



Bible Studies

Fellowship Study Four



*“For where
two or three
are gathered
together in my
name, there am
I in the midst
of them”*

Matthew 18:20



Fellowship:

- the conditions of sharing similar interests, ideals or experiences as by reason of profession, religion or nationality
- the companionship of individuals in a congenial atmosphere and on equal terms

(American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language)

- the meeting together of Christian believers to share deeply with one-another

Key Scripture

Hebrews 10:24 – 25 “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another.” (NIV)

In the context of Christianity – fellowship is vitally important – allowing Christians to worship together, to encourage one another, to study the Word of God and pray together. Imagine being part of a religious or political system where this was not permissible.

We have all heard the illustration of coals separated from the fire – how they are unable to maintain their heat– and know the importance of meeting together ourselves. Let’s look at how the Bible encourages all believers to meet together.

Discuss the benefits of Fellowship found in the following verses

1 Thess 5:11 Encouragement

Romans 12:4-8 Different Gifts – for what purposes?

Romans 12:13 – 16 Which aspects of Christian fellowship are mentioned here?

Galations 6:1-2 – Which benefits are mentioned here?

Let’s do this!

Heb 10: 24-25 Keep on meeting together. What does this meeting give us opportunity to do?

What is promised in these two Scriptures?

Mal 3:16

Matthew 18:20

The Example of the early church

Acts 2:46-47

In the Future

Revelation 7:9-10 Ultimately – all Christians will worship together.

*“Encourage
each other
and build one
another up”
1 Thessalonians 5:11*



Ruth Hussein receiving letters of encouragement from believers in Australia



Ruth's boys

Hypothetical

Now take a few minutes to discuss what would happen if you were no longer able to meet together freely as you do now? What effect would this have on your Christian lives? What ways could you find to contact one another, study the Bible together or pray together.

Think about the early Church – how they devised the symbol of the fish to let each other know they were Christians.

The Persecuted Today

There are thousands of Christians today who live under similar restrictions, whose meetings are raided, whose goods are confiscated, whose churches are burned, and who meet under threat of fines, imprisonment or even death.

In parts of China, Christians are still being harassed for meeting together and in countries like North Korea, Christians meet under the threat of death.

Christians are not meant to have to stand alone. We, who have freedom of religion, can find ways to encourage and help those who are alone.

Part of the work of Open Doors is to assist Christians who are unable to meet together freely, and to provide Bibles, study materials and other resources to believers who would otherwise not have access to these things.

Open Doors runs letter writing programmes. These are to encourage Christian women who are alone for various reasons – for example because their husbands have been imprisoned or killed or because they have been abandoned by their husbands or families because of their own faith in Christ.

Meet Ruth Hussein and her boys from Iraq

Some years ago in 1997, Ruth Hussein's husband, Mansour was shot in the Christian bookshop where he worked.

Widowed when pregnant with her second child, Ruth was struggling to raise her two boys. Open Doors has been able to help Ruth and others like her. Letters from women here encouraged her and visits and gifts from our co-workers blessed and helped her.

What can we do to help women like Ruth?

Pray – your prayers are powerful and really make a difference. Consider praying as a group for women like Ruth. We can provide you with special prayer information every second month to fuel your prayers.

Write letters – to those who need our encouragement. Read the latest Open Doors Prayer and Writing Guide for details of our current writing campaign.

Keep up to date – visit the Open Doors Webside at www.opendoors.org.au

Prepared by Annie Cullen

Open Doors Australia

PO Box 6237

Frenchs Forest NSW 2086

T (02) 9451 2999

F (02) 9451 2988

E odaustralia@od.org

I www.opendoors.org.au



Open Doors

Serving persecuted Christians worldwide