

## “Fellowship IN Christ”

**Use this guide as a tool to help you prepare to experience spiritual transformation in a practical way. It is a flexible guide that will help you discover, own, and apply the truths of God’s Word.**

### **Message Summary**

Last week we began a new series titled **IN** Christ. This series examines the intimate letter from the imprisoned Apostle Paul to the church leader in Colossae named Philemon. Philemon was an influential man in the city who also owned slaves. One of his slaves named Onesimus fled Colossae and tried to lose himself in the city of Rome, however, he met Paul and was born again **IN** Christ. Therefore, Paul knew he needed to send Onesimus back to Philemon to restore their relationship **IN** Christ. This restoration would reunite them as brothers rather than master and slave. Further it would be a demonstration of the forgiving power found among people who are **IN** Christ.

Last week we learned from this letter that we are a Family **IN** Christ. As a family we serve the same Master, live in the same body, work for the same purpose, fight the same enemy, and extend the same grace. This week we will examine what it means to be a Fellowship **IN** Christ. As a fellowship we partner together for the sake of the Gospel in order to multiply disciples of Jesus.

Paul was thankful for Philemon’s love toward people and his display of the Gospel in the community. Therefore, he prayed that Philemon and Onesimus’ relationship would be a display of Christian fellowship that was effective. Unfortunately the word “fellowship” has been watered down over the years and has become a term referring to social events, meals together, and just enjoying one another’s presence. However, the word “fellowship” means more than that. As a Fellowship **IN** Christ we will have distinct characteristics that will set us, the church, apart from the rest of the world. This is what Paul described as he shared with Philemon his own personal character qualities as a Christian and how they related to his relationship with Onesimus.

How do you relate to other believers in your Missional Community and in your local church? Could it be said of you that your love for people is like your love for Jesus? Are you partnering with others for the sake of Gospel-centered ministry or do you just enjoy spending time with other believers? Does your relationship with other believers imitate the kind of relationship Jesus had with His friends? These are important characteristics of Christians who are a Fellowship **IN** Christ. As you prepare to meet with your Missional Community examine the characteristics from the message and be prepared to answer the questions on the next page. Make a commitment to Christ to live with other believers as a true Fellowship **IN** Christ!

### **Message Outline**

**I want you to know and believe that we are a Fellowship in Christ.**

A Fellowship **IN** Christ...

1. Shares a sacrificial love for one another the way they love Jesus (5).
2. Shares an effective life transforming Gospel-centered ministry (6).
3. Shares in building up the body by imitating Jesus (7).

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### **Group Discussion**

Use the following questions to help make application of God’s Word to your Head (What God wants me to know), to your Heart (What God wants me to desire/value), and to your Hands (What God wants me to do).

In regard to Philemon 4-7:

1. What does this passage say about God’s character?
2. What is God doing here? How does this passage fit in the overall narrative of the Bible?
3. What is God saying about me?
4. Where am I not living by faith? How do I return to faith?
5. How should I practice this in everyday life?

### **Weekly Prayer Focus**

- **Church:**

- Pray that God would be glorified in the upcoming Beach Baptism on September 18, 2015.
- Pray that God would give us new believers and covenant members.
- Pray that all who have believed the Gospel will obey Jesus in believer’s baptism.
- Pray for new relationships that will lead to Gospel conversations.
- Pray for the elders as they lead us to accomplish the mission.
- Pray for the Missional Communities to establish their goals and objects and begin to live them out.

- **Local:**

- Pray for the Friday Night Beach Bonfire Outreach and the developing friendships. Pray these will lead toward Gospel conversations.
- Pray that God would burden us with the lostness in our cities, neighborhoods, and at work.
- Pray that God will identify 5 people you can begin to invest in and engage with the Gospel.

- **Global:**

- Pray that God would give you a heart for the nations.
- Pray for the new believer in SEA and for those who have heard the Gospel.
- Pray for A&M in SEA and their team as they seek to lead a church planting movement among the unreached.
- Pray for Good Shepherd Ministries and Bill & Sandy Younger.
- Pray for Servants Hearts Ministries and Bob & Georgette Kornegay.
- Pastor Abraham and his church in Guatemala.