



BREATH OF LIFE: YOU, YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT, AND THE CHURCH

“The Confessing Church” Colossians 1:9-10

Introduction

Growing churches are confessing churches. Members are not a mixed gathering of people who find some commonality, but a fixed assemblage of believers who confess the name of Jesus Christ. They share fellowship one with another.

Lesson aim: To demonstrate the importance of nurturing confessors of Christ rather than consumers.

I. Placing the Text in Our Context

A. A Quick Review: Fellowship (*Koinonia*)

1. The New Testament word for fellowship is *koinonia*.
 - a. It may be translated “fellowship,” “association,” “community,” “communion,” and “partnership.”
 - b. It means “to have a share in something with someone,” or “to have something in common.”
2. The church is a fellowship with a two-way relationship.
 - a. Members are related to God in Jesus Christ.
 - b. Members are also related to one another as a result. This is derived from a common experience of sharing in Christ and his benefits.
 - 1) Because Christians have been loved by Christ they are enabled and obligated to love one another.
 - 2) “Koinonia” is God’s creation through the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit.
 - c. Church members are not to thwart the Holy Spirit by attitudes and acts that hurt the fellowship.

B. Growing in Biblical Context: Colossians 1:9-10

1. Bible Text: And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the *knowledge of his will* in all *spiritual wisdom and understanding*,¹⁰ so as to *walk in a manner worthy of the Lord*, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God . . .” Colossians 1:9-10.
2. Bible meaning:
 - a. *knowledge of the will of God*: Paul prayed for God to *fill the church* with knowledge of his will
 - 1) This is more than mere data or facts. Paul means “fullness” as opposed to a conceited ignorance that was characteristic of heresy that would eventually

- grow to become Gnosticism. All thoughts, affections, purposes, and plans.
- 2) That God would cause you to be filled with knowledge. A living relationship. Gnostic gods were obscure and inaccessible. *This was in Christ.*
 - b. *through all spiritual wisdom and understanding*: the words are often used together to mean complete apprehension, knowledge, of God's will.
 - c. So that you may *walk in a manner worthy of the Lord*: The express purpose of being filled with the knowledge of God's will. To behave in a certain way meaning a manner that is required by their status as the Lord's people (1 Thessalonians 2:12).

II. Healthy Church Fellowships: Confess Christ Through the Ordinances

A. Baptism:

1. "Baptism is the outward visible sign that people are consciously accepting God's love and grace at work in their lives." We become members of a *fellowship of believers*.
2. Why Baptize?

B. The Lord's Supper

1. The Lord's Supper *helps worshipers to picture the Gospel* in a nutshell. "Mealtimes are basic for the unity and maintenance of human families, [so] how much more basic is this table **fellowship** for the family of God.
2. The Lord's Supper is *a memorial reminder* of Christ's death for our sins (Matthew 26:26-28)
3. The Lord's Supper is Communion – *symbolizes unity*

C. Fellowship Implications of the Ordinances

III. Healthy Church Fellowships: Express Christ Through the Spiritual Gifts

A. Giving (Romans 12:8)

1. Bible Meaning
2. Bible Examples
3. Practical Application

B. Discernment (1 Corinthians 12:10)

1. Bible Meaning
2. Bible Examples

3. Practical Application

C. Exhortation (Romans 12:8)

1. Bible Meaning

2. Bible Examples:

3. Practical Application

D. Wisdom (1 Corinthians 12:8)

1. Bible Meaning

2. Bible Examples:

3. Practical Application