

Kissing In Church Rom 16:16

My first “real kiss” was in church. I liked a girl from church and she liked me, but her parents didn’t. They always wanted her to get together with my little brother. So we had to be sneaky in our dating. We would hold hands on the way to youth activities and youth rallies and I found this nice quiet storage room in the back of the church where I got that first real kiss. Hey, I was just doing what the Bible said!

Obviously, Paul wasn’t talking about that kind of kissing in church so what did he have in mind when he wrote verse 16? You might be a little surprised.

PRAYER

I. Bible As Our Guide

A. The Bible is our book of doctrine

1. When I was doing some reading on this verse I came upon a commentary that gave churches of Christ special mention in this verse! Now what I found amusing was that it was listed under twisted understanding of Rom 16:16 stating that we believe this is the only acceptable name for a church. Most of us understand there are several names given for the name of a group of saints meeting together. We have just chosen this name as a way to identify ourselves under a common name to others looking for a church with similar beliefs.
2. I guess that means they have a twisted understanding of our twisted understanding!
3. So many churches have a book of doctrine that they look to as they talk about their church beliefs.
4. In some respects that’s not a bad idea to have written down you basic beliefs.
5. Where I have a problem with these churches is that they look at that book of doctrine either as important as the Bible or in some cases MORE important than the Bible.
6. When Helene became a Christian she was studying with a group who didn’t believe baptism was a part of salvation, when she began studying with some students from a campus ministry about baptism, she went to her minister and asked about it. He said he wouldn’t baptize her to be

saved, but only to join the church. She showed him the verses in the Bible and he responded with “I don’t care, it says in our book of doctrine...”

7. That’s what has destroyed many a sincere group of believers.
8. National leader set their doctrine rather than simply following the Bible.
9. We have no other book but the Bible for our doctrinal beliefs and we should never stray from that standard.

B. How the Bible shapes our beliefs

1. We believe that when God directly tells us to do something in scripture, we need to be doing it.
 - a) Matt 28:19-20 is a good example
 - b) Matthew 28:19–20 (ESV) — 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe

all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

2. We believe we should follow the examples of Christ and the apostles.
 - a) Acts 20:7 shows us that they took the Lord’s Supper on the first day of the week.
 - b) That’s why we have the practice of communion every first day.
 - c) Our desire is to follow God as closely as we know how.

C. Interesting concept

1. Now that I have laid out how important the Bible is to what we do and believe as a church, let me blow your mind with something you may have never thought about before.
2. This isn’t the only passage telling us to greet each other with a kiss!
 - a) 1 Pet 5:14 - Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.(NIV)
 - b) 1 Thess 5:26 - Greet all the brothers with a holy kiss.(NIV)
 - c) 1 Cor 16:20 - All the brothers here send you greetings. Greet one another with a holy kiss.(NIV)
 - d) 2 Cor 13:12 - Greet one another with a holy kiss.(NIV)
3. Wow! 5 times we are told to greet each other with a holy kiss. ..But we don’t do that
4. Are we going against all we claim about our following the Bible by not doing this practice?
5. Let’s look at this greeting a little closer.

II. Greeting with a Holy Kiss

A. Understanding the importance of greeting each other

1. We always look at the word kiss in this passage, blush, and then look away.
2. Let’s look first at the first word mentioned, “greet”
3. Strong’s dictionary says this was a special greeting to welcome joyously.

4. It also said that in the East it is practiced by those of like faith, but never between rival groups or faiths.

5. So this is more than just saying hi or waving at someone, it was a deeper more intimate gesture.

6. That's something to think about in today's crazy world.

a) How many of you have a cell phone?

b) Voicemail?

c) Email?

d) Social media app?

e) Facebook?

f) Text messaging?

