

When we seek fellowship with God, we are essentially seeking "eternal life" - not eternal existence, but eternal life. There is a potentially infinite distinction to be made, because we will eternally exist in heaven or hell (Matthew 25:46), but only one could be possibly regarded as true "life." How does John say we can enjoy fellowship with this source of eternal life?

John shows us a link, a chain, a bridge of fellowship pro-

ceeding from God: God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ, His apostles and witnesses, and their writings! It is only by reading their writings that our "joy may be full." It is only through "fellowshipping" their writings, the Scriptures, the Bible that we can have fellowship with these apostles, witnesses, and prophets, who had direct contact and fellowship with our loving Savior and King. And, it is only through Jesus that we can

approach the Father (John 14:6-9; Acts 4:12). Therefore, if we want to have fellowship with God, we must ultimately submit to those ambassadors and the methods that God chose to extend fellowship. Only through following God's Word can we enjoy fellowship with His apostles, His Son, and thereby God Himself. ~

(from InSearchofTruth.org)

NAVARRE MESSENGER

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Fellowship with GOD

Why?

Do you want to have fellowship with God? Do you wish to have a meaningful relationship with your Creator and the Designer of the entire universe? I sure do! I greatly look forward to that day, when I get to join that heavenly throng depicted here:

After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."

Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunders, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are

the seven Spirits of God. Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to

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Morning Worship Service_10:00 AM

Evening Worship Service_6:00 PM

Wednesday

Bible Class for all ages_7:00 PM

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come!” Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: “You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.” (Revelation 4:1-11)

Although there are many wondrous images portrayed in this one view, please focus on the One, Who is the center of this praise. Why were these heavenly beings so rich with their overflowing thanksgiving?

These spiritual creatures return to two different themes in their praise: One, God’s personal worthiness by virtue of His nature, and two, His worthiness because of what He has accomplished.

God is the infinite being, unsurpassed in holiness and power. No one can be compared to Him (Psalm 89:6-8). He is the timeless being who “was and is to come” and “lives forever and ever.” The symbolic imagery of jasper, sardius, emerald, lightnings, thunderings, voices, and being surrounded by such pure, powerful creatures all point to His holiness and might. Recognition of His attributes are justified and good, because the praise proclaimed is first true, and second we only injure ourselves to minimize Him. Furthermore, God does not just exist in infinite holiness and power, He has also created! He has created us among all of his glorified hosts. Therefore, life and all the blessings we enjoy from Him likewise worthily demand our hearty praise and thanksgiving.

Why Not?

For a moment, please consider the alternative of fellowship with God. Please

consider the possibility of life apart from God. What kind of life would that be? Please consider Peter’s response to a similar predicament:

From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?” But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” (John 6:66-68)

If we were to reject that pure and perfect existence with the Creator of all the universe, how would we possibly improve upon it? Could we fashion better bodies for ourselves? No, He has prepared undying, immortal, incorruptible, and glorious frames for us (I Corinthians 15:35-57)! How could we possibly improve upon His design? ... Could we make a better home for ourselves? No, He has prepared a place without tears, death, sorrow, crying, and pain (Revelation

21:1-5). ... Could we discover a greater source of sustenance and drink? No, He has readied for us “twelve fruits” from the “tree of life” with the “leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations” and free access to the “fountain of the water of life” (Revelation 21:6; 22:1-2). ... Could we search out a greater source of wisdom, experience, and guidance? No, because He is the One Who made “all things,” and He is bringing us to His home, where we will dwell with Him in His infinite light (Revelation 21:1-3; 22:1-2). ... Could we find or fashion a greater source of true love, mercy, compassion, and friendship? No, He has already sacrificed the ultimate, the best of all things - His Son - to draw us to Him (Romans 8:32; John 3:16; 15:13-15; Ephesians 1:3-12). ... How could we possibly improve upon any decision or provision He has prepared for us? What more could we possibly want?

Ahh, therein lies the rub! We have to choose to accept what He has outlined. And, that’s the real problem, is it not? We want to do, what we want to do. We do not want anyone to tell us what to do, no matter how qualified or motivated they may be! This is the wonder of pride and will. It does not matter, if we can really improve upon the provided option or not. We just want to be free of restraint and consequence, to do whatever we will. Moreover, we will injure ourselves in the most tragic way just to prove that we can! ... Can we see the folly of this prideful, self-destruction? Maybe it is by His design and grace, because even here He bestows a gift - a choice. At last, it depends upon us, whether to accept His offering or venture on our own. At the last, He lets us choose what to do. Do we wish to have fellowship with God? Or, will we reject Him and turn to an existence entirely devoid of

Him and bereft of all that He is?

How?

Assuming that we desperately want and crave this fellowship with our Most High, Holy, and Majestic Creator, how do we obtain it? How is such a link built and maintained?

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life — the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us — 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. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. (I John 1:1-4)