

# Blessed be the TIE

by Robert Hatfield



The words to the song “Blessed Be the Tie That Binds” were first composed in 1782. The poem was soon put to music and, in 1845, congregations began to sing this great song. The thoughts behind the words are applicable in every age. In fact, the tie that binds hearts in Christian love can be broken neither by separation on earth in terms of miles, nor by separation in death in terms of years. Christians work together (1 Cor. 3:9), rejoice together, and weep together (Rom. 12:15). They help one another through burdens and trials of life (Gal. 6:1-2). This is a unique bond which only Christians may enjoy.

Yet, this writer is often saddened by those who attempt to break that blessed bond. Christianity teaches people to care for each other. In fact, the phrase “one another” can be found 43 times throughout the New Testament. When Christians allow Satan to step in the place of Christian duties and services, the knot of Christian fellowship begins to loosen.

**The tie is broken when Christians fail to attend worship services.** The Hebrews writer stated that Christians are to “consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works” (Heb. 10:24). He continued by citing a good time for Christian edification: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together ... but exhorting one another” (Heb. 10:25). The worship service provides a great opportunity to spiritually recharge. When Christians miss an assembly of the saints, they not only fail to worship and glorify God, but they miss an opportunity to encourage others and to be encouraged by others.

**The tie is broken when brethren attempt to compromise the truth.** Truth cannot be compromised for fellowship; the Bible is the standard by which fellowship is extended. “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). The light is the word of God (Psalm 119:105). One cannot claim Christian fellowship while operating separate from the light (cf. 1 John 1:6). Christians are commanded to be like-minded (Rom. 15:5), united in the truth.

**The tie is broken when brethren lack love.** Paul stated: “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love” (Rom. 12:10). Love among brethren is a designating mark of God’s people. Jesus said, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another” (John 13:35). John said, “he that loveth not his brother abideth in death” (1 John 3:14).

The tie that binds Christians in love and fellowship is one that requires attention. Therefore, when someone misses an assembly of the saints, other brothers and sisters call that person and tell them that they were missed. When one departs from the truth or lacks love toward others, caring Christians plead with him or her to come back to the light. Fellowship in Christ is to be treasured. This is why congregations have sung those great words for many years: “Blessed be the tie that binds!”

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