

Story--young preacher looking for congregation.*

JOINT HEIRS

Heirs. Rom.8:16-17, Gal.3:29

Children of God. 1Jo.3:1 (“family of God”)

Christians (God’s spiritual family) have much in common. By focusing on such, we

Gain appreciation for what we have in common. (Tie that binds)

Become aware of the oneness of our faith, life and hope.

Realize the depth of our shared commitment.

Common faith. Tit.1:4

“Simon Peter... to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours...” 2Pe.1:1

Same faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Gal.3:26

Having made the same commitment. Act.2:41

Common confession. 1Ti.3:16

Confess/profess Jesus as the Christ:

His coming in the flesh. Phi.2:7 “...and being made in the likeness of men.”

Sacrificial death. 1Co.15:4-5

Ascended to rule and reign. Eph.1:20ff

Such confession resulting in salvation. Rom.10:10

Common temptations 1Co.10:13

The more we compare notes, we realize how much in common.

Human nature hasn’t changed since Bible days.

Deeds of flesh still beckon: “Immorality, impurity, sensuality, enmities, strife, jealousy, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing” Gal.5:19ff

Satan still tempts us in our peculiar weaknesses.

Common salvation Jde.3

Shared by all who come to the Lord. Gal.3:28

National, cultural, sexual differences have no bearing.

Common human body. 1Co.15:49

All share humanity: fleshly body.

Things not in common.

Church is true “melting pot” of humanity. Each brings their own “baggage.”

Have individual preferences, opinions, life situations, hopes, fears, problems.

WORKING TOGETHER

Being of the same mind (“on same page”), not withholding or sabotaging. Rom.12:16, 15:5, 1Co.1:10, Phi.2:2

One “dissident” can hamper any group activity.

Fellowship (joint participation). “We” includes “me”—doing my part, using my talent.

Synergism: together doing more than what can be done individually.

Pooling of resources and ability.

LESS THAN PERFECT MEMBER (erring)

Not an enemy, still brother. 2Th.3:14-15, Luk.17:3

“No brother of mine” makes “erring brother” an oxymoron.

Spiritual are to help restore brother. Gal.6:1ff

Paul “suffered long” with less than perfect brethren.

How would you like to be a member of a congregation like Corinth? Etc.

The Lord suffered long with the 7 churches of Asia.

LIFE WITH IMPERFECT BRETHREN

Sobering thoughts:

There will always be imperfect brethren.

Demanding perfection among brethren, if it is done, needs to begin with self. (A never-ending task.)

Brethren have to put up with my imperfections. And I expect them to love me anyway.

Others need to be able to count on me when they are overtaken in a fault...because I count on them whenever I am overtaken.

[Song Bless Be the Tie That Binds]

- [1] Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love;
 the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above.
- [2] Before our Father's throne we pour our ardent prayers;
 our fears, our hopes, our aims are one, our comforts and our cares.
- [3] We share each other's woes, our mutual burdens bear;
 and often for each other flows the sympathizing tear.
- [4] When we asunder part, it gives us inward pain;
 but we shall still be joined in heart, and hope to meet again.

CLOSING ADMONITION

Phi.2:1-4, 12-16 Think "one another" "common bond" "joint heirs" "brethren." (Not me/you)

Love one another, care for one another, help one another, strengthen one another.

Eph.4:32: *"Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."*

* He was wanting to work for a congregation that didn't have problems. Old preacher said "If there was one, it wouldn't want you."