is provided a Redeemer, and because of the nature of God, he is just.

The foundation of his throne is just. God could not revoke or change the sentence of death upon the human race, and furthermore, by the way Jehovah is constituted injustice. God could not draft His Son or anyone else to be the Redeemer. That may seem rather peculiar, but nevertheless it's true.

He would be violating his own principle of justice toward the One whom he would demand you be the Redeemer for this one. So how is Jehovah going to create man under those circumstances? And I suggest this, that perhaps the Heavenly Father, after the creation of angels and cherubim and seraphim and archangels and principalities and powers and all the things that are created in the heavens, the Father had a little conference with His Son and said, I have in mind a different creation, lower than angels. At that time, angels was the lowest creation, but we could make a lower creation than angels, and that is a human race upon the earth here. But There is one obstacle, one objection.

Lucifer would already have been before God, that is in his mind, in his heart. But he had not outwardly rebelled. There was nothing in an outward way to show that he had done anything to cause any trouble or disturbance in God's universe, except just in his heart. You know what the record says? He said in his heart, I'll be like the Most High.

I'll ascend above the other stars of God. I'll sit in the sides of the north. That's what he said in his heart. Apparently no outward demonstration of this. But the Bible tells us that God can lead the heart.

In Hebrews it tells us that the Spirit of God is sharp and quicker than a two edged sword piercing between the joints and the marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and the intents of the heart. So God would know the very moment that Lucifer had a wrong rebellious thought in his heart, even though there was no outward demonstration, and so not knowing the end from the beginning would know this, that the moment we create mankind upon the earth, Lucifer will rebel, and that will be his first open act of rebellion in God's universe, and he will cause the human race through the deception in Eden, he caused them to fall.

And God will necessarily sentence man to death, and that will be the end of the whole human creations unless there is a Redeemer, and the Heavenly Father might explain just that much to the Son, and it's up to somebody now to be the Redeemer, and the Heavenly Father might even explain that if there is a Redeemer to redeem Adam, the vast majority of all of Adam's race through an individual trial in a thousand years could be rescued.

But where's the Redeemer? No Redeemer, and this I suggest is where the Son stepped in the breach and supplied the necessary thing. The Son said, all right, I will be the Redeemer. He voluntarily from being below us, said, I will redeem the human race.

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Then that is why in the Scriptures it says he was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world from a way back before man was created. Actually the ransom was not an emergency measure quickly thought up after man transgressed. It was provided for before man was created. You know, no case in the Bible. Is there any statement, let us make man.

I mean, let us make angels, let us make cherubim, seraphim or anything else. Why do you suppose it says let us make man? There is a joint cooperation in the creation of man. As though there were two at least interested in this new Project, Let us make man. Bella guess could say, why not now?

Let us make man. You had that in your mind. There was an objection there in the fact that man will need a redeemer. I supply, be the redeemer. Let us go ahead, make man.

And so perhaps the Father and the Son would just jointly say, let us make man. Because their objections, the fingers in the way, has really been solved the problem, and this too would afford the Heavenly Father a most wonderful opportunity to exalt his Son to a higher level of existence, the divine plane, where the Father and the Son would have more complete fellowship. Because being on the same plane of existence now, you know, different ones on different planes of existence wouldn't have as close fellowship as if they were on the same plane of existence, and so the Father could exalt his Son.

And not only that, it would afford an opportunity for some of the human race also to be exalted, as was the Son, to the divine nature. Thus the fellowship that John talks about between the Father and the Son and John and the other apostles, it's the same kind of fellowship, the fellowship in connection with something that's very important in connection with the rescue and the restoration of the human race. You know, fellowship carries with it the thought of companionship, and also it carries with it about a partnership in some project that is understood. When we think about partnership, fellowship or companionship, there are many different groups of human beings that can have fellowship together, but not everybody can have fellowship with everybody else.

There must be what we would call understanding. An understanding, shall we say, a common meeting ground up front in order to have fellowship. People with identical interests can have fellowship together. Make an illustration. Professional, well, players would meet together and they'd talk a language that I wouldn't understand.

