

A Christian “Band of Brothers.”

Last weekend I attended a reunion of soldiers to mark the 25th anniversary of our participation in Operation Desert Storm. Over 60 former soldiers traveled from throughout the United States to be together. Although we had not seen each other for many years, we felt just as close as we had been in 1991. Our sense of unity, a bond born of hardship, and our brotherly love for one another had not diminished. At one time we would have died for one another, and I am pretty sure we still would. We were, and still are, a band of brothers.

Isn't that how we should feel about our Christian brothers and sisters? Should we not also feel a sense of unity, have a special bond, love one another, and be willing to die for one another? Should we be a Christian “Band of Brothers”? Scripture certainly indicates that we should.

Ephesians 4:3 says that we should endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This unity and bond should hold us together to face whatever the devil throws at us. *There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all* (Eph. 4:4-6). 1 Peter 3:8 instructs us to be of one mind. God wants us to be unified and to feel the special bond we have in Jesus.

It is clear that we are to love one another with brotherly love and to treat each other accordingly (Romans 12:10). We are told to love as brothers (1 Peter 3:8), and to “love the brotherhood” (1 Peter 2:17). The world will know that we are Christ's disciples if we love one another (John 13:35). This love should drive our actions toward one another. We should put others before ourselves, be kind, patient, and gentle toward one another.

Scripture also is clear that we should be willing to lay down our life for our brethren because Jesus laid down his life for us (1 John 3:16). Jesus said, *Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends* (John 15:13). Would you lay down your life for your Christian brothers and sisters? Do you love them that much?

My old Army friends and I have a special bond and certainly feel brotherly love for one another. We pledged to lay down our life for each other in war. As Christians, we are at war with Satan. We must be unified in our efforts, love each other, and if necessary, lay down our lives for one another. The elders love you and pray for you continually.