

The Oak Grove Oracle

(Family News & Views of the Oak Grove Church of Christ)

Meeting Weekly At Our Building Located At:

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Volume VI Sunday, September 16, 2018 Number 37

God's Family Enjoys Brotherly Love

If you grew up in a close knit, loving and supportive physical family, you likely got just a hint of some of the privileges of being adopted into the family of Almighty God (Rms. 8:15). If you were blessed to be born or adopted into a caring earthly family, it was but a foretaste of the joys attendant those who are added to God's spiritual family upon their obedience to the Gospel (Acts 2:41-47).

If you're a member of the family of God, do you think it might be possible that you sometimes take the privileges and blessings of the same for granted? If so, it appears it would behoove us from time to time to reflect upon those special benefits which are ours as brothers and sisters in God's family.

One of the first great privileges showered upon us when we walk through the door of the house where God's family lives is to find ourselves surrounded by brotherly love. Last Wednesday evening, at the midweek Bible study service of a nearby congregation of the Lord's church, I saw this acted out in "living color." Let me explain. Our son Ben had taken me to my late afternoon doctor's appointment in Longview. After my visit with the doc we drove to the nearby *Open Imaging* facility for a CAT scan of my kidneys. By the time we were ready to head home, there was not enough time for him to get me back to Mt. Pleasant, and then for him to make it back to the *East Mountain congregation* in time to teach his Wednesday night Bible class. So, I went with him as a visitor.

After class they concluded their service with a song and prayer. Sadly, the brother who led the prayer had a brain lapse before finishing his petition to our Father. There were several uncomfortable seconds of silence, before another man whispered something to him, helping him to collect his thoughts and finish the prayer. Immediately the brethren surrounded him. He was offered hugs, pats on the back and many words of encouragement. There were tears shed. It's called "brotherly love" (Rms. 12:10, 1 Thess. 4:9 & Heb. 13:1). The air hung heavy with it. You could have "cut it with a knife," as the old saying goes. It made me feel good and I'm sure it lifted the spirits of the brother who led the prayer.

No giggling at the man's momentary mental misstep. No recriminations, no spiteful comments, no backward glances like you might receive in our hateful society today for a socially awkward blunder, rather just loving concern from every other brother and sister in attendance. Not a single soul present wanted him to feel bad about his social faux pas. Brethren that's what brotherly love is all about. As the old song says, "love is the golden chain that binds" us together as Christians. What a privilege it is to have a loving family of brothers in Christ who care about us. Even if your physical family was a bust, your spiritual family can be a blessing. Make it so by practicing brotherly love (1 Jn. 4:7)!

David A. McCain