

## Called into fellowship with Jesus Christ

**Introduction:** This is the **Sunday before Thanksgiving**. We certainly can be and should be **thankful every day** of our lives for the **relationship** we have with Jesus Christ.

One day a little five-year-old girl, about five years old, heard a ranting preacher praying most lustily, till the roof rang with the strength of his supplication. Turning to her mother, and beckoning the maternal ear down to a speaking-place, she whispered: "Mother, don't you think that if he lived nearer to God he wouldn't have to talk so loud?"

I Corinthians 1:4-9

<sup>4</sup> I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup> that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge, <sup>6</sup> even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you, <sup>7</sup> so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>8</sup> who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup> **God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Proposition:** **We are called into fellowship with Jesus Christ. What is fellowship—sharing. How do we fellowship with God?**

### I. **Prayer—talking to God**

Formal prayer—elder prayer

Congregational prayer—praying together

Personal prayer

A prayer can be as short as:  
Help me God!

Psalm 42:3-5

<sup>3</sup> My tears have been my food day and night,  
While *they* say to me all day long, “Where is your God?”  
<sup>4</sup> These things I remember and I **pour out my soul within me.**  
For I used to go along with the throng *and* lead them in procession to  
the house of God,  
With the voice of joy and thanksgiving, a multitude keeping festival. <sup>5</sup>  
Why are you in despair, O my soul?  
And *why* have you become disturbed within me?  
Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him  
*For* the help of His presence.

We can **say anything to God**. He **knows our thoughts**. We have **no secrets** from Him. Read the Psalms and look at the **thoughts shared by the Psalmist in prayer.**

Martin Luther --Pray hardest when it is hardest to pray.

Psalm 62: <sup>8</sup> **Trust in Him at all times, O people;**  
**Pour out your heart before Him;**  
God is a refuge for us.

Dwight L. Moody-- Spread out your petition before God, and then say,  
“Thy will, not mine be done.” The sweetest lesson I have learned in  
God’s school is to let the Lord choose for me.

Matthew Henry prayed this on the night he was robbed.—  
I thank Thee first because I was never robbed before; second  
because although they took my purse they did not take my life; third,

although they took my all, it was not much; and fourth, because it was I who was robbed and not I who robbed.

Gaelic prayer—I am going out on Thy path. God be behind me, God be before me, God be in my footsteps.

## II. Listening to God

### A. Word of God

God speaks to us through His word the Bible.

II Timothy 3:16-17

<sup>16</sup> **All Scripture is inspired by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

This book is not merely God's word—it is God's word to you. It contains what God wants you to know. It is personal. Some have called it God's love letter to you.

II Timothy 2:15

<sup>15</sup> **Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.**

Matthew 7:24-27

<sup>24</sup> “Therefore everyone who **hears these words of Mine and acts on them**, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. <sup>25</sup> And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. <sup>26</sup> Everyone who hears these words of Mine and

does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.<sup>27</sup> The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall.”

## B. Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit communicates with us through the Word of God and through thoughts, feelings and words that come into our minds. We must be careful and prove and test these things.

I John 4:1:

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits** to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Psalm 62:5-6

<sup>5</sup> **My soul, wait in silence for God only,**

For my hope is from Him.

<sup>6</sup> He only is my rock and my salvation,  
My stronghold; I shall not be shaken.

Elijah I Kings 19:9-14

<sup>9</sup> Then he came there to a cave and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and He said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” <sup>10</sup> He said, “I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.” <sup>11</sup> So He said, “Go forth and stand on the mountain before the LORD.” And behold, the LORD was passing by! And a **great and strong wind** was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before the LORD; *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind. And after the wind an **earthquake**, *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake. <sup>12</sup> After the earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the **fire**; and after the fire a

**sound of a gentle blowing.** <sup>13</sup> When Elijah heard *it*, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. And behold, a voice *came* to him and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” <sup>14</sup> Then he said, “I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.”

We must learn to recognize God’s voice and respond.

### III. Sufferings

Philippians 3:7-11

<sup>7</sup> But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of **the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord**, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, <sup>9</sup> and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, <sup>10</sup> **that I may know Him** and **the power of His resurrection** and **the fellowship of His sufferings**, being conformed to His death; <sup>11</sup> in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

**Conclusion:** We are called to fellowship with Jesus Christ. We are also called to fellowship with other believers.

I John 1:1-4

<sup>1</sup> What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— <sup>2</sup> and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us— <sup>3</sup> what we have

seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup> These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.

#### Philippians 2:1-7

<sup>1</sup> Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion,<sup>2</sup> make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.<sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;<sup>4</sup> do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.<sup>5</sup> Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,<sup>6</sup> who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,<sup>7</sup> but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men.

#### Philemon 1:4-7

<sup>4</sup> I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers,<sup>5</sup> because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and toward all the saints;<sup>6</sup> *and I pray* that the fellowship of your faith may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake.<sup>7</sup> For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

We must **share our faith** with other **believers** and the **unsaved**.

He offers us fellowship with Himself, but He looks for fellowship from us as well. He longed for the fellowship of His disciples on the eve of His

crucifixion. "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." He needed their fellowship to strengthen Him for His conflict and His cross. He asks for it today also. It is something constant and continuous that He needs. A sense of His presence at the Holy Communion is good, but it is not enough. A wave of emotion at some evening service and the opening of the heart to Christ is good, but it is not enough. An act of self-consecration at some service like the present is good, but it is not enough. Some characters are deeply touched at some mission service, but the impression soon passes away. Some welcome Christ as a visitor for the weekend; but when Monday comes, care or pleasure banishes Christ from heart and home. Something more is needed. Our heart must be one that He can make a home in. It must be a contrite heart. It must be a cleansed heart. It must be a sensitive heart.

"Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool; where is the house that ye build unto Me? and where is the place of My rest? . . . To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite heart, and trembleth at My word" (Is. 66:1, 2). What shall our attitude be?

A prayer by Norman Grubb—Good morning God, I love you! What are You up to today? I want to be a part of it.