**Being *“Bound Together”***

Intro: 2Cor.6:14-18. Obviously, we are supposed to **not be** *“bound together with unbelievers.”*  But we **are** supposed to be ***bound together******with believers-*** both in the *universal* and *local* church senses. It should be equally obvious that such a *binding together* is supposed to be a “good” thing, cf.vv.16,18! So, two questions: 1) Do **you** feel *bound together* with brethren *generally?* And, 2) Do you feel *bound together* with this local church fellowship *specifically?*

Question 1: Do **you** feel *bound together* (united as *one*) with brethren ***generally?***

* Do you sense and relish camaraderie with saints in other places? Col.2:1-5
* Do you feel an attachment to them through Christ that causes you care for and support them in their struggle of faith? 1Thess. 4:9-10; Rom.15:27
* We love to have visitors from other congregations to come and support our gospel meeting efforts, but are we supportive of such efforts in other congregations? Some are, most are not. It is so easy to get caught up in “our own little world” and become practically oblivious to our *brethren* in other places- even those that are close at hand, let alone halfway around the world. But we are **brethren**, *bound together* in a common struggle with a common goal!

 Question 2: Do you feel *bound together* with this local church fellowship ***specifically?***

* Do you feel that *“We’re all in this together?”*  Do you use *we* and *us,* or *they* and *them* to refer to your brethren here and your association with us (or lack of the same)?
* Do you feel *a part* of the congregations’ *successes* and *failures?* Or, do feel your responsibilities end with our weekly worship time in the pew and a check in the contribution plate on Sunday morning? 2Cor.8:5
* Do you feel encouraged and uplifted when our Sunday morning attendance fills the building, but discouraged and disheartened when our Sunday and Wednesday attendance is only a fraction of Sunday morning’s? When you’re away from the congregation on the weekend, do you think of your *brethren* here? 1Thess.2:17

These things prompt a third question: What is it that *binds us together* in the ways suggested previously?

* Common **Parentage**- *born again* of same Father, 2Cor.6:18. We are ***brethren!***
* Common **Love for God**, 1John 4:7-21. We love *one another* because we love *God!*
* Common **Desire for the Word**, 2Cor.6:17; 1Pet.2:1-10; Acts 20:32. We *feed on* and are *nourished by* the Word of God to have strength to complete our journey!
* Common **Hope of Salvation**, Rom.5:1-5; Eph.1:18. The commonality of this hope and objective *binds us together* in a victorious march toward eternity!

Now get this:

* Our *common parentage* binds us together as *brethren-* the ***family tie****,* 2Cor.6:18;
* Our *common love for God* binds us together in *emotion- hearts* bound together: an ***emotional bond,*** note the “marriage” words, 2Cor.6:14-16;
* Our *common desire for the Word* binds us together in *intellect* (study) and *practice*- the ***practical bond***, 2Cor.6:17; and,
* Our *common hope* of salvation in heaven binds us together in *objective-* the ***bond of common goals/struggles****,* 2Cor.6:16.

**God never intended that you *do it* (Christianity) *alone*- which is why He gave us each other! Gen.2:18**