

We have been noting this phrase in Phi 3:10 *“that I may come to know Him”* which has been the reference to our current study of **Occupation with the person of Christ.** One of the principles we see is that occupation with Christ is the *ultimate* motivator in life. The love motive from which to live the Christian life and serve the Lord is good, but it is not adequate because it is not the motivation that is underwritten by God. The sincere believer seeks to struggle forward through the love motive which is “He did for me, so I must do for Him.” As growing Christians, we need to see the necessity of going beyond the love motive and reaching the life motive of Phi 1:21 **“For to me to live is Christ.”**

A magnificent word, which applies to our subject of occupation with Christ, is the word **“fellowship”** in 1JO 1:3 **“what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”**

There is one word our Lord uses that truly describe what fellowship with the Father is and what occupation with Christ is all about. Joh 15:15 **“No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.”**

The word fellowship, as John uses it, is the distinctive and exceptional word of “friendship.”

It is an interesting that in the three letters John writes in the last days of his ministry, he never speaks of Jesus as Lord, and never speaks of the disciples of Jesus as His servants. John did not forget the relationship which he and his fellow-disciples had with The Lord Jesus Christ (TLJC) as His bond-servants, nor did John forget the supremacy and sovereignty of Christ, that He was, indeed, the Lord. All three of John's letters, First, Second and Third John, are distinctively the letters of a close, and intimate, and personal friendship with TLJC. Paul also this word in passages like, 1Co 1:9 **“God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.”**

The word is very important to note concerning our relationship with God and our subject of occupation with Christ. The word "fellowship" here is translated in many ways in the New Testament and connotes the idea of intimacy, and is often translated “partakers, partners and companions.”

We have an illustration in the early church in the book of Acts concerning the intimacy and the intensesness of this word:: Acts 2:42-44 **“And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer and everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who had believed were together, and had all things in common;”**

Here we get even closer to the heart of the true meaning of fellowship with God and occupation with the person of Christ.

Having fellowship whether it is with man or with God, is having all things in common. One of the greatest titles that any believer could have is to be called a friend of God. It was said of Abraham in Jam 2:23. Abraham was known for having friends in high places 2Ch 20:7, Isa 41:8. To become a friend of God is the ultimate expression of fellowship with God and occupation with Christ.

There are two words that signify our true fellowship with God. One is the word *communion*, which we will use in the realm of *friendship*, the other is the word *partnership*, which we use in the realm of *business*.

By looking at what friendship is on the human level, we may climb to the higher elevation, and understand what is meant by our fellowship or our friendship, with God.

Solomon put it like this in Pro 17:9 **“He who covers a transgression seeks love but he who repeats a matter separates intimate friends.”**

There are probably very few people in your life with whom you can pour out everything in your heart. We have many acquaintances, and we value some of them, but very few real close friends, and we value all of them. With your friend you can think out loud, no restraint, no need to keep up an appearance. You pour everything out; knowing that your friend will sift between the garbage and the valuables, and with grace will throw the garbage away, and keep the valuables. That is friendship on the human level, and it describes what true friendship with God is as well, that is on our side of the fellowship.

With God, it is our privilege to pour out everything that is on our heart, saying anything, saying everything we are thinking. God said this about David in Acts 13:22 ***“He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will.”***

We see the type of fellowship David had with God: Psa 55:16-17 ***“As for me, I shall call upon God, And the Lord will save me. Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur, And He will hear my voice.”***

Too often we think our conversation with God must be that of carefully prepared. Conversing with God reaches its highest level when, alone with Him, you can pour out everything in your heart; that's what a true friend is for. The manner in which we have learned that secret, and live in the power of it, is the measure of the joy and strength of our friendship with God. It is perfectly true and it can be done.

That's what the apostle Paul said Rom 8:26 ***“And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;”***

This is why in Heb 7:25 ***“Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”***

So, even though we do not pray properly, he answers our imperfect articulation with the perfect comprehension of our needs. The other aspect of ***fellowship***, which is ***partnership*** or mutual interests and devotion. Fellowship with God means mutual interests: “God is interested in me, and I am interested in God.” Many are burdened when fellowship with God and occupation with Christ are mentioned. That I may be interested in God is understandable; however, how can God be interested in me.

