

"Community" is defined as "a group of people who have the same interest."
The Bible word for community is **fellowship** = *to have things in common*.

Everyone who claims to love God should eagerly embrace the teachings of Biblical community.

Threefold Theme of 1 John:

1. Connect to Community - Through Commitment
2. Build Community – Through acts of love
3. Protect Community – Knowing how to identify and reject false teaching
- 4.

1 John 1:3 that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

1 John 1:4 And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

1 John 5:21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

Ezekiel 14:3-5 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ³ "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put before them that which causes them to stumble into iniquity. "Everyone of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart, and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, and then comes to the prophet, I the LORD will answer him who comes, according to the multitude of his idols, ⁵ that I may seize the house of Israel by their heart, because they are all estranged from Me by their idols."'

2 Corinthians 1:25 Not that we have dominion (to lord) over your faith, but are fellow workers for your joy; for by faith you stand.

1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

To "love the world means" to allow one's desires and actions to be fashioned by our culture instead of Christ.

The word "lust" means strong desire, in this context, sinful desires of any and all kind. Sinful desires that our culture uses as bait to draw us away from our love for Christ.

John provided spiritual reasons for us "not to love the world." Such love for the world counters our love for God, a love that should be our highest desire in life!

John provided practical reasons for us "not to love the world." All that the world promises and offers, at its very best, passes away! However, they that love God and do His will shall abide forever. This "forever" not only speaks of duration but quality!

The root issue is about our love life! Who are what do we love the most? Loving God more than we love ourselves is always the root problem.

1 John 2:28-29 And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. ²⁹ If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.

"Abide" – a verb in the present tense meaning to continue to abide, to keep abiding, to staying remaining close to Christ. **"Abide"** is an imperative, meaning it is a command, not a suggestion.

- Make your relationship with Jesus priority #1.
- Cherish your walk with Christ.
- Protect your walk with Christ.

I am a man who is deeply in love with himself, who is in search of being deeply in **love with his Savior**, and such a quest makes for a very adventurous, but an inconsistent journey. But it is a journey that is well worth pursuing, easy no, worth it, yes, it is worth it, and throughout all eternity it will be worth it! Jerry Pelfrey (11.27.08)

Every believer should confess that **Jesus Christ is my greatest and highest priority!**

To state otherwise would be idolatry.

What does my relationship with Christ look like during the week?

How does Jesus determine the life choices I make on a daily basis?

Spiritual Assignment for this week: (1) Study the Passages below. (2) Review and work through the Soul Searching Question.

1 Corinthians 3:11-15 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

2 Corinthians 5:10-11 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. ¹¹ Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are well known to God, and I also trust are well known in your consciences.

Six Soul Searching Questions | Phillip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks At Psalm 23*

(1) Do I really belong to God? (2) Do I recognize His right to me? (3) Do I respond to His authority and acknowledge His ownership? (4) Do I find freedom and complete fulfillment in this arrangement? (5) Do I have a purpose and deep contentment because I am under His care? (6) Do I know rest and repose (calmness, peace) and a definite sense of exciting adventure in belonging to Him?