They would understand one another. We're all interested in the same project. In this sport of playing ball, I wouldn't understand also medical doctors, if they should be together in a conference. They would talk about subjects that the average man wouldn't be interested in, perhaps wouldn't understand what they were talking about, what they could have what we would call fellowship together. Likewise, all the different professions, whatever they may profession they may belong to, they can have fellowship together.

We sometimes say a group get together, they talk shop. Well, you know what that is. If you even come home from work or even at work, a bunch of fellows get together, they talk about something that is common interest to all of them. That's fellowship of a nature, of a kind. Each group understanding what is common to their own interests.

And each has his or her own personal interest in the subject that brings them together. Some men might have fellowship in more than one group of people. As, for instance, a medical doctor might be also a member of some fraternal organization like the Masons or Hubbard Fellows or something like that, and then again he might belong to some church group. Thus he would have fellowship not

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only with the doctors.

In one group will another group such as the fraternal organization and then his church group. Three different groups of people. But their interests would be different in the world. There is what is known as honorary degrees conferred by colleges. A college may honor somebody by conferring upon him some particular degree that is issued by that college.

And this is usually done for someone who has done some very worthwhile service to a community or to some cause. For instance, a man might donate a large sum of money to a hospital or some charitable institution, and for this perhaps he would be honored by the local college, making him an honorary member of some of their professions that they graduate students from. For instance, an illustration. During the last war, I was in northern Ontario in the gold mining area for 15 years.

And there were two boys up there, two young men. They grew up in the backwoods of Ontario. They had very little education, hardly more than write their name and read a little, and these boys were. They were prospectors, always prospecting for gold.

And the government in Canada didn't look upon gold prospecting as a very worthwhile war industry or war effort, and so they didn't give them many coupons to buy bacon and meat, sugar, jam, tea, coffee, Things that were scarce during the war. You needed coupons. We had them in Canada. You had something here the same way, I think.

And the boy didn't have enough to go in the woods to carry on a project and a long period of prospecting in the woods. So they came to me. I was in the managing a chain grocery store up there, and they wanted to know if I couldn't give them some extra food. Of course they paid for it, but without coupons.

And I had a large bank of coupons on hand, and I gave them considerable of these scarce foods. Without the coupons, they went in the woods. They had a little success. They didn't find some gold and they made a little money.

But one of the boys was very. He was very, well, I would almost say over anxious to make money. He went to New York and he succeeded in getting a backing of a group of financiers in New York City. They backed him to the extent of a million dollars to go prospecting for base metals in the province of New Brunswick. Base metals as iron, copper, lead, zinc, nickel or anything like that.

And this is what the government was interested in, and after a period in New Brunswick, he was very successful. He found a very large body of rich ore. I believe it was copper, nickel, things like that in it, and this opened up big mining interests in the province, in New Brunswick.

And for this, the government of New Brunswick, they made him the guest at a dinner given by the government in Fredericton, and then all the land around when he found he staked this block of claims for the company, enough to move and satisfy them for the backing they had given them. He found that the body of ore extended on all sides for miles round, and so all this outside land he staked in his own personal name for MJ Barlum. That's his personal property.

And in about two and a half years, this poor boy that grew up in the backwoods of Canada, he was worth 30 million. Now he just one in, we say in 10,000 that have really strike it rich that way, and because of great gifts that he made to the university in Fredericton, this university made this man, MJ Berlin, they made him an honorary doctor of laws. Now, the man wouldn't know what to do if he

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met with a group of students or a group of graduates from that college who had won the degree through going through the course of study and passing the examinations. If he should meet with them, he'd be like a fish out of water.

Although he had the degree, he couldn't talk with them. He wouldn't know what it was all about, and he laughed about it himself, and he didn't know what it was all about. But that was just an honor they gave to him.

He could go the woods, meet with a group of prospectors, and he could have wonderful fellowship with those because they understood things in common. He had nothing in common with educated men from that college, although he held a degree. Now, we of the Christian faith have been called to the highest fellowship of any beings in God's universe.

