

"Except They Be Agreed" (Fellowship)

Introduction:

- A. Many preachers today are calling for expanded fellowship.
*If one's unfaithfulness relates to difficult ethical issues, church government, or worship (while not denying one of the foundational doctrines of Christianity.), fellowship may be maintained indefinitely for the sake of exhorting and encouraging in the truth (Rubel Shelly, **I Just Want to Be a Christian**. 73).*
- B. Others have broken bonds of fellowship for unnecessary reasons.
- C. Read Amos 3:1-8 and comment on the text. Explain verse 3.
- D. Can we have fellowship with each other if we do not agree?

I. What is "fellowship"?

- A. meaning: association, joint participation, partnership, sharing
- B. Fellowship in Christ through the gospel is spiritual. - Romans 15:27; Ephesians 1:3
- C. Our fellowship in Christ is primarily with God. - 1 John 1:3
 - 1. The gospel calls men into fellowship with God. - 1 Corinthians 1:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:14
 - 2. The fellowship is broken by walking in darkness. - 1 John 1:5-6
 - 3. It is maintained by walking in the light. - 1 John 1:7
- D. We have fellowship with those who also have fellowship with God. - 1 John 1:7

II. in Faith

- A. "The faith" is the revealed will of God. - Galatians 1:11-12,23
- B. In faith we must have agreement. - 2 John 9-11

III. In Opinion

- A. Opinion is what men think. - Deuteronomy 29:29; cf. Exodus 3:1-5
- B. It includes things allowed but not required - 1 Corinthians 8:8-9
- C. In opinion we must allow each other liberty. - Romans 14:1-3

IV. Love should be the motive for all we do. - 1 Corinthians 16:14

Conclusion:

- A. On September 7, 1809, a little group in Washington, Pennsylvania, calling themselves the "Christian Association of Washington," adopted the "Declaration and Address" of Thomas Campbell. It's call was "In faith unity, in opinion liberty, in all things charity."
- B. We must agree on matters of faith, we should allow each other liberty in matters of opinion, and we should exercise love toward one another in all things.