

DIVINE FELLOWSHIP (1)

BY KEITH GREER

In your mind, picture an old wagon wheel. Allow the hub to represent the Lord and His church; each of the wheel's spokes represents an individual Christian who is attached to the hub. The hub securely holds the spokes together and supplies the necessary strength. Without the hub, the wheel would be useless.

Jesus used this illustration in His lesson about the vine and its branches *{John 15:5}*. As each spoke serves its purpose in Christ's kingdom, it must carry the load He placed on it. Let's discuss some elements of divine fellowship as they relate to the work of this gospel wheel. Fellowship is defined as: "an associateship, membership, partnership, companionship, or comradeship. A partner or an associate in an endeavor." We become partners with God and His Son, Christ. What a marvelous blessing it is to experience the fellowship associated with being part of God's family.

All spiritual blessings are in Christ. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."* *{Ephesians 1:3}* Every spiritual blessing given by God can be enjoyed by only those who are part of His family. This is a very special family that includes every Christian in the entire world. We wear His name and belong to the church Christ purchased with His blood *{Acts 20:28}*.

Divine fellowship is one of our spiritual blessings. *"But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."* *{1 John 1:7}* Fellowship with the Father and Son is one of our special spiritual blessings. Only those in Christ's church can share fellowship with both the Father and the Son. The New Testament depicts the early disciples as a closely knit family. *"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."* *{Acts 2:42}* Hopefully, a fuller understanding of what this fellowship entails makes it very appealing.

Outsiders have no hope or fellowship. *"That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."* *{Ephesians 2:12}* Talk about a dark and gloomy picture—on the outside looking in! The only way to enter is by being baptized into Christ. *"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ."* *{Galatians 3:27}* One achieves fellowship by being baptized into Christ

for the remission of his sins and being added to His body. Without baptism, there's no fellowship. Now let us examine some different aspects of this very special fellowship.

We're fellow-citizens in Christ's kingdom. *“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God.” {Ephesians 2:19}* This relationship comes about as the result of having entered into Christ's spiritual kingdom (His church) and willingly submitting to His rule and reign. *“Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.” {Colossians 1:12,13}* Since all saints are part of His kingdom, we thereby become fellow-citizens with them. We are children of the king {1 Timothy 6:15}.

In what greater place could we hope to be—what could surpass the kingdom that belongs to the king of all the earth? Yes, I'm proud to be a United States citizen but I have a higher citizenship. *“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” {Philippians 3:20}* Such citizenship, begins here in the Lord's church, and lasts through all eternity in the eternal kingdom in heaven! ***