It is so high and lofty that none may aspire to this fellowship unless they have been called by Jehovah. God himself called of God was errand, as the Scriptures say, and there are no honorary degrees conferred. Everyone is initiated in the same way. They must have the same course of study, pass the same examination in the school of Christ, and they will graduate in due time.

A lot of our brethren, you know, are graduating recently in the last few months. Oh, you'll hear Ever so many who have passed to their reward, and I think of them as graduating from the school of Christ, getting their diploma on the other side of the veil. Now even Christ honored not himself into this fellowship. God invited him.

He invited him. The Apostle Paul speaks of some called in fellowship with God, and this is what we read in first John. The call of God was within, and truly, as John says, our fellowship is with the Father and with his son.

In Acts 2:42, it is here recorded that through Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost, there was added 3,000 souls to this fellowship. 3,000 invited into this fellowship on the day of Pentecost, and then it says they continued steadfast in the apostles doctrine and in fellowship. Oh, yes, doctrine is very necessary to fellowship. The doctrine is the teaching.

We must understand what the other one understands. There must be a common meeting ground of thought in order to have fellowship. You can have what we might call a social good time with people that don't understand the truth, but you can't have fellowship with them. That man who got the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws, he could meet with some of those college professors perhaps, and he could talk about the weather and he might talk about politics, and he'd talk about a few other things, and he could have a social good time with them. But if they started to talk about the things they were educated in, he wouldn't know what they were talking about.

And so it is with Christians. You cannot have true, proper fellowship with somebody that doesn't understand things the same way you do. We must have a common understanding of the truth. Right? Doctrine is necessary.

It is recorded that the scribes and Pharisees there were astonished at Jesus doctrine, and Jesus said, my doctrine is not mine, it is my Father's doctrine. Why would the scribes and Pharisees be astonished at Jesus doctrine? Because the doctrine that Jesus promulgated or spoke of was so completely different to the scribes and Pharisees. The scribes and Pharisees doctrine was, if we do not exalt ourselves, we never get any exaltation.

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If we do not look out for ourselves, nobody else will look after us, everybody for himself. Selfishness. But you know that the doctrine of Jehovah and the doctrine of Jesus and the doctrine of those that are called to this fellowship is so entirely different because it goes entirely contrary to the ways of the world, and it's based on a very wonderful truth, a very basic truth. It's based on these words, he that examines himself shall be abased.

And he that humbleth himself shall be exalted. The scribes and Pharisees knew nothing about that kind of doctrine that was so completely foreign to their way of thinking, and yet that's the doctrine of Jesus, and the doctrine of the heavenly Father is that if we humble ourselves, we shall be exalted in due time. Jesus said, I came not to do mine own will.

The scribes and Pharisees were only interested in having their own way and doing their own will, and so Paul in Philippians 1:5 speaks about our fellowship in the gospel. Now, the gospel is the good tidings of great joy which shall be unto all people. In other words, it is knowing the divine plan of the ages, and who else in the world today knows the divine plan of the ages and can have fellowship together like the Lord's people?

They do not know it, and nominal Christendom, you can have fellowship with them because they don't understand the truth. There must be an understanding not only knowing about this plan, but the privilege of making it known to others is an important thing. The gospel of this preach to Abraham. If we have fellowship with the Father and with the Son, it will lead to cooperation in the work of the gospel.

Now Philippians 2 and 1, Paul speaks about the fellowship of the Spirit, fellowship of the Spiritism, meeting ground of our thoughts. God can read our thoughts without our expressing them, and when we talk to one another about our hopes and joys and the things that are on our mind concerning the Divine plan and our part in that plan, then we are having fellowship of the Spirit. It's in the mind and our fellowship will be the more complete as we are emptied of self and filled with kingdom interests. We have often been told or reminded that the mind is the battleground of the new creation.

That is our place where we have our battles in the mind. But our mind should not be a battleground to battle one another. We have enough to do to battle our own fleshly weaknesses and the adversary and the world without using our mind as a battleground to battle others of like precious faith. Our mind is the hallowed meeting place of the Spirit and a place for fellowship with the Father and with His Son and with one another, and the mind also should be and is, I think, a beautiful temple of worship, a place to worship God.

