

Kiononia: Man-to-Man

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Acts 2:40ff.

B. The early Christians devoted themselves to “koinonia” or “the fellowship.”

C. The New English Bible translates “koinonia” as “to share in the common life.” (1 John 1:3)

II. The word “kiononia” in its biblical context has four basic meanings.

A. One basic meaning is “to share together.” Upon salvation, we become part of Christ and therefore we belong to one another. (Romans 12:5; 1 John 1:3)

1. Being in fellowship with all other believers is an objective fact- it happens automatically when we become Christians.

2. The realization of this fact is meant to provide the foundation for experiential fellowship.

a) We belong to each other, which means that we need to make an effort to make relationships positively. We need to work at liking each other.

b) We are to care for one another. We need to protect each other, not gossip about one another’s failures or pain. (1 Corinthians 12:25)

c) We need to honor one another. Instead of envy, we need to respond to each other’s successes with joy. (Romans 12:10; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:16)

1) We need to support the whole body of Christ, not just “our people.”

2) We may each have individual roles in that growth, but we are one body.

B. Another basic meaning is “to share with one another.” This means that we meet each others’ needs.

1. We need to share with each other spiritually. The point of teaching and learning with each other is to build up each other’s individual relationships with Christ, to encourage one another, and to spur each other on in practicing our faith. (Romans 1:11-12; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 10:24-25; Proverbs 27:17; Hebrews 3:12-13; Malachi 3:13ff)

2. We need to share with each other materially. This is the most common use of “koinonia” in the New Testament. (Romans 12:13)

Application questions:

1. What does Jerry mean when he says that fellowship with other believers is an objective fact?

2. How does the perspective that believers belong to each other influence your attitude toward other believers?

3. What can you do to create context where mutual teaching and learning from the Scriptures occurs in your relationships with other believers?
