

# One in Christ

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I used to doze off reading Chapter 16 of the book of Romans. It's just long lists of names difficult to pronounce. I have come to realize these days that this is the most emotional and instructive chapter of this precious book. I got real emotional going through those names the other day with tears. Romans 16:3-4 is an exceptionally powerful piece of writing.

**Romans 16:3-4** Greet Priscilla and Aquilar my helper in Christ Jesus. Who have for my life laid down their own necks unto whom not only I give thanks but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

It is rare that women were noticed or acknowledged for anything in the first century. However, here in this precious letter the first seven names are all women where they are recorded for all eternity. Paul also mentions their extreme commitment to the gospel even at the risk of their lives. God showing his concern for all have their names written down in the book of life.

Paul showed intimate and extraordinary affection for the unity he saw in the church at Rome. The study of these names reveals that both women and men, Jews and Gentiles were side by side supporting his writings in Galatia. There is no differentiation between male or female, Jew or Greek, slave or free. They are all brothers and sisters in Christ.

The gospel of Jesus unites people across ethnic lines like no other thing in this world. We all have one common Savior, Father and one common Salvation. This unity demonstrated in this church brought so much joy to the Apostle Paul as well as me. This is the beautiful picture of the blood bought bride of Christ. Interestingly the names of well-known slave are also mentioned in this passage such as Urbane Rufus, Julia, Olympia and Persus. This is unique.

It's known that both slaves and masters would go to church together hand in hand, sitting together with no discrimination you can hardly tell who's who. We seem to be losing this today. How I pray we never lose this the picture of true unity. I pray we can lay down our pettiness. We don't have to dress alike, speak alike or look alike to keep this unity as long as we focus on Jesus Christ. He is our unity and the very cause of this unity.

It's sad we are easily distracted with the choice of a song or short comings of a brother. Focusing on what I don't like about a brother or sister should not be the cause for division. There are things I don't like about my natural brother or sister from my mother's womb, but I don't separate myself from them. There are things about you also that someone doesn't like.

Our focus must be Jesus who is the one that has broken down the wall of partition that separates us. We are many parts but one body. Let us seriously consider anything in us that can be feeding tendencies for division and get rid of it for Christ's sake.

**Romans 16:17** Now I beseech you brethren mark them which cause division and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned and avoid them. For they that are such serve

not our Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. Bless all the saints. KJV