

Name of Assembly: United Apostolic Church

Type of service: Bible Study

Date: September 1st, 2026

Series Topic: “**Living the 7 Ministry Pillars**”

Lesson 1: “**Fellowship: Strengthening the Bonds That Bind Us Together**”

Text: Acts 2:42



INTRODUCTION

We are continuing our Bible Study on Pillar #7, exploring “**Fellowship: Strengthening the Bonds That Bind Us Together.**”

“**And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers**” – Acts 2:42.

God designed His church to live in meaningful relationship. Fellowship is **not an optional social program** — it is a spiritual discipline through which believers grow, persevere, love, serve, and display Christ to the world.

The Importance of this Lesson

The key focus of this study is that we **cannot** fully fulfill God’s purpose for us on our own. Christ unites believers with Himself and with one another through strong fellowship, which nurtures individual disciples and benefits the entire church.

This lesson discusses the biblical mandate and examples of fellowship, highlighting Hebrews 10, Acts 2, and Proverbs as key scriptures. Part 2 will focus on practical application—demonstrating how love is expressed, unity is maintained, and a culture of belonging is developed and kept alive. These sessions aim to encourage members to move beyond simple attendance toward active, Christ-centered engagement in one another's lives.

What Is Biblical Fellowship?

Koinonia is the Greek word translated “fellowship” in Acts 2:42. It means deep communion and partnership — a sharing of life together in Christ. More than a friendly gathering, koinonia describes a covenant-like bond formed through the Holy Spirit, where faith, resources, joys, and struggles are held in common. Believers are drawn into genuine union with Christ and with one another — not as acquaintances, but as partners in the same sacred life.

In practice, koinonia encompasses gathering, praying, studying, sharing meals, being generous, serving, encouraging, and bearing one another's burdens. This is not passive attendance or casual acquaintance, but active co-participation — believers entering into one another's spiritual journeys and daily lives with purpose and presence.

Yet koinonia is not about comfort or familiarity. It pushes us beyond our limits, challenges us, and shapes us into Christlikeness. It demands humility to receive help from others and courage to offer ourselves — whether through time, prayer, honesty, or practical support. Simply occupying the same church building does not create koinonia; it takes intentional, Spirit-guided effort to enter into genuine communion with one another.

What does this kind of fellowship look like in practice? It is:

1. **Christ-Centered** — Unity begins with a shared relationship with Jesus — not with age, culture, or personality, but with one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one Spirit.
2. **Intentional** - Strong relationships do not happen automatically. Believers must make room through time, conversation, hospitality, and consistent presence.

3. **Mutual** - Every believer has something to give and something to receive. We teach, encourage, listen, pray, serve, correct, comfort, and carry burdens “one another.”
4. **Transformational** - God uses other believers to expose blind spots, strengthen faith, develop character, and help us obey His Word — iron sharpens iron.

DISCUSSION ACTIVITY

Partner Discussion

“How has another believer helped you grow spiritually? What words or actions left a lasting impression on your faith?”

There are no wrong answers — this is an invitation to honest discussion. After partner discussions, selected responses will be shared with the group.

My Response:

Fellowship Is a Divine Command

Hebrews was written to believers facing pressure and spiritual weariness. Some were tempted to withdraw from the community of faith. The writer calls them — and us — to draw near to God, hold firmly to hope, and remain intentionally connected to one another.

“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together ... but exhorting one another.” —

Hebrews 10:24–25

1 Consider One Another

The command begins with careful attention. We must notice people — their gifts, struggles, growth, absence, and need for encouragement. Fellowship starts with paying attention.

3 Do Not Abandon the Gathering

Isolation is dangerous, especially during discouragement. Regular gathering allows believers to receive truth, prayer, correction, encouragement, and strength.

2 Provoke Love and Good Works

Christian fellowship should move people toward obedience. Our words and example ought to awaken greater love, service, holiness, and courage in fellow believers.

4 Encourage One Another

We gather not only to receive but also to contribute. Every believer should arrive asking, “Whom can I strengthen today?”

The question is not only ‘What did I receive?’ but also ‘Whom did I notice, encourage, and strengthen?’ Biblical fellowship turns spectators into participating members.

Proverbs 27:17 — Iron Sharpens Iron

“Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend” — Proverbs 27:17.

This single verse captures one of the most vivid images of biblical fellowship in all of Scripture. Iron does not sharpen itself — it requires friction, contact, and the pressure of another piece of iron. In the same way, believers are not designed to grow in isolation. God uses other people — their words, their example, their correction, their encouragement — to shape us into who He has called us to be.

The word “sharpeneth” implies an ongoing, active process. It is not a one-time event but a sustained relationship. True fellowship is the context in which this sharpening happens — through honest conversation, accountability, shared prayer, and the courage to speak truth in love. Every believer is both the iron and the friend: we are simultaneously being shaped and helping to shape others.