You know you have a meeting place and you keep it clean, you dust it, you have it tidy and neat. Suppose we think about our mind as our temple or meeting place to meet God, to have fellowship with the Lord and His Son and with one another. Would we want our temple of worship, our mind to be a dingy, dirty place? Why say no? Well then it should become so little every day, just a little daily, keeping our minds fleeing.

And sometimes we suggest that a good way to do that is to perhaps the manner text in the morning and perhaps the resolve and a few things like that, or a few texts. Read little in scriptures. It keeps the mind in a sanitary condition so God can meet with us there as a temple of worship.

Furthermore, there may be some of the lost people that might only cleanse their temple or mind. Oh, maybe once a week.

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That's like a little house cleaning once a week, say a little every day. There may be some cleansed out for a whole month at a time, and then the rubbish that may not go to meeting or do anything about it. Perhaps a whole year. We've known of some that just maybe comes meeting once a year.

Well, that's like house cleaning your house once a year, not so good, and then there may be some that come back for years and years on end, and then these would be those who are spoken of in the Scriptures as perhaps a great multitude. They come out of great situation and wash their wounds or offends their mind too much tribulation, and these have lost a great deal of wonderful fellowship down through the years because they didn't worship the Lord in their mind and keep their mind as a hallowed meeting place or a temple of worship during all the years that they knew the truth.

It's a good thing to have our mind constantly cleansed so God can meet with us in our mind. In Philippians 3:10, Paul speaks about another fellowship. It's the same group, but he speaks here about a fellowship of suffering. Suffering. If we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him, being made conformable unto his death.

That is a sacrificial death, not the Adamic death. The world cannot see the difference. But body members should see, know and understand because they are co partners in the suffering. Fellowship of suffering in sacrifice. This suffering may be very direct and very personal with each one of us.

If we suffer for righteousness, happy are you, says Paul. But he also tells us. Paul tells us a different way we might suffer. He says in Hebrews 10:33, why you become companions of them that were so used. In other words, if brother may suffer, and you might be his companion in suffering, whereas he has the real suffering, you are just looked upon as a companion of thus one that is suffering.

An illustration of on the night that Jesus was undergoing his great trial before his crucifixion. You remember the girl, one maiden there said, pointing to Peter, she said, this fellow answer was with him, and you know, Peter denied that. He said, I wasn't over man at all. Now Peter lost a wonderful opportunity to be a companion, a companion of Jesus at a time when Jesus was suffering.

Often we can suffer that role as a companion of the one that is suffering. Of course, Peter later on, you know, Peter did finish his course with great suffering, and we believe he was faithful and adept. He saw the opportunity later on to be loyal and faithful to the Master, and you remember after him denying the Lord three times, why he was reinstated by the Lord.

And our Lord asked him if he loved him, and Peter says, ye thou knowest I love thee, and so on. But that isn't the opportunity he missed on that occasion, and so Paul further says, ye had compassion of me in my bonds. Paul also was in trouble.

And Paul's brother. They were companions with Paul in the suffering on some occasions, not on every occasion, but on some occasions, and he said in Romans 8:18. For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.

This oneness of suffering, or fellowship of suffering is pictured by Paul in Hebrews 13:13 as going without the camp, bearing his reproach. What does Paul mean?

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Only fully initiated Christians would understand Paul's language, Paul's reference. In Hebrews 13:13. He says, Let us go to him without the camp, bearing his reproach and filling up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ for his body's sake, which is the Church. Now. No honorary Christian, no merely nominal Christian, will understand this language of pearl.

There are very few Christians in the churches. I mean nominal Christians who understand what we call tabernacle shadows. They do not understand it. Paul here is making reference to the sacrifice on the day of atonement, when the bullock was slain and part of its body burned on the brazen altar. Part of it was taken outside the camp and burned and blood taken into the Most Holy.

And then the goat was likewise dealt with when it was slain. Part of it burned on the brazen altar, part of it taken outside the camp and burned, and then the blood taken in from the trolley. Now Paul says, let us go to him. Let the goat go to the boat outside the camp and suffer in the same way that Jesus suffered, and that is true.

