BEING “IN CHRIST”

Today’s devotion has been taken from Romans 16:3-16. Here we’re given a glimpse into the life of the early Church as Paul is greeting his friends in Rome and sending greetings from some who were with him in Corinth. This glimpse is of great importance because it causes us to re-evaluate the way we look upon the Church in our culture today. And the individuals greeted here can motivate and encourage each of us to be all that God wants us to be.

In verse 3-5, we are introduced to Priscilla and Aquila. We are told they had a meeting of believers in their house, who are called the Church in their house. We are also told that they were fellow-workers in Christ, and that they risked their lives for Paul.

Paul specifically mentions the fact that Priscilla and Aquila were “in Christ”. This declaration concerning the truth about believers is mentioned throughout these verses where Paul is greeting different people. The other expression Paul uses is of being “in the Lord”, which is the same thing. Paul asks the Romans to receive Phoebe “in the Lord”(16:2). He assigns Priscilla and Aquila as “fellow-workers in Christ Jesus”.(16:3). He says Andronicus and Junias “were in Christ before me”.(16:7). He called Ampliatus ”my beloved in the Lord”. And the list goes on.

Here we see an essential designation of a true Christian. A true Christian, as opposed to one who is a Christian in name only, is that they are “in Christ” and “in the Lord”. Throughout Paul’s letter, Paul uses this designation to express what it means to believe in Jesus. He says in the beginning of Romans chapter 8, “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus”. Being “in Christ Jesus” designates that a person has so believed in Jesus as their Savior that they have become united to Christ and raised to new life in Him. This union with Christ means that Christ is our Lord and we follow him in total obedience. He is our good Shepherd, our leader.

The last thing concerning Priscilla and Aquila is their self-sacrificing giving of themselves to Paul and to the cause of Christ in the churches. Here is an example of Christian commitment and self-sacrifice.

In verse 5, Paul greets Epenetus and tells us that he was his dear friend. Therefore we learn that in the family of the Church, all are brothers and sisters in Christ because we belong to one family of God where Christ is the head of the family. So whenever we gather together, we feel that there is real love among us.

Now in the first part of verse 16, Paul directs his believers in Rome “to greet one another with a holy kiss”. Paul sends his personal greetings (verse3-15), all the churches send their greetings (verse 16b), and those with Paul send their greetings (verse 21-23). Now Paul tells the Romans to greet one another among themselves. A Christian greeting is the evidence of Christian unity.

So the church in Rome was made up of these ordinary, diverse people. Some were slaves, workers, some were wealthy, some were men, but Paul mentions a number of women too. So what drew them together and united them? The phrase Paul repeats eleven times “in Christ” or “in the Lord”.

In Conclusion, whatever gifts and calling we have, the most important thing is that you know that Christ has saved you from eternal judgement because you have put your trust in Him as Savior and Lord. So let us all have a good relationship with each another by being hospitable and helpful to one another as family and working hard together to serve the Lord, just as these people did.

Have a Blessed Day!!