

**ROMANS**  
**Our Message to the World**  
AMEN Bible Study 2015-2016

**It Takes All of Us**

Romans 16:1-16

May 4, 2016

**Four observational treasures found in the early Church for the Church today.**

**I. The early Church was a diverse community.**

**A. socio-economically**

*<sup>1</sup>I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, <sup>2</sup>that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well. <sup>3</sup>Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, <sup>4</sup>who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. <sup>5</sup>Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. <sup>7</sup>Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. <sup>8</sup>Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. <sup>9</sup>Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys.*

**B. ethnically**

*<sup>5</sup>Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. <sup>7</sup>Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me.*

**C. backgrounds**

*<sup>11</sup>Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. <sup>12</sup>Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. <sup>13</sup>Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well.*

cf. Mark 15:21

**D. gender**

*<sup>1</sup>I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, ... <sup>6</sup>Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. <sup>12</sup>Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord.*

**II. The early Church was unified in diversity.**

*Why did they pursue unity and how did they maintain it?*

**A. Why? It is God's design for His Bride.**

cf. Genesis 17:3-8; Matthew 28:18-20; Revelation 7:9

**B. How? They had the commonality of being in Christ.**

*<sup>2</sup>that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, ... for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well. <sup>3</sup>Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ... <sup>5</sup>Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. ... <sup>7</sup>Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me.*

cf. Galatians 3:28

### III. The early Church was a missional community.

- A. Most were not professional missionaries.
- B. Families went on mission together.
  - 1. Prisca and Aquila were partners in Gospel ministry.
  - 2. They embraced uncomfortability for Gospel ministry.
  - 3. They taught the Scriptures together. cf. Acts 18:24-26
  - 4. They used their marriage as a platform for Gospel ministry.
  - 5. They risked everything for Gospel ministry.

#### C. Paul celebrated their “work in the Lord.”

*<sup>1</sup> I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church ... <sup>3</sup> Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ... <sup>5</sup> Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. ... <sup>7</sup> Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. ... <sup>9</sup> Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, ... <sup>10</sup> Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. ... <sup>12</sup> Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord.*

### IV. The early Church loved each other as family.

#### A. They viewed each other as family.

##### 1. familial titles

*<sup>1</sup> I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church, ... <sup>13</sup> Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. <sup>14</sup> Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them.*

##### 2. friendship titles

*<sup>5</sup> .. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. ... <sup>8</sup> Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. <sup>9</sup> Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. ... <sup>12</sup> Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord.*

cf. Proverbs 18: 24

#### B. They were action-oriented in their love.

- 1. Learn the names of those in your church.
- 2. Greet each other.
- 3. Seek to mentor younger men.
  - <sup>13</sup> Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well.*
- 4. Be hospitable.

*“I am convinced that in the twentieth century people all over the world will not listen if we have the right doctrine, the right polity, but are not exhibiting community.”*

- Francis Schaeffer

*“Christianity means community through Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ. No Christian community is more or less than this.”*

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer