

## **A Lower Case c**

### **Romans 16:16**

Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you. This is what Romans 16:16 says; but what does it mean? Some of God's people are focused on giving their church a proper name and using this verse of scripture to do it. Would it really be God's focus to make sure no one is calling His church by any other name than the one that seems to be seen here, "The Church of Christ?" And if He were really giving His church a proper name here, would He begin it with a lower case c?

I believe that God purposely began this phrase with a lower case c so that one would have to lower his eyes and look at it through his bifocals and get the deep meaning of this verse of scripture. The real message is in the first sentence; and the second sentence throws in the clincher. Greet one another with a holy kiss.

What would a holy kiss be? What would a kiss have to consist of in order to be considered holy? Anything that is holy is from God, a kiss that is good and right and pure. In Philippians 4 verse 8 and 9 we read, "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you."

A holy kiss comes from God and it is full of all those qualities. And it doesn't even have to be made with the lips. Last Sunday I was sitting in a chair in the atrium at church and someone came up behind me, leaned over me, and kissed me on the top of my forehead. It was a guy. I don't normally like men kissing me. I would love girls to do that, often. But my thinking here isn't holy is it? It's focused on the flesh. This kiss said, "I love you, I think you're a fine brother, you're really something." And I saw who it was, and it was okay, though I wouldn't go seeking that again. It was like a kiss from God that was pure. It had nothing to do with the flesh.

That kiss could have been given with a touch of the hand. It could have been given with a spoken word. It could have been given with a written note. It could have been given with any act of kindness. God wants us to love one another from the heart, fervently, with a pure love that is passed on from Him through His people. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches, which are full of Christ, greet you in this manner. These two sentences are meant to be viewed together thorough our bifocals.

All the churches are all the groups of God's people. Apostle Paul is passing on a kiss from God through all His people. When a kiss is blown to you, it feels just as good as if it were planted on the lips when it is done out of love, when it means, "I really love you." Here Apostle Paul is blowing us a kiss from every congregation of God's people. How does he know that all the churches would want to do that? He's saying that it's from all the churches of Christ, that is, all the churches that are made up of Christ, all the churches that belong to Christ. And Christ always wants to do that.

We are supposed to be dead to self and alive to God in Christ JESUS Romans 6:11. All the churches that are of Christ are the ones that are letting Christ live and shine through them. Nowhere in scripture does God give His church a proper name. He calls it many things; but all of them begin with a lower case letter. He knew there would be some who focus on proving that

their opinions are “right” rather than sharing His love with all those around them by dealing out encouragement and strength for everyday living. “Rather determine this- not to place an obstacle or stumbling block in a brother’s way.” And “Let us encourage one another all the more as the day draws near.” Let your kiss be holy and your church be, of Christ.

By the way, it doesn’t end here. Apostle Paul continues in verses 17 through 19 of Romans chapter 16 to speak of the ones who are opposed to loving each other through Christ Jesus. And isn’t it significant that in verse 20 He says, “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet?” Satan is the one causing strife in the churches by leading God’s people to focus on and argue about what is “right” rather than sharing God’s love with all those around them. Will you give-in to Satan, or will you join God in crushing him under your feet? Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches, which are of Christ, greet you.

By Wes Allen  
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