

Seeing Jesus in Church



Week 25: Seeing Jesus in Fellowship

Scripture: Psalm 133, John 17:20-26, Acts 2:42-47, 1 Corinthians 1:9, 10:16-17, 12:12-31, 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, 13:14, Ephesians 4:1-6, Philippians 2:1-2, Hebrews 3:1, 1 John 1:3-7

Devotional:

As parents with young children, one thing we are working on together is sharing. As many of you know from experience, sharing is not something that comes naturally. While we don't have to teach our kids how to be selfish, we do need to teach them how to do the opposite. This would be an easier task, if only I had mastered sharing myself! Alas, this is not the case. Learning to share is a life-long process.

So, what does sharing have to do with fellowship? Well, the Greek word in the New Testament that we translate as "fellowship" can also mean "share" or "participation." At its heart fellowship is very closely related to sharing. So, in 1 Corinthians 10 when Paul talks about the Lord's Supper being a *participation* in the blood and body of Christ, he is pointing to what Christ shares with us and we with him – our fellowship. The very next thing Paul says is about the Church being one body because we eat from one loaf. Jesus has fellowship with us, and we imitate his example in our life as a church.

This fellowship is at the very heart of our identity in Christ and at the heart of the Gospel message. Acts 2:42-47 contains a beautiful description of the early church. These believers are said to have devoted themselves to "the fellowship." I think it's important that word "the" is there. The Christian Church is meant to be *the* example of fellowship in the world, and so we are to devote ourselves to this difficult task of sharing life together. The only other time "the" appears before fellowship in Scripture is in Philippians 1. There Paul gives thanks to God for the believers because of "the fellowship" or sharing they have in the Gospel. It is the Good News of Jesus Christ – our fellowship with him – that brings us together, and it is our sharing in this Gospel life together – our fellowship – which is at the heart of the Good News.

But remember, sharing isn't natural for us. Fellowship would be easy if it was, but

instead this is a life-long journey for every church community. To do this well we need to devote ourselves to it. We also need to humbly recognize that we are all growing like children in this, and will have our stumbles. More importantly though, we need to keep our eyes fixed on God. God models the fellowship as Father, Son and Spirit, and he brings us into the fellowship through Jesus, and our sharing in his death and resurrection. The church's fellowship is possible because of Jesus, and the church's fellowship is at the heart of our witness to Jesus.

Song

*"Leaning on the
Everlasting Arms"*



Activity

Talk with others about how Bethel's fellowship has been a blessing, and what areas of it we need to work on.

Memory Verse:

1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him
who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Questions to reflect on this week:

- How have I seen Jesus in the **B**ible?
- How have I seen Jesus in the **L**ove I show toward God/others?
- How have I seen Jesus in **E**arth he's created?
- How have I seen Jesus in **P**rayer?
- How have I seen Jesus in the **O**thers he's placed before me?

[**BLEPO**: means "to see" in Greek]

Seeing Jesus is believing in Him!



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