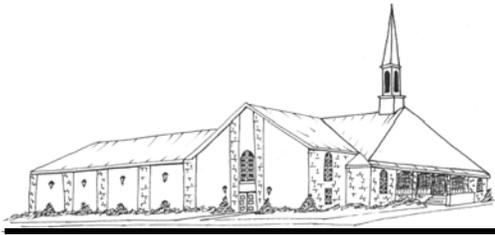


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From Where I Sit . . .

“God’s Church - A Sense of Identity”

Many people today understand the need of having a sense of identity and a feeling of belonging. Most folks I know desire to know **who they are and from whence** they came. As never before, people are seeking their DNA records desiring to know what can be determined about their backgrounds. Parallel to this is a growing interest in studying family trees hoping to pinpoint their family history: family names, places of birth, ancestral homes, positions and occupations, burial sites, and all other relevant information. Family reunions, it seems, are popular again. Distant relatives converge upon a chosen locale, and kinsmen talk and visit among themselves about their various connections. Impressions are deepened about the past. All of this gives us a greater feeling of belonging. It strengthens our *ties*, and it increases family loyalty.

Today, I want to **stress the wonderful benefits and blessings** that God has provided for us in the family relationship He calls the church, **“God’s Church, The Family Of God.”** If we are members of the Lord’s church, the Bible underscores that we’re part of His family! To belong to the Lords’ church is to belong to the greatest institution in all the world! The Apostle Paul describes this in **Eph 3:14-16 “For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.”**

If we have been begotten by the word of truth and “born anew,” the Bible teaches that we are God’s spiritual sons and daughters. **1 Peter 1:22-23 (KJV)** ²² **“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:*”** ²³ **Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”** **1 John 3:1** **“Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.”**

As such, We’re part of a grand family: **Hebrews 12:22-23 (KJV)** ²² **“*But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,*”** ²³ ***To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.*”**

This being so, we have something in common, **“the like precious faith.”** **2 Pet. 1:1** ¹ **“*Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:*”** And Friends, this is our link with all the redeemed of all the ages – our link with Pentecost, and with Jerusalem, and with Ephesus – **The Like-Precious Faith!!**

We are members of the church we read of in the New Testament. Christ is our founder and only head (**Matt. 16:18; Eph 1:22-23**). He adds all His saved ones to that one body. Our relationship to each other in that family is that of brothers and sisters. Born of water and spirit, we are united by the blood of Jesus that flows through our fellowship. We are a brotherhood. I may not know who all of God’s children are, but He most certainly does. I can know that we all have to come to Him in accord with His Will. **Galatians 3:26-27 (KJV)** ²⁶ **“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”** ²⁷ **For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”**

. . . Terry Broome