This is why Proverbs places fellowship not in the category of preference, but of wisdom. To withdraw from meaningful relationship is to choose spiritual dullness. To remain connected — even when it is uncomfortable — is to choose growth.

The Early Church Model — Acts 2:42–47

Acts 2 follows the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and Peter’s proclamation of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Those who received the Word were baptized and added to the church. Their conversion immediately produced a new pattern of belonging — not merely doctrinal agreement, but shared daily life. The early church did not program fellowship; they practiced it. And it transformed everything around them.

“And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” — Acts 2:42.



The Apostles’ Doctrine

They learned and obeyed the truth together. Fellowship without truth becomes shallow; truth received in community forms mature disciples who hold one another accountable to the Word.



Breaking of Bread

Meals and communion created room for remembrance, hospitality, gratitude, and personal relationship. The table became a sacred space of belonging and grace.



Fellowship

They shared faith, daily life, resources, joys, and burdens. Their relationships were consistent, sincere, and gloriously practical — the kind that crossed social boundaries.



Prayer

They sought God together. Corporate prayer aligned their hearts, strengthened faith, and kept the community dependent upon the Holy Spirit rather than their own strength.

What Their Fellowship Produced

The Acts 2 community did not produce these fruits by accident. They were the organic results of a people consistently devoted to one another and to God. The early church was both spiritual and social — and the world took notice.

Teaching and prayer were joined with meals, hospitality, generosity, and everyday care. Biblical fellowship refuses to separate devotion to God from love for people.

→ **Awe and Reverence**

The presence and power of God became palpable in a community where love was visible and truth was lived. Wonder filled their gatherings.

→ **Generosity That Met Real Needs**

Resources were shared so that no member lacked. Material giving flowed naturally from spiritual unity. Their bank accounts reflected their theology.

→ **Daily Gathering — Public and Private**

They gathered in the temple courts and in homes. Large settings gave identity; smaller settings gave intimacy. Both were essential to their health.

→ **Gladness, Sincerity, and Praise**

Joy was not manufactured — it was the natural fruit of people who belonged to one another and to God. Their worship rang true because their lives matched it.

→ **A Credible Gospel Witness**

The Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. Their fellowship made the gospel believable to those on the outside looking in.

What Their Fellowship Produced

The Acts 2 community did not produce these fruits by accident. They were the organic results of a people consistently devoted to one another and to God. The early church was simultaneously spiritual and social — and the world took notice. Teaching and prayer were joined to meals, hospitality, generosity, and everyday care. Biblical fellowship refuses to separate devotion to God from love for people.

→ **Awe and Reverence**

The presence and power of God became palpable in a community where love was visible and truth was lived. Wonder filled their gatherings.

→ **Generosity That Met Real Needs**

Resources were shared so that no member lacked. Material giving flowed naturally from spiritual unity. Their bank accounts reflected their theology.

→ **Daily Gathering — Public and Private**

They gathered in the temple courts and in homes. Large settings gave identity; smaller settings gave intimacy. Both were essential to their health.

→ **Gladness, Sincerity, and Praise**

Joy was not manufactured — it was the natural fruit of people who belonged to one another and to God. Their worship rang true because their lives matched it.

→ **A Credible Gospel Witness**

The Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. Their fellowship made the gospel believable to those on the outside looking in.

Case-Study Activity

SMALL GROUP EXERCISE

Within your small group, select one of the scenarios listed below. Develop a thoughtful response grounded in the fellowship principles you’ve learned. Focus on practical and specific actions — not just what the church “should” do in theory, but what your group can realistically accomplish within the next seven days.

Situation A A new member has attended three Sundays but still feels disconnected — no one has learned their name or story.	Situation B A college student is increasingly isolated, missing services, and has stopped responding to messages from church friends.
Situation C A family is under severe financial and relational strain. They have mentioned nothing to church leadership, but the signs are visible to you.	Situation D A longtime believer is spiritually discouraged — doubting, withdrawn, attending out of habit, and struggling alone with questions they feel too ashamed to voice.

Your response should include: **one way to notice** the person, **one way to encourage** them, **one practical action** your group could take, and **one follow-up step** within the week.

Homework Review & Personal Commitment

SEPTEMBER 1 · CLOSING

Take a moment to review and respond to the following multiple-choice questions:

- 1) **Q1: Why is fellowship more than a social option?**
 - A) It helps the church grow in numbers
 - B) It is a spiritual discipline commanded by God
 - C) It makes church services more enjoyable
 - D) It is a tradition passed down from early Christians

- 2) **Q2: Which of the following is NOT one of the five actions commanded or implied in Hebrews 10:24–25?**
 - A) Consider one another
 - B) Provoke unto love and good works
 - C) Forsake not the assembling
 - D) Tithe regularly

- 3) **Q3: What four practices shaped the Acts 2 church?**
 - A) Preaching, tithing, singing, and fasting
 - B) Apostles' doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers
 - C) Evangelism, worship, service, and giving
 - D) Prayer, fasting, reading, and baptism