Look at Psa 8:3-4. Fellowship with God means that God is interested in my being, in my spiritual life, in my mental ability, in my physical need. He said Mat 6:25 ***“For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?”***

There is no part of our life in which God is not interested 1Pe 5:7 ***“casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you.”***

Now, the other side of the coin is that I am to be interested in the things of God, in His present enterprises; in His ultimate ends and goals. My friendship and fellowship with God and occupation with the person of Christ demands that my eyes are upon that goal, Eph 3:17. Partnership also means mutual devotion. God's resources are all at my disposal and we have a mutual fellowship and friendship. My responsibility in the partnership or friendship is that my resources ought to be at His disposal, for true friendship is not a one-way thing? How often we settle down in our own wisdom and neglect asking for His, all the while He is waiting to give, Jam 1:5 ***“But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”***

Why doesn't God accomplish His purpose in the world, and put an end to all the things that agitate and perplex us? The long-suffering of God is His patience, Omnipotence is never in a hurry, Omniscience is right on time, Omnipresence is right there with us. As one preacher said, ***“it is a marvelous thing that Enoch walked with God, however, it is a more marvelous thing that God walked with Enoch.”***

We look back over our own lives and see how many times He slowed down and stayed with us at our pace, waiting, always waiting. We have all kept Him waiting when we ought not, but He has waited even then.

If God accommodates Himself to us in gentleness, He enables us to rise to new activity with Him, in almost overwhelming power.

2Co 2:14 ***“But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.”***

He leads us everywhere in triumph.

**Silence** is the final proof of friendship, and contentment in silence. A true friend is one you can sit with and say nothing. God doesn't always speak to us when we want Him to. God's truest friends are those to whom God is often silent with. Our fellowship with God and occupation with the

person of Christ will have times of silence, so if we are driven to silence, we don't have to be afraid. PSA 62:1 ***“My soul {waits} in silence for God only; From Him is my salvation.”***

It is much easier to work for God than to wait for God. It is the waiting that tells and wears the heart. If in our deepest heart, when there is no song, no psalm, no ecstasy; no joy, we are true; His friendship will bear the strain.

He wants us to be such friends that we can bear the strain of silence and the great test of quietness. But, we need to practice our fellowship. He wants to talk to us of His own secrets, of the meaning of our life, and the way He would have us go; one of the greatest lacks in the present day is that we do not take time to listen. Has it ever occurred to you that God is often disappointed that we are so busy doing things for Him, that we have not time to talk to Him? God is not interested in your performance. When it comes to true friendship and fellowship, performance is to be the result of the proper motivation from the heart not because of obligation.

There comes a time in the life of every believer when he must go it alone in silence. You're going to have that experience from time to time to see if the doctrine is there. God never lets you go it alone unless you've been exposed to the doctrine. Sooner or later you are going to have to face the test of the silence of God, and you need to recall that He is your true friend! There are times when all the doors in your life being closed, reveal the silence of God and then you must make your own decisions and go it alone, as it were. It is a part of His plan for your life.

Don't blame others when you know that He is in control and if He wanted to He could change things in the twinkling of an eye!

Think instead of the fact that you have a friend in high places, who will justify you, acquit you, vindicate you, and defend and support you when one condemns you. He will intercede for you.

### **Occupation with Christ is a foundation or basis in the Christian life.**

1. Occupation with Christ is the basis by which the mature believer contributes to national blessing, Deu 30:15-16,20, 30:15-20.
2. Occupation with Christ produces combat courage and victory in battle, Jos 23:6-10-11.
3. Occupation with Christ is the basis for preservation in testing,  
Psa 31:23-24. Occupation with Christ is the only way a believer can handle the problems of marriage, romance, friendship, business, profession, or job.
4. Occupation with Christ is the basis of stability and great happiness, Psa 16:8-9.
5. Occupation with Christ results in supergrace escrow blessings,  
Psa 37:4-5.
6. Occupation with Christ is the basis for strength under pressure, Heb 11:24-27. Occupation with Christ in maturity becomes the means of great decisions and great dynamics in history. In Heb 11:27, ***“Moses gave up the crown of Egypt.”***
7. Occupation with Christ avoids soul fatigue, Heb 12:2-3.  
Heb 12:3 ***“For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.”***  
Occupation with Christ is mandated by God; it is not an option.  
If you are going to execute His plan for your life, you must come to the point of occupation with Christ.
8. Occupation with Christ is both the basis for support and the motivation to pass suffering for blessing tests, and it even intensifies during evidence testing, Phi 1:20-21.