

Eisenhower Church of Christ

Can A Congregation Refuse Fellowship to Another Congregation?

In a time of liberalism, worldliness, and compromise with error, this question is critical. In the first place, God's people must not fellowship world religions, Catholicism, denominationalism, or sectarianism. In the second place, the church must beware of false teachers and prophets (Colossians 2:8, 20-23; 1 John 4:1). "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them," Paul commanded (Ephesians 5:3-11). He refused "to give place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you" (Galatians 2:5). It is commanded for the local congregation not to have communion with the unclean, the defiled, the wicked, the dark, in the local congregation but yet permissible to fellowship other congregations which condone and/or teach the same (2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1)? Can faithful congregations fellowship apostate churches?

In the third place, can churches depart from the faith? Can they cease their communion with God and Christ (1 John 1:3-10; 3:23-24); can they pervert the Gospel and become anathema (Galatians 1:6-9)? Can congregations become partakers of their evil deeds by supporting and fellowshiping such other congregations (Romans 1:32)?

In the fourth place, churches are commanded to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3). Faithful saints and congregations are in fellowship with the faithful everywhere; they "Love the brotherhood" (1 Peter 2:17). They partake in the "common salvation" (Jude 3). They salute one another (Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Romans 16:1). Is that fellowship to be maintained with apostate congregations? Indeed not! Brethren cannot maintain fellowship with those who no longer partake of evil and false doctrine (Romans 16:17, 18; 1 Timothy 6:3-10; 1 Corinthians 15:33; 2 John 9-11).

In the fifth place, churches can harbor and defend the wicked and the false teacher, in clear violation of Scripture. Note God's attitude toward those who hide their eyes from the wicked man; He sets His face against them and cuts them off (Leviticus 20:1-5).

In the sixth place, to withhold fellowship from a church is not to violate local autonomy. Rather, to attempt to deny a congregation's right to do so would be to violate its autonomy and to cause it to transgress Paul's command, "withdraw from every brother that walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which they received of us" (2 Thessalonians 3:6). Can people in a local congregation have fellowship with an apostate congregation, whereas it would be wrong to fellowship the same worldliness and false doctrine in the local church? Is the command to, "...mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned; and turn away from them" (Romans 16:17- ASV, 1901), confined to the local congregation? Indeed, a church can refuse fellowship to another church; it violates the local autonomy of neither the dis-fellowshipped nor the dis-fellowshipping church.

What are some practical considerations? One, elders must discharge their responsibility of watching over and protecting their flock, whether from internal or external threats issuing forth from influences and teachings from other congregations (Acts 20:28). Two, error can spread from member-to-member and from congregation-to-congregation (1 Corinthians 5). Three, marking a congregation may awaken members of the marked congregation of the false teaching and/or worldliness condoned therein [of which they may have been unaware] and move them to stand for the truth and to attempt to reform the

church. It might save some of the members from destruction, and possibly, save the congregation. If the people are desiring to stand and wanting to do right, it will put them on notice that either the congregation needs to repent or they must [after finding out that they cannot help the situation] place membership elsewhere, disassociating themselves from the marked church. Four, the longer the delay in acting, the less likely the reformation.

Love for the truth of God, for the purity of the church, and for the brethren, as well as discretion and care, should characterize every act of discipline. Care must be given to being sure of facts and attitudes before this final step is taken.

—Curtis A Cates

Prayer Request

Mary Brown was admitted into the Medical Center Hospital last week to be treated for pneumonia. **Bill** is also sick with a bad cold. Keep both of them in your prayers that they soon will be feeling much better.

George and Jurlean Warren have requested prayers for their daughter, **Trina Plyler**, who is battling stage 4 cancer. Trina underwent kidney surgery on Monday, December 6th in hopes that this surgery will help with the pain that she is having. Continue to keep Trina in your daily prayers that she will overcome this cancer.

Don Easlon is very sick with Bronchitis. He is being treated with prescribed medications. Also, **Nancy** had a cold and just not feeling well last week. Keep both Don and Nancy in your prayers.