That's exactly the proposition. Only the lodge people understand the reference here to the fellowship of suffering. If we suffer with him we shall reign with him. If the goat goes through the same experiences as the bullock, it will have the same reward. Jesus was the bullock, the goat, we are the goat in this matter of sacrifice.

And that's what Paul is referenced to here. These can enter into a fellowship of suffering, the sufferings of the Christ head and body. In 2 Corinthians 1:5 7 Paul for as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounded by Christ, and whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer the same way that Jesus suffered, and he says, our hope of you is steadfast, knowing that as ye are partaker of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation or comfort.

In other words, if we suffer with him, we get the same reward. Fellowship of suffering that's what Paul has in mind in Hebrews 2:10 we're told that the captain of our salvation was made perfect through suffering. If the head Jesus needed the suffering, then truly the wily members need the suffering too. Same kind of suffering, and it is a fellowship of suffering in 1 Peter 4:12, 13 Peter Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange, strange thing happen to you when we have some severe trials.

These trials are for our edification and development. A different translation here, I am told, reads this Think it not belonging to another, the severe trial that is to try you. That is, sometimes we might have a a kind of experience of suffering trial. We might think in our own mind, brother so and so needs that, or the sister needs that kind of suffering, but it doesn't belong to me. Well, now that's just where we make the mistake.

Think it not belonging to this one or that one. If you have a trial of some kind that's yours, God gave you that trial for your own edification and development. If they had needed the experiences, Jesus we need the experience that God brings upon us, and in every case the experience will be just suited to us, and Paul says, if it seems to be greater than we can bear, God will give us grace to bear it, or he will change situation and change the trial so that we can bear it.

He'll give us grace sufficient for every time of need, and as Paul says in Romans 8:28, he will call all things to work together for good. Even though it may be a great trial, it will work together for good to those that are called of God, called according to his purpose, and then he says, but rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his

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glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy, and now Paul speaks of another fellowship, same group, but fellowship of ministering to saints.

In Second Corinthians 8:4, the fellowship of ministering to saints. Now, on this particular occasion that Paul was talking about, it is in connection with a gift from the brethren of Macedonia to brethren in Jerusalem. The Macedonian brethren, I think, were a little better financially fixed than the brethren in Jerusalem. They were poorer and they were making a gift, and Paul was to bear this gift from Macedonia to Jerusalem for the brethren.

And he calls that a fellowship of ministering to Saints. Now, in 1 Corinthians, the 16th chapter and 15th verse, we have a little statement there that I was surprised to find in the Bible. I find a word there that not usually you'll find it. It speaks about being addicted. You know, when we talk about somebody that's an addict, we always think of them as an addict of dope or of drink or something like that.

But you know, it speaks about addicts in the Bible here. But it says they were addicted to ministering to saints. Now, that's a good way to be addicted. Of course, an addict is simply somebody that has a real strong habit that's hard to break. Hard to break the habit.

Like, I suppose, the Alcoholics Anonymous. They try to overcome this thing. Well, they're an addict. Something that they can't get rid of. Now this, Paul says some were addicted to ministering to saints.

Wasn't that a good thing? A strong habit, hard to break, doing good for the saints. That's what he has in mind, the fellowship of ministering to saints. Ministering, of course. Things temporal as well as spiritual.

Remember the apostle James talks about this. He says if we see a brother or sister in need, he says, and you say to them, be ye clothed, be you fed, but notwithstanding, you don't do anything to help them be better clothed. You merely say, God bless you, brother. I hope the Lord takes care of you, but you don't do anything about it. He says, how dwelleth the love of God in that one?

And he says, how does that help the one that's in need? It doesn't help at all to just say, I hope you get fed. I hope you get clothed. It needs a little practical application. That's what Paul has in mind.

And you know, Jesus always shows us the right way and you remember on one occasion, Jesus performed the most humble, menial kind of service for his brethren that could be possible for anybody to do if he washed their feet. He got a towel basin, some water and washed his disciples feet. Now some think that is a kind of a ceremony. Some Christians, they have a ceremony of washing feet. But that wasn't it.

