

Community

sharing of values, experiences, and space within a group of people.

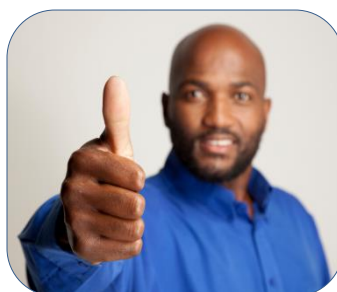
How do you think God desires us to relate to other believers? Can you think of any Scripture that would answer this question?

Looking back at the truths talked about under **New**, how would believing these truths about other believers affect life and relationships overall? How would they specifically affect your relationships?

Fellowship is deep and meaningful mutual encouragement between Christians that can benefit every area of the believer's life. This fellowship is always a natural by-product when two or more believers who have put Christ first in their lives take the personal initiative to build each other up in Christ. Fellowship is vital to our growth because we can learn a lot from other believers as well as share how God has worked in our life.

There is a great sense of encouragement when we can share the reality of Christ through our victories and the mistakes we have made. Fellowship helps us understand our dependency on God and each other. We need close relationship where we are mutually accepted, developed, and encouraged in order to grow. We need to sense that we are truly in the family of God. Fellowship is a lot like a burning fire that gives off light and heat, but the logs in the fire must be close to each other or the fire may go out.

Read **Hebrews 3:13 & 10:24-25**. Discuss which picture best describes these verses and why.



Read **1 Corinthians 12:12-27** and discuss which picture best describes this verse and why.



Read **Acts 2:42-47**

What types of things did the early Christians do together in fellowship?

What could fellowship practically look like in your circle of believers?

Read **Galatians 6:1-2** and discuss which picture best describes the authors intended meaning of this verse and why.



The word restore in Greek means to set a broken bone or mend a net.

Discuss how these word pictures bring depth to the verse.

Read the following verses and write down the specific instruction of how to treat other believers.

John 13:34-35

Romans 12:16

Romans 15:7

Galatians 5:13

Ephesians 4:25, 32

1 Thessalonians 5:15

Hebrews 10:25

James 5:16

1 Peter 4:9

What are some reasons God wants us to treat other believers the ways described above? Which is the easiest for you? Hardest?

What relationship with a believer in your life would be different if you believed what God said was true about them? How can you help yourself believe what's true about them this week?

How can you encourage another believer in your life toward action this week?

When there is little or no genuine fellowship in your life, Christianity becomes more theoretical than real. You become a lone ranger believer who becomes ingrown, undeveloped, self-centered and lives a life of futility. True fellowship fades because of personal sin and when a believer allows sin to take over, he rebels and runs from God and other believers.

Christ centered fellowship which encourages obedience to Him is one of the most positive contributors to growth you will find. Without that strengthening community we are bound to live a life of failure after failure, never experiencing the help God intends from those around us.