

Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

**James 4:8**

## Store In My Heart

### Ruth 1:16-17

But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the Lord do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me."

These events take place during the time of the Judges, but they are also associated with the kings of Israel and the Savior of men.

These two verses sum up the story of Ruth. She was a woman devoted to service. She was willing to do whatever was necessary to help Naomi, her mother-in-law.

A final passage gives a clue why her story is found here.

**Ruth 4:21-22** and to Salmon was born Boaz, and to Boaz, Obed, and to Obed was born Jesse, and to Jesse, David.



# Love The Brotherhood

Irven Lee

"Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king" (1Peter 2:17). This collection of short sentences is full of advice that our generation needs. This verse has, no doubt, been urgently needed in all ages. Those who are least prepared to appreciate this wisdom often use the word "relevant." To use their often repeated word, we could say that these short messages are relevant.

The children of God are brethren. They are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. How could any one find words to describe the blessedness of one who pleases God and is added to the church or family? For God to set one in this body is the greatest thing that can be done for that one. This is much more wonderful than it is to achieve political power or to accumulate wealth. Faithful children of God receive a hundredfold now in this life, with persecution, and in the world to come eternal life. Brethren, let these thoughts linger in grateful hearts.

The children of God on earth are in need of praying for forgiveness. They are sinners saved by grace, and they have no room to glory, save in the cross of Christ. God is willing to call them children, and Christ is willing to call them brethren, so they are the most highly blessed creatures on this earth. Love, mercy, grace, and forgiveness are needed to explain this acceptance from deity. Men do not attain this relationship by merit, but in obeying the truth they walk in the light and the blood of Christ cleanses them from all unrighteousness.

If the Lord is willing to accept this great brotherhood, surely each disciple should be willing to accept all other children of God. We should all learn to be lovers of good men. The color of the skin, the degree of education or social status, and other such things do not count. There should be fervent love shown because this is a mark of this discipleship. The man who does not love the brethren is not God's son. He is not one of this great brotherhood.

The brotherhood is made up of people who have received love, mercy, grace, and forgiveness, so they must show this same spirit toward each other. Slander, envy, bitterness, and self-will are so very inappropriate in this family of God. Let us remember this week after week, month after month, and year after year. Remember that Christ said: "*Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*"

It seems evident that some who want to be in that number must forget at times.

The brotherhood is the universal church over which Christ is head. We may have great joy and consolation in hearing of the faith and love of a brother even if he is overseas. The saints who meet at one place regularly may be touched by the needs of brethren in other areas, and rejoice in their accomplishments. Our view is much too narrow if we are interested only in our congregation. Is it not a sad state of affairs when the disciples in a given community forget the brotherhood, having no interest beyond the imaginary line a few miles or a few blocks from their meeting house?

We are to "love the brotherhood," but we are not to seek to activate it under some human agency so that we can do "big things." The servants of God are the salt of the earth, but the Lord does not want His salt in a big lump. It seems that in the different centuries it has been very difficult for men in the church to be great by being servants of all, rather than by creating chief seats where they may sit. Men began this mystery of iniquity before the apostles died, and the digression continued until the "brotherhood" was activated as a body with a government almost exactly like that of the old pagan Roman Empire, but when it was thus activated it was an apostate church. Christ had, no doubt, removed the candlestick. Similar digressions in the direction of an activated brotherhood have filled and are filling the church history books. Men forget that the Bible authorizes no unit larger than the local church as a working unit under overseers. Very much of the work authorized by God is assigned to the individual. We are to be judged as individuals, even in worship, even though we are to assemble for public worship.

We are to love the brotherhood so much that we would not condone men from among us who would speak perverse things and draw away disciples after them. We are to love the brotherhood so much that we would dispute daily in the school of Tyrannus or in any other place in earnestly contending for the faith. Would any one doubt that Paul had the proper love when he withstood Peter who was to be blamed because he caused some to be carried away in a dissimulation? People who would divide this spiritual body for which Christ died should be marked, avoided, rejected, and purged out as old leaven. Love for this brotherhood can furnish the motivating power for one's wrestling against wickedness in high places, warring a good warfare, or fighting a good fight, as good soldiers of Christ.

Some parents say they love their children too much to chasten them. They are wrong in this remark. He that spareth the rod hateth his son. People who say, "Peace, peace, where there is no peace" are hindering those who are set for the defense of the gospel. "Love the Brotherhood." Do not harm it seriously by defending the factious man who is subverted and sinneth, being condemned already.

## Contact Us

We want opportunities to speak with others about the Lord.

**Church of Christ**  
1512 Tanner Street  
Malvern, AR 72104  
(501) 332-8806

## Find Us Online

preacher@tannerst.com  
**tannerst.com**  
**FB @TannerStCoC**

**The CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
MEETS HERE

 10:20 AM • Sunday Worship Service  
5:00 PM • Sunday Night Bible Study  
7:00 PM • Wednesday Bible Study

## For Our Information

**Paula Laubach** has Single Level ACDF surgery scheduled for March. She is dealing with a good bit of pain.

**Ruben Keisler** is still having back and leg trouble. **Brenda Keisler** is hoping to get a shot for her hip soon.

**Sue Soliday** is getting some therapy on her arm. **Jim Soliday** has been having pain in his heels.

**Amy Simpson** is still having some back trouble from time to time. Sunday Evening - **Ezra 1. Wednesday - 2Peter 3:10.**

**Our meeting with Reuben Prevost is scheduled for April 21-25.**

We seek only to serve God according to His Will!