Jesus was showing his disciples little ways that they should be thoughtful of their brethren. It was a custom in those days for the host to provide the guests with a towel and some water to wash their feet. Because they traveled in dusty roads and they only wore sandals on their feet, and they would be get some dust and probably a little gravel or sand and to make your guests comfortable. That was the custom to get a basin and provide some water so they could want.

Now the disciples and Jesus were together. What do you suppose the disciples were thinking about that they didn't see the necessity of perhaps just doing that little service for the Master. You know what I think it could just be possible that they were discussing who would be greatest in the

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kingdom. You remember on one occasion they did say, master, we have left all to follow you. What are we going to get in the kingdom?

That's what they asked him, and you remember the mother of two of them, she said, I would like that you live my two sons, one sit on your right hand and one on your left hand in the kingdom. So perhaps there was a little selfishness among those disciples, and Jesus taught them a very needed lesson when he proceeded to wash their feet. Jesus also ministered to others than his own disciples.

Do you remember the occasion when there were 5,000 and again 4,000 that he fed with the loaves and fishes? These were not his disciples. They were the public that come together to hear the wonderful words of life that he had to speak, and Jesus ministered to their natural needs in that way. Of course he did also minister spiritual things.

He taught them the truth and preached about the kingdom of heaven as well as do these other things of a more practical nature. As well as healing their sicknesses and opening blind eyes and even raising the dead. All of this comes under the headship of fellowship of ministering to saints. We have the same privilege as the Master. We have the Lord saints with us today.

We can see little ways that we can minister, and that's a fellowship, an understanding of service one to another, as we have the opportunity. The Lord's people all have these opportunities. Paul also labored in the ministry as well as Jesus in any way to help his brethren, and writing to The Corinthian brethren, He said in 2 Corinthians 12, 15, I will very gladly be spent for you.

In other words, Paul was ready to die for his brethren, suffer even unto death for them. But you know what he said? The more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved. So in Paul's day, there was some misunderstanding among the brethren. Perhaps some of them accused Paul of certain amount of self seeking and selfishness, although he were willing to die for them.

And then, Oliver, a very interesting scripture here. This to me is important to the older brethren who find it more difficult to serve now than they did when they were younger. This is where Paul says in Hebrews 6:10, for God is not unrighteous to forget your works and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that you have ministered and do minister to the saints. What does he mean? Brother Russell on one occasion said.

It's in the reprints. I believe he said, we who are older or the brethren who become older. If when we were young people, young in the truth, perhaps young in years, if we devoted our time to distributing free literature or in the carpenter work, selling the books, or in any way advancing the cause of truth when we were young, he says, when we get old and have not the physical strength to go from door to door or do the work we did when we were young, he says, do not be discouraged. God remembers your service. Don't be discouraged.

And that's what Paul says here. That's what he says. God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love which you have showed toward his name, in that you have ministered when you were young, and you do minister a little now when you get older. Don't be discouraged. God remembers it.

In other words, I think God has made many credit entries in his books for these, and the end of our life, it will add up. All these credit entries will add up to an abundant entrance into the kingdom. So we need not worry about God forgetting what we have done. Do you remember how God

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remembers?

There is an instance in the Bible, there's about two of them that we're going to mention. When Cornelius was invited into this fellowship, he was the first Gentile convert, first Gentile to be invited to this fellowship, and God said to Cornelius, your prayers and alms have come up before me as a memorial. That is, the memorial is. I remember you, Cornelius, even before the door was open to Gentiles, you were making prayers and giving alms.

And I remember all this, and now that the time has come for the Jewish Israelitish clan to be ended. I'm going to invite you, Cornelius, into this fellowship, and you remember another man in the Old Testament times. You remember what Elijah said to the Lord?

He said, elijah says, they've killed all your prophets and I'm the only one that's left. They seek my life, and you know, the Lord said to Cornelius, or rather to Elijah, the Lord said, I know where I can find 7,000 in Israel that have not bowed the knee to Baal. I think God keeps a wonderful record over there. Maybe he has a lot of angels that are bookkeepers, looking after the human race, keeping track of everyone.

