

Person to Person

John 17:6 – 21

I. Intro

A. Communion today – God/Jesus desires to have “communion” with us

B. communion (Def.) - *intimate fellowship; a body of Christians having a common faith and discipline*; (Gr. *koinonia*) - literally *participation, partnership, or social intercourse* (stressing the intimacy aspect)

i. 1 Corinthians 10:16 (KJV 1900)

¹⁶The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not **the communion** (*koinonia* – intimate fellowship, partnership, participation) of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not **the communion** (*koinonia* – intimate fellowship, partnership, participation) of the body of Christ?

ii. 2 Corinthians 13:14 (KJV 1900)

¹⁴The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and **the communion** (*koinonia* – intimate fellowship, partnership, participation) of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

C. Another indication of this *koinonia* the Lord desires to have with us in passage: **READ John 17:6 – 21**; not only does the Lord desire to have *koinonia* (communion) with us but He also commands we have the same *koinonia* (communion) with one another

D. All through scripture Jesus emphasizes relationships; John 13:34 (ESV)

³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.; **50 “one anothers” in scripture** – *accept one another, build one another up, be kind to one another, forgive one another, bear with one another, encourage one another, etc.*

E. As human beings, being relational beings is obvious (mainly because our Creator wired us that way); dig into some deeper reasons for having close, spiritually-focused relationships

F. So far this year, as we’ve emphasized discipleship (what it truly means and looks like to be a real disciple/follower of Jesus Christ), we’ve been concentrating on our relationship with God; today we’ll begin turning our attention to our relationships with one another

G. Today, discuss the “why” we need close spiritual relationships; in weeks ahead, the “what” they are and “what” they aren’t, and the “where” true spiritually-focused relationships are best cultivated/nurtured

H. We has humans are driven by the why – always need a reason (one of the first 5 words children learn), if there’s not justifiable, practical, beneficial reason then because of our nature we Don’t; when the “why” is missing or can’t be answered we’re simply not motivated; three “why’s” for *koinonia* relationships

II. 1st “Why”

- A. Remember, humans are created in God’s image and that image is a relational image (said earlier, God has wired us to be relationship beings)
- B. We need close, intimate, spiritually-focused relationships, and be motivated to build those relationships in our lives, because when we do we show the world a true picture of who God is – an intimately relational being – **REFER v. 11, 21**
- C. To be an example to the world of our genuine/authentic godliness isn’t accomplished by just being nice – a lot of “nice” people in the world
- D. Not accomplished by just doing “nice” things; Jesus was a “nice” guy and did many “nice” things, but it was His relational depth with His closest friends/followers that had the greatest impact in their lives
- E. [SLIDE] If we’re going to paint a true/realistic picture of who Christ is to the world, we must go way beyond ordinary relationships

III. 2nd “Why”

- A. Building deep/close, transparent, spiritually-focused relationships have extremely important health implications
- B. Studies shown: lacking strong relationships increases the risk of death from all causes by 50% - similar to smoking 15 cigarettes a day, even higher percentage than being obese; Great Britain study showed loneliness can be twice as unhealthy as being overweight
- C. We actually function better when we have close relationships in our lives; Ecclesiastes 4:9 (ESV)
⁹Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.
- D. In close, spiritually-focused relationships is where the greatest transformation in a person takes place
- E. [SLIDE] True, measurable spiritual growth in a person’s life rarely, if ever, takes place without *koinonia* relationships

IV. 3rd “Why”

- A. [SLIDE] Christianity isn’t a “solo” act; being closely relational is not optional for a follower of Christ; stories of people leaving a church because they don’t feel “connected”, not experiencing deep/close/spiritually-focused relationships/communion with other Christians

V. Close

- A. Passage today is Jesus praying for His followers first – He tells His Heavenly Father:
 - i. I told them about You; You brought them out of this world and gave them to Me

- ii. They have received and kept Your word
- iii. They have believed
- iv. I am leaving this world, *I am coming to You ... keep* (watch over, protect) *them* (those with whom I've developed *koinonia* relationships with)
- v. *Keep them ... in koinonia* relationships with one another so that *they may be one, even as We are one* (lead them to build relationships that mirror the relationship that You, Father and I have)
- B. If you want to reflect the image of who God really is to the world ...
- C. If you want to experience real/measurable spiritual transformation in your life ...
- D. If you want to truly “connect” with other spiritually-focused believers in Christ ...
- E. Then – because of these three “whys” for needing these *koinonia* relationships we should be motivated by this simple truth saw earlier from God's Word – *two are better than one*
- F. To be able to participate/experience this *koinonia* (communion) with Jesus Christ, you must first understand your sinfulness, that you need saving, this time of invitation is for you to surrender your life to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior because He alone can save and restore you back into right relationship with God your Creator
- G. Once you've made that decision, made it public today by coming forward during this time of invitation, you can then participate and experience this *koinonia* (intimate communion) with the Lord by participating with us in the celebration of Communion (the Lord's Supper) immediately after