

Parson to Person

2 Corinthians 13 – Part 4

“Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen” (2 Corinthians 13:12–14).

In Review

Last week we were reminded that God is with us. We know that He called us, keeps us, causes us to grow, and provides us with personal inner peace. For this reason, He calls us to dwell in peace with the Church—our spiritual family. We have been instructed to work toward maintaining *“the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace”* (Ephesians 4:3), and given the standard, *“If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men”* (Romans 12:18). Therefore, inasmuch as there are aspects of God’s work that He does for us and in us without any human assistance and without our involvement, developing and maintaining peace and harmony with our spiritual brothers and sisters rests fundamentally with us. We can cause division and/or we can work toward unity. May we all work toward unity—based upon the truth.

Closing Remarks

In the closing remarks Paul made to the Corinthians, he said that we should greet one another with a holy kiss. This would be difficult were we to be in disharmony and suffering division. Therefore, Paul makes the (correct) assumption that unity and love have and will be nurtured among the Corinthians. We should expect the same.

A Holy Kiss

A *holy kiss* should not be confused with anything other than a loving greeting utilized to show interpersonal affection. Customarily when a man or woman greeted one another in a public or private setting a cheek-to-cheek kiss was offered—on each side of the other person’s face. This was not a sexual, sensual, or romantic gesture, but only a greeting wherein one showed love and affection for the other. We might equate this with a hug, or a direct look into the eyes of another while smiling and offering one’s hand in the customary handshake. The “*holy kiss*” was indeed “*holy*” because it was nothing worldly, fleshly, or sensual.

All the Saints

Paul included with his familial gesture of affection (the “*holy kiss*”) a mention of the saints in Macedonia and their desire to send greetings to the Corinthians. This too shows the beauty and love of an interpersonal relationship between the members of the Body of Christ—even if there had never been a face-to-face meeting.

There is a beautiful unity believers find with one another even among those meeting for the first time. I have experienced this many times. It is a special blessing when it occurs with those of a foreign country. Many times, when traveling to Israel, Turkey, Greece, Jordan, Honduras, and Canada, I have met with, prayed with, and been blessed by the fellowship of other members of the Body who experience an immediate sense of family and deep friendship with me—as I do with them. Truly we are one in the Spirit of the Lord. I am sure you have had similar experiences—or will.

The unity of the Spirit is the work of grace, as provided in Jesus, and the love of God we all enjoy. It is what we define as the communion of the Holy Spirit—in the saints.

“*Communion*” is the English word translated from the Greek “κοινωνία” “Koinonia.” The word suggests a close, mutual, deeply

held, fellowship based upon relationship. This is what we enjoy with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, as we equally experience the “love of God” through “*the grace in [our] Lord Jesus Christ,*” we interrelate with one another in the depths of that mutual love and grace.

I pray we all grow to experience this “koinonia” as we grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.

The Triune Nature of the Godhead

Please note that Paul makes mention of all three persons of the Godhead in this closing benediction: “*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.*” There is no need to further explain the “us” and “our” in the often-interpersonal communion God demonstrates in the Scriptures.

Many will argue that Jesus is the Father and that the Father is the Son. Moreover, some suggest that The Holy Spirit is simply another manifestation of Jesus or God the Father in Spirit. However, this is an elementary failure of understanding the person of God as a triune being of three persons.

Jesus prayed to the Father. The Father spoke of the Son. The Holy Spirit empowered, led, anointed Jesus, and raised Him from the dead.

Books can and have been written on the subject of Theology (the study of God). We need no more than to read the Bible to build an airtight case for the Trinity.

As a sampling, I leave you with these:

John’s Introduction of Jesus

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men...But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:1–4, 12–14).

At Jesus’ Baptism

“It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove. Then a voice came from heaven, ‘You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’” (Mark 1:9–11).

After Jesus’ Baptism

“Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness...” (Luke 4:1).

Jesus, In The Garden of Gethsemane

“And He [Jesus] was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and prayed, saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Yours, be done”” (Luke 22:41–42).

Jesus, On the Cross

“And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, ‘Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit.’ Having said this, He breathed His last” (Luke 23:46).

Concerning Jesus' Physical Resurrection from the Dead

“But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you” (Romans 8:11).

The Words of the Author

Paul wrote, *“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (Ephesians 4:1–6).*

The Benediction

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.”

I love you all,
Pastor Paul