

SANDWICHES, COFFEE AND DONUTS

One man said, "When I hear the word 'fellowship' I smell the coffee." A social gathering of Christians and other people does not constitute fellowship in the scriptural sense. It seems that some have been confused as to what true Christian fellowship really is.

The apostle Paul writes, "God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:9). And John says, "...truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). We also have the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (Phil. 2:1).

When a person obeys the gospel and becomes a Christian, he enters into fellowship with God. By this same token he enters into fellowship with other Christians. However, the fellowship that we sustain with God and with fellow saints is dependent on whether after that we walk in the light. John says, "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth" (1 John 1:6). Again, he says, "...if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another..." (v7).

Christians should know the difference in a 'potluck' where members of the church gather together for the purpose of socializing, eating and playing games, and what the Bible teaches is fellowship of Christians. We can gather for coffee and donuts and visit and talk at a social function and there enjoy Christian association, but that is not Christian fellowship as taught in the Bible. There is a difference.

When brethren announce a social event they should not announce it as "Christian fellowship" or "Fellowship Dinner", as has been done. We should encourage the association of fellow Christians and their families and encourage members of the church to expose their friends to association with Christians for the influence we can have on them. But why not call it what it is, "Christian association", meaning association with Christians. However, that is not Christian fellowship in the scriptural sense.

"Christian fellowship " is not based on hot dogs and hamburgers nor coffee and donuts. Such gatherings of Christians are good association and can be beneficial, but let's not confuse worldly things with spiritual. We should not "smell the coffee" when we hear the word "fellowship".