

# Bible Fellowship: Is it Social or Spiritual?

Acts 2:42

## Introduction:

- A. Some said, “Today when you hear ‘fellowship,’ you can smell coffee and taste donuts.
- B. “Fellowship” is a great Bible word – never used in social and recreational sense.
  - 1. Nothing of “fellowship” meals.
  - 2. Nothing of “periods” of fellowship.
- C. Modern usage tied to the social gospel concept.
- D. Questions that we need to before using “fellowship” so loosely.

## Discussion:

### I. What Is Bible “Fellowship?”

- A. A spiritual partnership (1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Cor. 6:14; 1 John 1:3-7).
- B. Spiritual activity of this partnership - joint participation (Acts 2:42; Phil. 1:5; Phile 6).
- C. Gift growing out of that partnership (2 Cor. 9:13).
- D. Not all “joint activity” is fellowship any more than any washing is “baptism.”

### II. What Is Church Work?

- A. Not all of a Christian’s work is church work.
  - 1. Church one of several relationships of a Christian – Domestic, Civic, Civil, Spiritual, etc.
  - 2. Need to keep activities separated (cf. 1 Cor. 11:22, 34).
  - 3. Church work and individual work is not the same (1 Tim. 5:16).
- B. Social and recreational “fellowship” is does not belong in church work.

### III. Where Is the Authority for “Fellowship Halls” and Gyms?

- A. Spiritual activities must the expressly authorized (cf. Lev. 10:1-5)
- B. Divine authority is expressed:
  - 1. In one of three ways - command, example, necessary inference.
  - 2. In generic and specific forms (cf. Gen. 22)
- C. We are not asking for specific authority – just the generic.
  - 1. We do many things without specific authority, but with generic authority.
  - 2. The general authority to assemble includes place, facilities, etc.
  - 3. The general authority to teach/preach includes place, material, etc.
  - 4. The general authority for recreation and social action would include place, facilities, etc.
  - 5. A “church building” covered by authority to assemble – no authority to cover “fellowship hall”

### IV. What about Incidental Eating and Drinking in Church Building?

- A. Is a baby’s bottle and a child’s cracker parallel to a “fellowship meal”
- B. Is a water fountain the same a kitchen for social meals? (“Spigot fellowship”)
- C. Is sandwich of workman in building parallel to a “fellowship dinner?”
- D. This kind reasoning opens many doors:
  - 1. Would a baby sleeping on the bench be parallel to turning building into a “church hotel?”
  - 2. Would a janitor repairing a vacuum cleaner turn building into appliance repair business?
  - 3. Would preacher taking handkerchief an wiping dust of shoes parallel church shoe shine service?

## Conclusion:

- A. Let’s be careful with our usage of “fellowship.”
- B. Let’s understand and respect the difference between individual and church activities.