

“Blessed Be the Tie that Binds” ~ John Fawcett

Fawcett was converted at age 16 under the ministry of George Whitefield. He at first joined the Methodists, but three years later began attending the Baptist Church in Bradford, England. Having begun to preach, he was ordained a Baptist minister at a small church Wainsgate, Yorkshire. In 1772 Fawcett was invited to London to succeed the renowned Baptist minister and theologian John Gill as pastor of the Carter's Lane Baptist Church. He accepted the call and preached his farewell sermon to his little congregation at Wainsgate. The wagons were loaded with his books and furniture, and all was ready for the departure, when his parishioners gathered around him, and with tears in their eyes begged of him to stay. His wife said, "Oh John, John, I cannot bear this. Neither can I, exclaimed the good pastor, and we will not go. Unload the wagons and put everything as it was before. His decision was hailed with great joy by his people, and he wrote the words of this hymn in commemoration of the event. This song, and *God Be With You 'Till We Meet Again* are the most useful farewell hymns in the world.

Mr. Moody used to tell of a Sunday-school teacher, to whom he had given a class of girls, who one day came to Mr. Moody's store much disheartened. He had suffered from hemorrhage of the lungs, and his doctor had ordered him to leave Chicago. He was sad because he felt that he had not made a true effort to save his class. At Mr. Moody's proposal that they go to visit each of the class members, they took a carriage and at once began the work, the young man in his feebleness saying what he could to each. At a farewell meeting where they were all gathered, they endeavored to sing "Blest be the tie that binds," but their hearts were full and their voices failed. Every member of the class yielded her heart to God.

*Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.*

*Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims are one
Our comforts and our cares. We share each other's woes,
Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear. When we asunder part,
It gives us inward pain;
But we shall still be joined in heart,
And hope to meet again. This glorious hope revives*

*Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day. From sorrow, toil and pain,
And sin, we shall be free,
And perfect love and friendship reign
Through all eternity.*