

Fellowship

Key Men Invitational 2013



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"They say the Christian life is like a three-legged stool," the young Sunday School teacher told his class. "You must be supported by three things-the Word, prayer and witnessing-to be effective in your Christian lives."

Throughout his ministry, Dawson Trotman, founder and first president of The Navigators, liked to use illustrations or diagrams like this to help others remember basic principles of the Christian life. So in the 1930s, when he was working with Sunday School classes and boys' clubs, he used the best illustration he had heard describing the balanced Christian life-the three-legged stool (illustration 1).

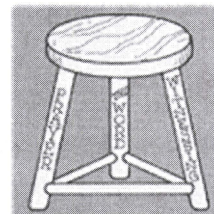


Illustration 1

But Trotman became dissatisfied with the illustration. It left the Christian sitting down-certainly not a practical way to approach the dynamic Christian life he saw taught in the Bible. After much thought and prayer, he designed what he called "The Wheel" illustration to solve this problem.

This wasn't the Wheel many of us know today, but a forerunner to it. The hub was Christ, the center of the Christian's life; but there were only three spokes on this wheel, corresponding to the three legs of the stool (illustration 2).

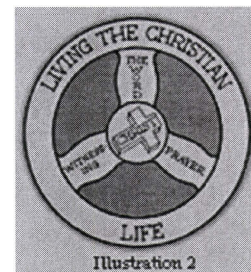


Illustration 2

Now he had the Christian moving, but he began to see another weakness in the illustration. It showed that Christians should witness, know the Word and pray, but it left out the application of the Bible to all areas of one's life demonstrating the power of Christian living.

So Trotman added a fourth spoke-"Living the Life"-to the Wheel (illustration 3). The rim was called "The Christian Life" or "The Christian in Action."



Illustration 3

This emphasis on living every area of life with and for the Lord came at an important time. Dr. Arthur Glasser, dean of the School of Mission at Fuller Theological Seminary, says, "Dawson was one of the pioneers in reacting against easy believism. Dawson said 'You can't treat a command in the Bible as advice. A command is a command!' He was a living protest against a form of Christianity that sought to understand the Bible, but which wasn't serious about obeying it."

Later the new fourth spoke, "Living the Life," was shortened to "Obedience" and the rim was renamed "The Christian Living the Life" (illustration 4). Some people asked, "Where is the Holy Spirit in the Wheel?" Trotman answered that the Holy Spirit was intrinsic throughout, being necessary to the fulfillment of each component of the Wheel.

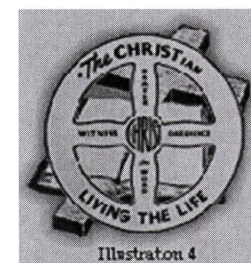


Illustration 4

After Trotman's death, in 1956, the Wheel continued to change. Some thought "Obedience" shouldn't be a spoke, since it wasn't in the same category as the other spokes. Rather, it was the theme of the entire Wheel.

At the same time others realized that another basic element of the Christian life was not included in the Wheel, even though it was being practiced throughout the body of Christ and was found throughout the New Testament-fellowship. So in 1968 "Obedience" was moved to the rim of the Wheel and "Fellowship" replaced it as a spoke.

That leaves us with the Wheel as it is today (illustration 5). And whether it remains in this form, or is eventually changed again, it is a useful way of understanding and remembering the essentials for living the Christian life, just as its forerunners were.

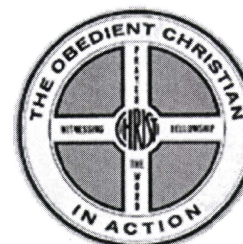


Illustration 5

Original title: "The Wheel Was Once a Three-Legged Stool," by Ray King from the January 1975 issue of NavLog.

What is God asking us to do when we talk about “fellowship”?

