

Fellowship Synonyms
1 John 1:3

Fellowship Synonyms

Last week we ran across an observation that Paul associates fellowship with verbs he prefixes with “with” or “συν” in Greek. So, let us look at some of these verbs. Do they help us identify actions that are associated with fellowship between God and man? Note the emphasis on “life.”

Here are some passages we will look at:

Romans 6:8 Live with Christ

2 Corinthians 7:3 Die together Live together

Romans 8:16-17

joint testimony with the Holy Spirit

joint heirs with Christ

joint sufferers

joint glorification

Romans 6:4 joint burial so that we walk in newness of life

Galatians 2:19 joint crucifixion

Colossians 2:12 joint resurrection

Colossians 3:1 joint resurrection so that joint glory

Ephesians 2:4-6 joint life, joint resurrection

2 Timothy 2:12 joint death, joint life

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Romans 6:8 We share the life of Christ

Romans 6:8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

Died with. This is the verb “died” plus preposition “with.” Technically this death with Christ is called “retroactive” positional truth. At the point of faith in Christ, we are logically placed on the cross and died with Christ. We share his death. But Paul did not use a “συν” + verb. No. That was reserved to emphasize life.

Live with (συζάω). “with” prefix plus verb to live. It is an interesting construction. Died with Christ is verb (died) preposition (with) noun (Christ). But Live with (verb without preposition) noun (Christ).

At the point of faith in Jesus, we were entered into Jesus’ death and into “in Christ.” We now share His life. This life is properly lived while in faith dependence on the Holy Spirit.

We could just fly by this and say we live with Christ and be done with it. But, this life is “in Christ.” This life is lived as a child of God. Our relationship is governed by the fact we are in union with Christ the Son of God. This life is profound and beyond any words I can come up with.

Have you ever been in a huge ornate cathedral which generates a profound sense of awe in you? The Holy Spirit indwells us to provide an exquisite temple in which we fellowship with Jesus. We fellowship with Christ in this temple. We operate in it through the power of God the Holy Spirit. It should give us pause and and sense of awe.

The important takeaway is the emphasis on “joint-life” with Jesus which in other places is called “fellowship.” It is partnership/sharing. **Life.**

2 Corinthians 7:3 Die together Live together

2 Corinthians 7:2 Make room for us *in your hearts*; we wronged no one, we corrupted no one, we took advantage of no one.

2 Corinthians 7:3 I do not speak to condemn you, for I have said before that you are in our hearts to die together and to live together.

Die together. From Biblehub: “Built from the preposition σύν (“with”) and the verb ἀποθνήσκω (“to die”), the term expresses shared death or death in company with another. Its range of meaning embraces literal willingness to die alongside someone and the spiritual reality of dying with Christ.”

...

“The motif dovetails with “co-crucified” (συνεσταύρωμαι, Romans 6:6), “co-buried” (συντάφητε, Colossians 2:12), and “co-raised” (συνεγείρω, Colossians 3:1). Together these verbs articulate the believer’s participation in every stage of the Christ-event, forming the backbone of Paul’s ethical instruction: because we have died with Christ, sin’s dominion is broken and new life is obligatory (Romans 6:11-13).¹”

Some key concepts: “believer’s participation.” “new life is obligatory.”
Life.

Live together. From Biblehub: “Strong’s Greek 4800 underlines the concept of sharing life in the deepest sense—either with fellow believers or, supremely, with Jesus Christ. Far more than mere coexistence, it conveys an inseparable union in vital, ongoing life together. While the word surfaces only three times in the New Testament, its theological

1 <https://biblehub.com/greek/4880.htm>

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weight touches on *koinonia*, sanctification, resurrection hope, and pastoral intimacy.”

I quote from Biblehub because it is authoritative and it is not just me saying these things. Others point to these words which point to fellowship with God.

Sharing. *Koinonia*. Life together. **Life**.

2 Corinthians 7:4 Great is my confidence in you; great is my boasting on your behalf. I am filled with comfort; I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction.

Romans 8:16-17 witness with, joint heirs, suffer with, glorified together (with x 4)

In these two verses, Paul packs in four $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ + verbs. We participate in many facets of God’s plan.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit Himself testifies with (or to bear witness with is a single word $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ + witness) our spirit that we are children of God,

Testifies with. $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ + witness.