7,000 in Israel, and Elijah thought he was the only one that left him. They worship God. So we won't be discouraged then if we can't do as much now as we did when we were younger, because God is not unrighteous to forget this now, this ministering as Paul ministered and all the apostles ministered and Jesus ministered, we too have the same privilege today, and Paul says, be ye followers of me, even as I follow Christ.

And Jesus says, be followers of me. As dear children, we the FEET members will follow where the head is directed. Our fellowship in the ministry also includes the privilege of bearing witness to the nations about the kingdom. This today is a wonderful privilege. Paul says in one place in Philippians, he says, we shall be bright and shining lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.

A different translation says, holding forth a message of life. A message of life in contrast to a message of death. Everywhere in the world today, there is a message of death going over the world. What I mean by that is that the great scientists and all the men who understand the present world situation, they tell the we have the instrumentalities, we have the know how we can destroy the human race completely off this earth, and it's no idle threat.

The world is very fearful. We are living at the very time when Jesus said men's hearts were would fail them for fear of the things coming upon the earth, and Jesus said, unless these days be shortened, no flesh would be saved. Never in the history of the world has there been such a time in which they had the ways of destroying the human race as they have today, and that is no idol set.

It goes all over the world. It's in the newspapers. There's a man named Bertram Russell, he's a kind of a philosopher in England that does a great deal of writing. Recently he said that the human race will disappear from the earth in less than 40 years. Now he's right.

From their standpoint, unless God does something, and Bertram Russell or none of the rest of them know what God can do. Or rather, they probably don't think he will do anything. Now, taking Paul's words, we the Christians, we should be bright and shining lights in the world, he says, holding forth a message of life. In other words, we should comfort the world by telling them that the things that their scientists tell them will not come to pass.

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And Jesus said that too, because he said, but because of the elect, those days shall be shortened. What does he mean? I think this. It could be. We know that God keeps account of everything in the world.

It's his project, the whole human family, and he knows. His foreknowledge is that mankind would reach the very point where we are today, when the human race would destroy itself. But running alongside of the world of mankind and the national progress, God has his project working, and his project is that he is developing the future members of the government of the world, running right alongside of the rulers, kings and emperors and dictators, and at a focal point, at a point just where we are today, a synchronizing point when the world is about ready to destroy itself.

The saints will be glorified because of the elect, because God will glorify them. They take over the world's affairs and those days will be shortened so that the flesh will not all be destroyed. We have come to that point just about now. The last of the saints will go beyond the veil, and a good time of trouble will not go to such a degree or to such a length that no flesh shall be saved.

That is the practice. What should we do while the Lord leaves us here? Tell the whole world that the kingdom you have prayed for for thousands of years is right at the door, and God will not permit the satanic developments of atomic bombs and weapons to destroy the human race. We're telling them that.

They're hearing it too, on the air, and it's a good thing. That's what we ought to do. Then we have. In Philippians 1:5, Paul speaks about a fellowship of the gospel are good tidings of great joy.

What should we do with this knowledge? Well, Colonel again seems to suggest the answer, and he seems to have the answer to practically all our problems. Here in Galatians 2 and 9, Paul says, when James, Cephas and John, who seem to be pillars, this is James, Cephas and John. I always think of Peter, James and John, and they were the pillars in the church. He says when they perceived the Grace that was given unto me.

Well, who's me? Me is Paul. Paul talking, and Paul was one time Saul of Tarsus and Peter, James and John would know that Saul of Tarsus was a great waster of the church, going about breathing out threatenings against the Lord's saints, and as he was on that road to Damascus, he was going there to do some more persecuting when God turned him right about his face and said, thou art, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.

God turned Saul of Tarsus around and made him proud. Now what does Paul say? He when Peter, James and John saw the grace that was given unto me, when they saw how God turned me around from being a persecutor of the church, what did they do? He says, they gave to me in Barnabas the right hand of fellowship. Was that just a handshake?

And say, God bless you, brother Paul. Will you accept you amongst us as a brother? No more than that. What did he say? Listen, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship that we should go to the Gentiles.