With God

- I Corinthians 1:9
- Psalm 42:1
- Psalm 63:1
- Jeremiah 29:13-14

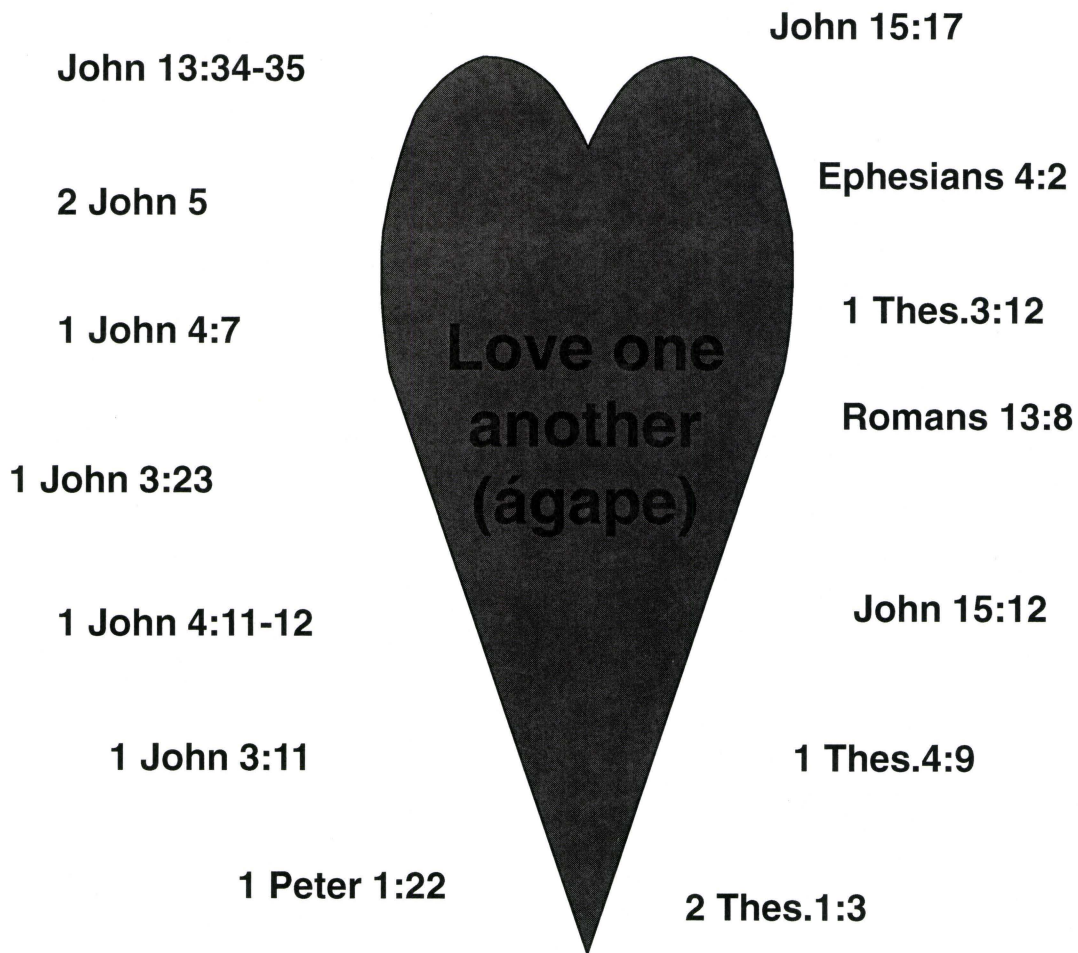
With each other

- I Corinthians
12:25-27
- Ephesians 1:1-3

Some Verses on the One Another

Mark 9:50	Galatians 5:13
John 13:14	Galatians 6:2
Acts 10:24	Ephesians 4:2,
Romans 12:10	Ephesians 4:32
Romans 12:16	Ephesians 5:21
Romans 14:19	Philippians 2:3
Romans 15:5	I Thes. 5:15
Romans 15:7	James 5:16
Romans 15:14	I Peter 4:9
I Corinthians 11:33	I John 1:7
I Corinthians 12:25	
I Corinthians 16:20	

Relationships characterized by the one another



The fundamental relationship in “one another” is to love one another.

Negative commands in one anothers

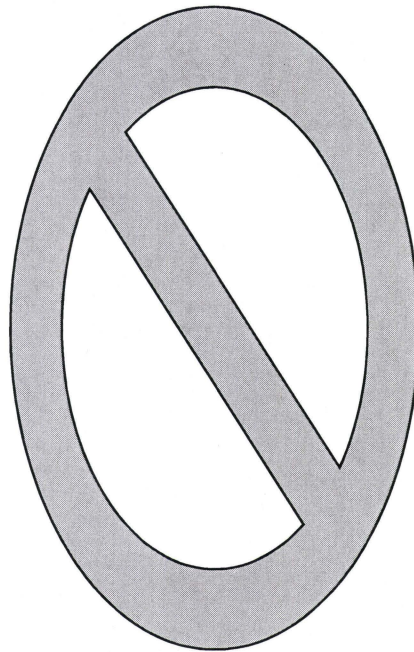
John 6:63

Rom.14:13

Col.3:9

James 5:9

1 Cor.7:5



Gal. 5:15

James
4:11

Gal. 5:26

Characteristics of a disciple

Acts 2:42

How would you describe your fellowship with God?

Joyful, rewarding, inspiring,
awkward, exciting, powerful,
uninspiring, uneventful, non-existent

How would you describe your fellowship with others?

Warm, awkward, healing, joyful,
encouraging, growing, tense, exciting,
stagnant

1. Do you regularly experience koinonia?
2. Have you isolated yourself from meaningful fellowship with other believers? If so, why?
3. Do you trust the people of God? Do you make yourself open to other believers?

John 17:21-23

I Corinthians 7:29