(Bible Hub) “The verb translated “to bear witness with” joins the ideas of testimony and partnership. It conveys an allied, corroborating witness—never a solitary voice, but one that adds weight to an already existing testimony. The New Testament confines the term to Paul’s Letter to the Romans, where it appears three times and describes three distinct yet harmonious spheres of witness: the conscience, the Holy Spirit, and the apostle’s own spiritual perception.²”

² <https://biblehub.com/greek/4828.htm>

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““The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.” Here the verb describes the Spirit’s direct, experiential assurance of adoption. The apostle does not ground assurance merely in external rites or intellectual assent but in a joint testimony—Spirit with spirit—producing filial confidence and freedom from fear (Romans 8:15). This inner witness anchors the believer’s identity and empowers victorious Christian living.³”

Not said but implied is the emphasis on life of the children of God. **Life.**

Romans 8:17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs(συν plus heir) with Christ, if indeed we suffer with(συν plus suffer) *Him* so that we may also be glorified with (συν plus suffer) *Him*.

This verse has some difficulties. I will only deal with the issues in a cursory manner. I will wait to delve into the details when we get to this verse as we study Romans chapter 8.

Children. *Teknon*. Not baby believers.

Heirs. The word is deceptive in English. The Old Testament concept which is used here refers primarily to possession of property, not death.⁴

Fellow heirs. He uses “heirs of God” and then uses fellow heirs of Christ. We share in the inheritance of Christ.

“Some prefer to render v. 17 as follows: “And if children, then heirs—that is, heirs of God. Also fellow heirs with Christ if indeed we suffer with him so we may also be glorified with him.” Such a translation

3 <https://biblehub.com/greek/4828.htm>

4 <https://deanbibleministries.org/new-testament-menuitem/romans-menuitem/message/2010-romans-087b/read>

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suggests two distinct inheritances, one coming to all of God's children, the other coming only to those who suffer with Christ.⁵

This is the path that Robby Dean takes. There are a couple of issues here.

First, there is a theological problem. Salvation is faith alone in Christ alone. There is no other requirement for salvation (Acts 16:32 and other passages). So, if being heirs of God is the same as joint-heirs of Christ we are required to bear Christ's sufferings as part of salvation. In other words, salvation now depends upon works. That is, if you accept the NASB translation. The issue pivots on where we put the punctuation.

Second, there appears to be a separation of inheritances by the use of different words. There are two instances of the basic word for inheritance. Some translations put a colon after the first word for inheritance. Others put a dash⁶. The two words for inheritance following the first explain the first use of inheritance. But the two words that follow are different. One is "heirs of God." The other is "joint-heirs (one word) of Christ." There is a difference. Paul is trying to tell us something.

As I see it there are perhaps five different issues that support the interpretation that there are two different inheritances/possessions. The first inheritance deals with salvation/justification and the position "in Christ." The second has to do with rewards.

1. **Logic.** If both inheritances, inheritance of God and the joint heirship with Christ are the same, then this implies that there is a requirement for salvation beyond mere faith: suffering. This violates many other passages. Logic says that there is a different explanation for the two inheritances.⁷

5 <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=rom%20%3A17&version=NET>

6 <https://www.biblegateway.com/verse/en/Romans%20%3A17>

7 <https://deanbibleministries.org/new-testament-menuitem/romans-menuitem/message/2010-romans-087b/read>

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2. **Definition.** The Greek word for inheritance goes back to the Hebrew concept of inheritance which is centered not on the death of someone but on the possession of something⁸.
3. **Vocabulary.** There are two different words for inheritance in this verse. There is the normal word for inheritance. Then there is the $\sigma\upsilon\nu$ + inheritance. Why would Paul use two different words for the same concept? It suggests there is a difference between the words.
4. **Two Possessions.** In the text, there are two different inheritances/possessions stated: inheritance of God and joint-heirship with Christ. This is also brought out by use of two different words for inheritance.
5. **Grammar.** Biblehub suggests that the grammar ($\mu\epsilon\nu\dots\delta\epsilon$) supports a single inheritance. I beg to differ. Robby Dean does not address this issue, so I'll have to wait till I come across the full explanation.

This boils down to where to put the comma. Some give the illustration of the sentence in English: "A woman without her man is nothing."

A woman, without her man, is nothing.

A woman, without her, man is nothing.

Same words two different meanings. Where to put the comma?

Robby Dean's translation

"However. If we move a comma so that we place it after God ..."

Romans 8:17 (Dean Translation) If children, heirs also of God ..." Then "joint-heirs with Christ if we indeed suffer with Him."

8 <https://deanbibleministries.org/new-testament-menuitem/romans-menuitem/message/2010-romans-087b/read>

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“So that being an heir of God is related to being a child of God and that is part of the grace package received at the instant of salvation. But to be considered a joint-heir with Christ in which there is additional reward on the basis of suffering. That would be a second category.⁹”

Romans 6:4 Buried with Christ, walk in newness of life

Romans 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Buried with. This is one word. Buried with prefix “συν.”

