

# Spiritual Kinship

By Ken Weliever

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Kinship. I just got to thinking about it. I'm not sure why. It's not a word you hear used a lot anymore. You used to. Someone would say, "I know your kin folks!" Or "Are you all kin?"

The word "kin" comes from a common Teutonic word. Kin has to do with family—those who are related and share a common bloodline, a common ancestor. Kinship carries the idea of a relationship that is shared. I have aunts and uncles and cousins in which there is a common bond. A relationship. An affinity.

Spiritually speaking Christians enjoy a kinship in Christ. In the Lord's church we are kin to one another. We are family. Kin folks. We are related by blood. The blood of Jesus. We all been bought with His blood. Washed in it. Redeemed by it. Born again to His family through it. That makes us brothers and sisters.

The early Christians looked at their relationship like family members. They were brothers and sisters. In Acts 2:42-47 we see them eating together from house to house, sharing together and helping each other in time of need. It is obvious they embraced their new relationship in the Lord and really cared for each other. Kinship.

In Galatians 6:10 we are called "the family of believers." In I Timothy 3:15 Paul refers to the church as "the family of God.." And in Ephesians 2:19 Paul affirms that "you are members of God's very own family." Kinship.

It is interesting that the word "kin" is akin to "kind." They share a common derivation. We expect our kin folks to be kind to us. The Bible teaches that "love is kind" (1 Cor 13:4). As parents we teach our children to be nice to each other. If they're not, we say, "Is that any way to treat your little sister? Be nice!" Why? Because of the kinship that exists.

We should think of our spiritual kinsman in the same way. Our association is not based on rules and regulations, but relationship. Kinship. This bond naturally issues itself in kindness. Paul exhorted, "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you." (Eph. 4:32)

As kin who are kind, we're not interested in one-upmanship, petty, political gamesmanship, or prideful posturing. We're kin. We treat each as such. With kindness. Sympathy. Compassion. Gentleness. Benevolence. Thoughtfulness. Helpfulness. Humanity. Kin are kind. Never forget it.

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