

“Greet One Another With a Holy Kiss”

Special Edition

1 Corinthians 16:20

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The challenge of embracing the brethren about whom we have doubts ... or I know I know Jesus, but I'm not sure whether you know Jesus like I know Jesus

1. The Unity of the Body of Christ is very important doctrine to me.
 - a. A God created reality and commanded of all who are in union with Christ
 - John 17:20. “... **that they may all be one**, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, **so that the world may believe that you have sent me ... that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.**”
 - Ephesians 4:1-3. *“I ... urge you to ... maintain the **unity** of the Spirit...”*
 - Ephesians 4:11-13. *“...to equip the saints ... for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ **until we all attain to the unity of the faith ...**”*
 - 1 Peter 3:8. *“... all of you, have **unity of mind**, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind.”*

2. The Body of Christ is in a same predicament; we are suffering amnesia of the Body.

The church of Christ, while one in Spirit, is in daily reality fractured in literally thousands and thousands of pieces ... and we never think about it. It's just the way it is.

3. A disturbing read: Warren Litzman's book, *Church Unity*

“... We accept the other believer as a person who is also related to Christ. We do not accept other believers by what they do, nor do we accept them on the basis of how they express Christ, nor by what their doctrine is. We accept other believers on the grounds of the Christ who is in them! ... Never forget that it was Christ who ... made each of us acceptable to God. If you are acceptable to God, what possible reason could I find to make you unacceptable to me ...”

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“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.” John 15:4

When I am put in Christ ... I in Him and He in me ... I am put into His Body, the Church

From the moment I am regenerate, and put into Christ, I am an intimate with every other Christian as I am with Christ.

“In one Spirit we were all baptized into one body ... and all were made to drink of one Spirit ... ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” ... But God has so composed the body... ²⁵ that there may be no division in the body ... “ 1 Corinthians 12:13-27.

4. Warren Litzman uses the word “accept.”

“greet” = *aspazomai* = salute, pay respects to, welcome = literally, to enfold in the arms, to embrace.

“The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. All the brothers send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.”
1 Corinthians 16:19, 20.

There are certain people and groups in Christ that I don’t want to embrace.

5. Getting my own house in order before fixing the bigger house:

I need to confront the fact that I’ve disowned, ignored, judged and condemned other members of His Body, members that He has accepted, greeted, embraced and kissed.