

There is a lot of buzz in the Christian community about the effect that the Web is having on ministries. Internet ministries are constantly congratulating themselves on being able to reach vast numbers of young people who they wouldn't have been able to talk to before, all with the creation of a few simple websites. There is something to be said for this type of Christian witnessing. It certainly is useful to be able to talk to people thousands of miles away, spreading the word of Jesus without even having to leave your own house. Something is lost, however. Christianity, you see, is not simply about preaching a set of doctrines. It is about Christian fellowship - joining with fellow believers in a righteous community dedicated to spreading Christian values.

As part of a Christian Baptist Fellowship group, I recognize that the most important relationship is between the worshiper and God. No Christian Fellowship can make up for not having accepted Jesus, and if you do except the Lord you will be saved even if you don't spend any time with fellow Christians. You won't, however, be doing much to spread the word of God. You see, we have been a community since the beginning of our religion, and we were intended to be a community. Christian church services, Christian youth groups, and other traditional assemblies are some of the ways that we have been able to look out for each members physical and spiritual well-being. The Internet is great for talking, but it is no good for maintaining real Christian Fellowships.

Even a modern church shouldn't only use modern methods of Christian fellowship. Just because the new ways of preaching help reach the younger generation doesn't mean that the old ways should be discarded. You can worship Jesus from in front of your computer, but you should also worship him with other believers. For some, Christian Fellowship may start with the Internet, but it can't end with the Internet. Christian ministries need to spread the word of God in the actual world, and believers need a community around them to help them stay true to God's path. Only in that way can we make sure that a church stays strong and true to its principles. On your own, it is very easy to preach one thing and do another. With fellow believers, however, you're much more likely to be held accountable for your actions.