

Tarry one for another

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1 John 1:1-5

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life – the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us – that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

Walking in the light

The apostle John, with a presbytery, declared that they had been invited into the fellowship of Yahweh, and had been taught by God concerning the word of life. The eternal life that is with the Father was proclaimed and explained to them, and then manifested and given to them, so that they could see, understand, and handle the life as their own possession. 1Jn 1:1.

John explained that the work of a presbytery was to bear witness to, and declare, what God had manifested to them within the fellowship of Yahweh. Their work was to invite their hearers to be joined to them in fellowship with the Father and the Son. 1Jn 1:2-3. The message that the presbytery had been instructed to declare is that ‘God the Father is light and in Him is no darkness at all’. 1Jn 1:5.

The first condition that God places upon anyone who wants to join His fellowship and obtain eternal life by being born again as His son is that they must come to the light. Everyone who practises evil does not come to the light, lest their deeds should be exposed. Those who practise the truth come to the light so that their deeds *may be clearly seen*. They want to know what the truth is, and they want to live in the truth. Joh 3:20-21.

Those who bring the communion meal to our houses have come to tarry with us in prayer, and to join with us in the fellowship of Yahweh’s offering. When we tarry together in fellowship, the life of God is ministered to us as we partake of the communion elements. This life comes to us, giving us illumination, enabling us to turn from our darkness and to practise the truth. Joh 1:4. 1Jn 1:6. When we practise the truth, the first thing that we do is have fellowship with one another.

The apostle John said that those who walk in the light with God the Father have fellowship with one another. When we acknowledge our darkness and confess our sins, it is the Father who forgives us our sins. The Father then uses the blood of Christ to cleanse us from all unrighteousness by joining us to the fellowship of Christ’s offering and

sufferings. 1Jn 1:7. It is God the Father, through Jesus Christ, who takes the initiative to confront us about our sins. If we resist the word of the Father when our sins are confronted, we make God a liar and His word, which is the truth about us, is not in us. 1Jn 1:10.

It is important, then, that we tarry in fellowship with the Father, with one another, and with the brethren who bring communion to our house. This is an opportunity to resolve issues and matters in the light of the word as we have fellowship with one another. We note that Jesus said that if we don't forgive one another, the Father will not forgive us for our trespasses. Mat 6:14-15. The communion is a fellowship for resolution.

Coming to the throne of grace

Jesus Christ is our High Priest who, by offering Himself to God, tasted the sufferings of death that belong to every person. Heb 2:9. He is acquainted with our condition, and able to sympathise with our weaknesses. He was tempted in all points, as we are, and did not fail or sin. Heb 4:15. Because Christ's offering was successful, Paul was able to exhort us, saying, 'Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.' Heb 4:16.

The *throne* of grace is the mercy *seat* of the ark of the covenant. In the Old Covenant, on the Day of Atonement, blood was sprinkled seven times on the mercy seat as an atonement for sins. Lev 16:14-15. In his letter to the Romans, Paul explained that, in the New Covenant, God the Father sets forth Jesus Christ in our lives as a mercy seat when we receive and exercise faith in His blood. Rom 3:25. We demonstrate faith in Christ's blood the moment that we accept and believe that the sufferings we are experiencing in life belong to Christ. They are causing Him to bleed, so that His blood is sprinkled on His body.

When the Father sets forth Christ in our lives as a mercy seat, He grants to us a *connection* to Christ's suffering. By this means, as Christ's blood flows from His heart and falls upon His body, it is also *falling upon us*. His blood is then sprinkling our hearts, cleansing our conscience from dead works so that we can serve God by doing His will. Heb 9:14. This connection to the offering of Christ is the mercy of God, which we receive from the throne of grace when we have faith in Christ's blood.

Paul said that faith works by love. Gal 5:6. How does this happen? The Holy Spirit pours the love of God into our heart, which then becomes the active principle of faith within us. Rom 5:5. When love is motivating our faith, we are compelled to judge ourselves by faith rather than from the basis of another law. Rom 7:23. We must avoid judging ourselves and others by our own measure of what is good and evil. This activity only leads to condemnation and depression. Rather, by faith, we judge 'that if One died for all, then all died'. 2Co 5:14. This is the judgement that we are to make as we partake of the communion meal.

Paul said that if we judge ourselves by the illumination that we receive when we hear the blood of Christ speaking to us, we are not judged as part of the old creation. This is because, through faith in Christ's blood, we are joined to the fellowship of His sufferings. In this fellowship, the judgement we are under is turned to a chastisement. We are chastened by the Lord so that we will not be condemned with the world. 1Co 11:31-32.

Not dying before our time

As we receive God's word, understand and believe it, we are able to fellowship in the body of Christ, and properly participate in the communion meal. In the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, we are kept alive by the resurrection life of God that is in Christ's blood. Because we have access to His life, we will not die before our appointed time.

We are kept alive each day so that we are able to die the death that Christ died for us. We die this death in fellowship with Him by the grace that we receive when, by faith, we come boldly to the throne of grace. Heb 4:16. This is the same grace that enabled Jesus to endure the sufferings of our death, making it His death. Christ's death is a *death of attainment*. It is a process by which we are being delivered from our disobedience and rebellion against God. It is the process that is perfecting us as Christians.

When this process becomes our reality, we are able to testify in the same manner as Paul, who said, 'Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.' Php 3:12-14.

Tarrying at the communion table

Having established the necessity to judge ourselves rightly as we participate in the communion meal, Paul then said, 'Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, *tarry one for another*.' 1Co 11:33. To 'tarry' means 'to wait for one another for the purpose of receiving illumination'.

As we considered earlier, when communion is brought to our house, it is important to tarry for one another as we partake of the elements of communion. We do this through discussion and prayer for each other as we seek to come to terms with, and acceptance of, the sufferings of Christ that we are enduring, in some measure, as individuals and families. Through discussion and fellowship in the Spirit, our faith can be inspired as we are illuminated to see that our difficulties are an opportunity for blessing. In Christ, they are the chastening of the Lord upon us, and a perfecting process in our life.

The sufferings that cause us heaviness are a '*trial of faith*'. 1Pe 1:7. We need to learn patience when we are being tried with fire in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. Don't forget, faith that survives the fiery trial is a great reward! The apostle Peter said that it is more precious than gold. 1Pe 1:7.

When we accept that our sufferings are a participation in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, and recognise that they are necessary for our perfection, we are expressing faith in Christ's blood, and are participating in the fellowship of His body and blood, which is the New Covenant.

We declare to you

John did not send the revelation of the word to the churches as a theological resource that they could take and use as they saw fit. He wrote down and sent what he had seen and heard so that those who received this word would have fellowship with him and with those who were ministering with him. As we considered earlier, their fellowship was with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 1Jn 1:3.

John and the other New Testament writers communicated the gospel of sonship, which is the word from the beginning, through their letters to the churches. Their writings are part of the Scriptures. 2Pe 3:15-16. From the Scriptures, and by the illumination of the Spirit, we are livestreaming this same word to you, today, as a ministry of present truth. 2Pe 1:12. We are livestreaming the word of present truth to you, so that you can have fellowship with us, and our fellowship is with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Those who receive the word of present truth will desire to be connected to the fellowship of Yahweh from which the word is proceeding. Accordingly, they will ask for this fellowship, or communion, to be brought to their house. When brethren bring the communion to our house, it is important that we tarry in fellowship with them. This is an opportunity to judge ourselves rightly in relation to our participation in the elements of the communion that we are receiving.