7. Yet with all these ways to connect with each other, we are becoming more and more isolated.

8. We try to use emojis or gif to show emotions to our words, but it isn't quite the same as face to face time.

9. In the Eastern Culture the Bible was written in, even the way you greeted someone often showed what kind of relationship you had with a person.

a) You had a formal greeting of words.

b) You had a greeting of a kiss on each cheek and was how most of the greetings were done and still are done in the East.

c) Kiss on the mouth that showed true affection for someone, but not erotic affection.

d) Most scholars believe this was the kind of kiss that Judas gave Jesus when he betrayed him.

10. The idea behind this verse is taking the time to slow down, touch each other, and acknowledge each other as special.

B. Do we greet each other as we should?

1. (HOLD UP GREETER BADGE) Our greeter badges identify those who welcome people into our building.

2. It's a nice touch, but do we really greet each other?
3. When I visit different churches, I am always assessing what they do compared to us.
 - a) Some churches have greeters, but you would never know it as they sit talking to each other and not paying a bit of attention to who is coming in the doors.
 - b) Some have greeters who are cordial and give you a bulletin, and then on to the next person.
 - c) Some greeters are very warm and personable and spend a few minutes with you.
 - d) Some don't have official greeters, but every person greets you and welcomes you to their congregation for the day.
4. Do we warmly welcome each other with something more than a mere nod and hello?
5. Do we greet everyone with a show of acceptance?
6. We need to show a warm welcome to our guests and we do a decent job of that but greeting each other should go beyond a warm welcome of a visitor.

C. Holy Kiss

1. The Greek idea for this kiss is the word "holy"
2. It's the idea of genuine, authentic.
3. I read a news story about a young man in Pennsylvania who broke into a house of an 81 woman. As he looked at the lady, he recognized her as one of his former teachers in school. He sat her down, gave her a kiss on

the forehead and said, “you were always good to me.” Then stole \$281 from her home.

4. I don't think that kiss carried very much authenticity or connection with it.

5. A Holy kiss means much more than a kiss on the cheek.

6. We need to greet each other as close friends or family members because as fellow Christians, that exactly what we are!

7. It's what made disfellowship work in Biblical times. Disfellowshipped members keenly missed the personal connection with other members of their congregation.

8. It's not based on your social standing, race, or anything but being part of the family of God.

9. It's a gesture that should be universal in the church, not just our clique of friends.

10. This greeting that Paul and Peter mention 5 times is about acceptance of all within the church not just those who are like us.

11. That's where we can grow; caring about all of our spiritual family not just our little group of friends.

12. I understand we'll be closer to some than to others; and because of that, we have a warmer relationship with them. That is natural.

13. What I want to challenge us to do is get out of mindset that only the preacher and elders should be checking on people and greeting people in

the church and do what the Bible says; ALL OF US greet each other as a special family of God.

14. If I had a dollar for every time someone has asked me “who was that couple who came in today?” I could retire a rich man.

15. Why not find out for yourself?

16. Or how often I have been asked how so and so is doing. Why not find out for yourself?

17. If we were to be family, let's really act and love like family!

D. Churches of Christ

1. Going back to the name thing I talked about at the beginning of this lesson.

2. If you look carefully at this verse, you notice that the c of churches isn't capitalized.

3. What that means is that it's an identifier, not a name.

4. The groups that belong to Christ greet you.

5. We use the name Church of Christ simply as a tool for basic recognition of similar beliefs among so many various groupings that call themselves Christian.

6. I have said over and over, it's the name on the heart that matters, not the name over the door.

7. Don't ever confuse how we group Christians together with how God groups them together. You might get a nasty surprise come judgment day.

E. Conclusion

1. Paul tells these Christians to greet one another.

2. At the end of the verse he tells them that all the churches of Christ greet them.

3. Family, acceptance, closeness, inclusive.

4. We come into the gathering of brothers and sisters in Christ with one of two attitudes, “I am here” or “there you are!”

5. Two TOTALLY different ways of greeting.

6. One is expecting everyone to come to you and more elitist
7. The other is proactive, caring and intimate.
8. Do we need to do more kissing in church?