Baptism of the Holy Spirit first identifies us with Christ’s death on the cross. The purpose is so that we are also identified with Christ being raised from the dead. The goal is to “walk” in newness of life. **Life.**

Romans 6:6 United with Christ.

Romans 6:5 For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection,

United. (Biblehub) “Derived from the idea of two living things “growing together,” the term evokes the ancient practice of grafting a branch into a rootstock so that, over time, the tissues fuse and a single organism emerges. The imagery is organic, inseparable, and life-bearing: what affects one part inevitably affects the other.¹⁰”

9 <https://deanbibleministries.org/new-testament-menuitem/romans-menuitem/message/2010-romans-087b/read>

10 <https://biblehub.com/greek/4854.htm>

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Romans 6:6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him*, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;

Crucified with. Συυ + crucified. It is interesting to note that this word is used of the two criminals who were “crucified with” Jesus. Now, as believers, we too are crucified with Jesus.

Romans 6:7 for he who has died is freed from sin.

Death with Christ leads to resurrection, a new life, in order that we would not be slaves to sin, freed from the domination of the sin nature. **Life.**

Galatians 2:19 Crucified with Jesus. Christ lives in me.

Galatians 2:19 For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Crucified with. One word. Crucified plus prefix “συυ.” The result is that when I am living the Christian life, it is Christ in me that lives. It is a life of faith which is lived in the position of “in Christ” or in this case said as “in the Son of God.” This is not emphasizing positional truth. This not a status. This is emphasizing a dynamic life lived in Christ. The “dynamo” of the Christian life is the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

Colossians 2:12 Buried with Christ and Raised up with Him

Colossians 2:9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

Colossians 2:10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;

Colossians 2:11 and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;

Colossians 2:12 having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

This is a repeat of what Paul said in Romans chapter 6.

Buried with. $\Sigma\upsilon\nu$ + buried.

Colossians 3:1 Raised up with Christ.

Colossians 3:1 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Raised up. $\Sigma\upsilon\nu$ + raised up. Although there are several disparate passages, they begin to form a coherent narrative. Our salvation is intimately joined to Christ's salvation work. We died with Him. We were

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buried with Him. We are raised up with Him. The purpose is that we live the abundant life in Him and with Him.

Colossians 3:2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

Colossians 3:3 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

But here, Paul takes us another step past the Romans 6 passage. Here is he is emphasizing living life here and now. Our lives now should be motivated and energized by our thinking which is focused on heavenly things. **Life.**

Colossians 3:4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

Raised up with Christ → Life in Christ → Glory in Him

Life.

Ephesians 2:6 Alive together with Him.

Ephesians 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

Ephesians 2:5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

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Ephesians 2:6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,

Ephesians 2:7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Raised up.

2 Timothy 2:12 Died with Him. Live with Him

2 Timothy 2:11 It is a trustworthy statement:

For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him;

2 Timothy 2:12 If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us;

2 Timothy 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

Here Paul summarizes our salvation in three phases.

Died with. $\Sigma\upsilon\nu$ + died. Aorist tense in a point of time on the cross via our faith.

Live with. $\Sigma\upsilon\nu$ + live. Future tense referring to our time on earth and beyond.

Reign with. $\Sigma\upsilon\nu$ + reign. This takes it a step further into phase 3 salvation when we reign with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom on into eternity.

Died with → Buried with → resurrected with → live with → glory

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“To me, the true glory of the Christian message is not the fact that it is a way to get to heaven, (though there was a time in my early Christian life when that was all important to me, and it certainly is the way to get to heaven), but the richness of the Christian proclamation to me is that, in Christ, I discover a way to become a man. That is the really tremendous thing. God is not interested in making saints, period. He is interested in making saints, but only as one step in the process of producing men. After all, that is what God is after – men and women. The goal is not sainthood, but manhood and womanhood, as God intended them to be.”

“All the writers of Scripture aim toward that goal. You can see this in the first letter of the Apostle John. He makes clear right from the beginning that it is impossible to become a man, as God intended men to be, without first becoming a Christian. In other words, God is absolutely necessary to the process of fulfilling our humanity. God is not, therefore, an option to life, as we are being told on many sides today. He is the most basic necessity of life. It is impossible to live and fulfill ourselves without coming to know God through Jesus Christ. Our Lord himself put it flatly, “Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God,” {cf, Matt 4:4}. That is essential to the full development of manhood and womanhood.¹¹”

11 <https://server.firefighters.org/stedman/stedmandvd/1john/index.html>