Concern Update

Rudy Ochoa is waiting to be rescheduled for his hand surgery. The surgery will be done in San Angelo, TX.

Terresia Weaver will begin stronger chemo treatments to help fight her cancer.

Tiffany Horton received good news from her surgeon. Her lymph nodes were clear of cancer. Due to the type of cancer she has, Tiffany is choosing to have a double mastectomy.

Prayer List

Wayne Anderson; Betty Branson; LaDonna Chism; Dana Erwin; Hattie Gilmore; Hugo Grijalva; Doug Guynn; Rosanna Herrera; Tiffany Horton; Alex Martinez; Ora McAfee; Glenna McCarty; Melissa Moore; Juan & Estella Morolez; Julie Munoz; Cain Pilgrim; Bruce & Trina Plyler; Chasidy Rayos; Jackie Rex; Daniel Reyes; Lisa Salas; Marilyn Upshaw; Terresia Weaver; Janet Wesson; John Wood, Natalynn Wood.

Eisenhower's Shut-ins

Dusty and Kathy Marshall; Glenna McCarty; Jackie Rex; Janelle Shirley and Marilyn Upshaw

Youth

Bible Quiz Question ... (Finish the Beatitude)

“Blessed are the merciful... (?)

Last Week's Quiz Answer...

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness...for they shall be filled.”

Events

Watch “*In Search of the Lord's Way*” Sunday mornings at 7:30 am on KWES TV 9.

Office News

Reminder: When requesting prayers for friends, neighbors or co-workers and you would like for the church to send them a card, please furnish the office a correct mailing address for them. A lot of people do not have a listing in the telephone book or on the internet. Thank you.

Treasures in Heaven

In general people living in today's society have become very materialistic. By their behavior it is easily seen that their trust is being placed in things that exist now, things which are visible and can be touched. Little or no thought is given to the importance of seeking and finding spiritual values. The worldly-minded person is more interested in his assets, his financial affairs, the making of money and having a "good time" than he is in God.

When a person realizes that the pursuit of worldly riches and fame is useless, what will he use to replace the material treasures he has always sought after? Jesus gave the answer in Matthew 6:19-21 when He said, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Peter, instructing his fellow Christians, said "Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ..." (1 Peter 1:13). To that John added, "Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (1 John 3:2-3).

Life can be a beautiful and rewarding experience if one will put spiritual service to God first, and allow the remainder of his existence to revolve around Jesus Christ. There is a life to be lived, deeds to be done, a goal to be reached, commands to be obeyed, and a home in heaven to look forward to. So, "lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven." Anything so temporary as the material possessions of this life must not be allowed to take away the marvelous blessings of an eternity with God, our Father.

—Tom Sutherland

December 12, 2021	A.M.	P.M.
Announcements	Allen Weakland	Allen Weakland
Song Leader	Cody Wesson	Jacob Carson
Sermon	Allen Weakland	Allen Weakland
Opening Prayer	Allen Weakland	Allen Weakland
Scripture	Bill Ryan	John Wood
Second Prayer	Scot Straw	Craig Wesson
Closing Prayer	Oliver Hernandez	Charles Wood
Lords Supper		Jr. Munoz
<u>Scripture Reading:</u>	<u>Larry May</u>	Communion
	Gary Loving	(In Library)
	Jon Roemisch	
	Don Easlon	

Other Responsibilities: *Elder:* Allen Weakland 254-8209 —*Deacon:* Bill Ryan 352-4871 —*Pulpit:* Tom Sorenson 638-9447 —*Table:* Jr. Munoz 212-2231 —*Song Leaders:* Larry May 638-3990—*Recording Sermons:* John Wood 413-7444— *Collections:* Jr. Munoz 212-2231

Sunday AM

"God's Rest"
(Hebrews 4:1-10)

Sunday PM

"Have You Forgotten?"
(Genesis 41:1-9)