

Welcome friends to another broadcast of “Morsels for Zion’s Poor”

Paul reminded the Philippian believers that they were constantly in his prayers. Especially as he recalled their *“fellowship in the gospel”*, which began when they were given eyes to see the glory of CHRIST’s redemption, continuing until the present time. This was a source of great joy to him as he contemplated the faithful work of CHRIST in those whom HE is pleased to call. This *“fellowship”* is that which manifests the bonds of Christian love which are exhibited by those in whom the LORD has begun a good work and presently performs the same in them. *“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”* To be without this “brotherly love” is to manifest the absence of the work of GOD regardless of what one may claim to believe or be. *“We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.”* The Greek word for *“fellowship”* is *“koinonia”* and means “participation or partnership in a common cause.”

When one has this kind of “fellowship” with another they must share a common desire (to see CHRIST exalted), a common bond (love for CHRIST and one another) and a common commitment (to follow the way of CHRIST) or there can be no such thing as true “fellowship” at all. *“Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”* Those whose affection is set upon this world have fellowship with the *“unfruitful works of darkness”* which they are engaged in to the satisfying of their flesh. The sons of GOD are admonished to *“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”* Rather *“our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:”*

Paul speaks of *“fellowship in the gospel”*, which describes the basis for the bond which unites the sons of GOD in this world and is a precursor to that which is yet to be realized in the *“ages to come”*. This “gospel” of which he speaks is one which centers on the work of redemption which CHRIST came to perform in the behalf of that elect people which were chosen in HIM before the foundation of the world. Paul relates to this when he told the Corinthians, *“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”* This is the basis for the true fellowship which he speaks of to the Philippians. Schisms have crept in among the saints over the years as some have introduced various works of the flesh which they require of men. Those who emphasize the free will of men as something which is equally important as the work of CHRIST are the greatest troublers.

This pure *“fellowship”* has also been wounded by those who would promote a hierarchy among the saints which is commonly seen by having a class of men set apart which are commonly known as the clergy. Oftentimes they make “preaching” to be a profession which one pursues even as he would any other worldly form of employment. Clearly all gifts are given by the same SPIRIT and all are intended for the building up of the body with none occupying a dominant place among the saints.

We have often witnessed churches whose *“fellowship”* is centered around the gifts of certain individuals. Some are more enamored with the “ability” of these individuals to “preach” than they are with the outworking of the gospel itself. The *“fellowship”* of the saints must be in CHRIST alone, anything or any “one” else is a detriment to true *“fellowship in the gospel.”* When CHRIST alone is preached, none care who the mouthpiece might be, but together rejoice in HIM. That man who promotes himself cannot preach CHRIST alone and the man who preaches CHRIST alone cannot promote himself.

Over time, the notion has arisen that the purpose of the gathering of the church is to “hear” someone with an appropriate gift “preach”. While we are thankful for all of the gifts and callings of GOD, we are no more or less thankful for the preaching and teaching gifts. We would in no wise seek to denigrate nor deemphasize the importance of sound teaching and preaching among the saints, yet we can find no exhortations or examples in the scriptures that would lead us to believe that this is the primary “activity” around which the church gathers. We do find that we are to *“shew the LORD’s death till HE comes”* by eating the bread and drinking the cup. We are to be *“teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs”*, and comforting and edifying one another. *“the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”*

This is the true *“fellowship in the gospel”* which has regard first to CHRIST alone and then to our brethren (the church) *“Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”*

“Thy free grace alone,” #11 If you would like a free transcript of this broadcast email us at forthe poor@windstream.net