

PRACTICING A ONE ANOTHER CULTURE

Small Group Discussion Guide

Sermon Title: Practicing Koinonia with One Another

Date preached: September 27, 2026

Opening prayer: Our God, we pray that we may enter together into fellowship with you – Father, Son and Spirit – and as we experience fellowship with you, we may also develop fellowship with one another so that we might reflect the love and care for One Another that brings you honor and us joy. Amen

Opening question: From last week's study, were you able to identify someone to whom you could show honor? If so, were you able to follow through and what were the results?

Sermon Focus: The sermon this week focused on koinonia – the practice of fellowship with one another centered on Jesus. Christian community – koinonia – cannot be separated from the gospel. It is not an intellectual exercise but a practical, experiential way of life. We don't just believe in the Trinity - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – we experience them. How the Trinity interacts is how we are called to interact. When we practice koinonia, we are revealing the gospel. Confession is connected to our life together. We are participating in the ongoing revelation of God through our life together.

Sermon Question:

- What part of the sermon has stayed with you since Sunday?
OR What challenged, encouraged, or surprised you in the sermon?

Scripture reading: 1 John 1:1-10

Scripture Context: Most scholars attribute 1 John to the apostle John, son of Zebedee, though the letter never names its author, the attribution rests on close similarities in theme and style to the Gospel of John. The author grounds his authority in firsthand experience: he declares what he has heard, seen, and touched concerning "the word of life" (1:1–2). He had walked with the incarnate Christ himself.

Tradition holds that John later became bishop in Ephesus, a largely Gentile church, where believers faced Gnostic heresy, a Greek philosophical movement that split mind from body and prized esoteric intellectual enlightenment as its chief goal. Some believers used this to excuse the body's sin as irrelevant to an "enlightened" mind.

John's first letter tackles this heresy head-on – hence the emphasis John places on having experienced (heard, seen and touched) Jesus Christ. John's faith is grounded in experience and he calls the reader to a tangible faith, grounded in koinonia fellowship where the struggle with sin is

addressed confessionally in community rather than dismissed as an intellectual exercise. He condemns the idea that light (righteousness) can have any fellowship with darkness (sin) {many gnostics believed the actions of the somos were unimportant as long as one was enlightened in mind} and directs believers instead to an integrated life characterized by repentance, confession and living lives together in community.

Word in focus: Koinonia (Fellowship) – (Gk: κοινωνία) key-no-KNEEA – fellowship, sharing in common, communion. This Greek word defines a community of believers sharing all of life together. (See Acts 2:42 for the most striking example of this). A key ingredient of this fellowship is that it grows from obtaining restoration and peace with God through the shed blood of Jesus. Believers take on a new self (Ephesians 4:24 and Colossians 3:10) and are adopted as children of God (John 1:12-13) and this new self belongs to a community of believers – ‘the body of Christ’ (I Corinthians 12:12-27) in which to live out this new life in koinonia fellowship.

Questions:

1. What is John proclaiming in verses 1-5? Why is he able to proclaim this message with confidence & how does this impact how we receive what John has to say?
2. What is the challenge John describes in verse 6 and how have you experienced this tension in your own life?
3. What remedy does John prescribe for resolving the challenge posed by sin and darkness?
4. Why would we like to make the claims of verses 6, 8 and 10?
5. Why is confession so hard? Why is it so necessary? (Why in the apostle’s creed is “the communion of saints” followed closely by “the forgiveness of sins”)
6. How is fellowship connected to us walking in the light and confessing our sins?
7. How have you experienced true fellowship? What are the characteristics of true fellowship? What are the characteristics of false fellowship?
8. What practices would we adopt to establish koinonia as our common practice?

Sharing life together: Where could you make space in your life this week to share koinonia fellowship with others in a new way?

Closing prayer: Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.