In other words, they said, God bless you, Paul, go preach to the Gentiles, and that's exactly what Paul had to do. Paul was the prospect of Gentiles, and so we realized that Peter, James and John, these pillars in the church, they had often been with the Master, with Jesus, and they learned of him, and they gave this right hand of fellowship in the Gospel to Saul of Tarsus, who now is Paul, and expected him and thought of him as going and preaching to the Gentiles.

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And that's just what he did. Now, this fellowship of the ministry of the Gospel, with its fellowship of suffering, the soon, the other, very soon it will give place to the fullest fellowship of the Spirit in glory. If we cast not away our confidence, which has great recompense of reward very soon. What is the reward? The reward for these who have the fellowship of the Gospel, the fellowship of suffering, the fellowship of the Spirit, the fellowship of ministering to saints, to these, the award is something like a triple crown.

They tell us that the Pope wears a triple crown. It's kind of a three tier affair, I suppose. It designates him as the Lord of Heaven and Lord of earth and Lord of perhaps some lower regions. Anyway, there's a triple crown mentioned in the Bible in 1 Peter 5, 4 2nd Corinthians 3:18, and in Psalm 73:24, it's spoken of as a crown of glory. You know, a crown represents the top attainment when they have A crowning of a beauty queen.

They hunt for the greatest beauty in the community or in the country. It's a top attainment. Then it's also spoken of as a crown of righteousness. Paul talks about this in 2 Timothy 4:8. He says, There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.

And it's also spoken of as a crown of life or of immortality in James 1:12 and Revelation 2:10. Now here we have a crown of immortality, crown of righteousness and a crown of glory, and this crown is for these who have enjoyed the fellowship together, and this is beautiful symbolic language. It doesn't refer to material things.

This crown and that which it refers to is not material things. It rather is a beautiful picture language and refers to qualities rather than material things, and thus Isaiah 62:3, these crown wearers are spoken of as a royal diadem in the hand of God. A royal diadem is something very beautiful, something that God is going to display in the ages to come to perhaps yet uncreated beings. He's going to show them his mighty power in exalting and raising poor, imperfect, sinful human beings to his own right hand of power, the divine nature.

That will be a wonderful attainment for those who can hold fast that no man take our crown. So we think now getting very near the end of our way, very soon the last member of this group who are having fellowship in the Spirit now they will be exalted to the Father's right hand and they'll have full fellowship with the Father and the Son and with all the other saints who have gone before. We'll have a fuller fellowship in glory, and we trust these few facts may help us to appreciate the privilege of having fellowship together now, and that's why, Paul, forsake not the assembling of yourselves together.

And so much the more as we see the end approaching. May the Lord bless you.

Thank you, Brother Baker, for calling to our attention the privilege, the blessedness of the sweet fellowship that we have of life precious faith. Brother Baker had brought to us the love of the various brethren Ecclesias that he has visited. I'm sure the Gary friends would like to send their love with his brother. How many would like to do this?

We'd appreciate very much, Brother Baker, if you would take the Gary love to the brethren on your further journey. Now let us close the choice of Brother Baker's 23 Christian Fellowship. Blessed be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love. We will stand as we sing the last verse.

Sa now we'll ask our dear Brother Baker to dismiss us with prayer. Our most gracious and loving heavenly Father. With humble hearts we bow before Thee, and we thank Thee for every evidence

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of Thy loving watch care over us. We recognize Thee, the One from whom all blessings flow.

We know Thou art the giver of every good and perfect gift. We thank Thee, Father, for the great gift of Jesus. Be our Redeemer. We pray for Thy blessing for Thy people, Thy work in all parts of the earth. We remember our brethren in other lands who may suffer more than we do because of conditions under which they live.

But bless them with the things they have need of, and now, Father, great heart here bowed before thee. Thou knowest the things we need suit a blessing to us as Thou seest we need, and with this we pray that Thou would forgive us for our failures. We realize we have shortcomings.

We pray, forgive us for anything that your eyes have seen amiss in our thoughts, words or in our actions. We ask these favors and we give Thee our humble thanks. In the precious name of Jesus, Amen.