

Romans 16:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and
Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

Analysis

Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them—Aspasasthe Philologon kai Ioulia, Nērea kai tēn adelphēn autou, kai Olympan, kai tous syn autois pantas hagiois (ἀσπάσασθε Φιλόλογον καὶ Ἰουλίαν, Νηρέα καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν αὐτοῦ, καὶ Ὀλυμπᾶν, καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς πάντας ἁγίους). Five believers plus tous syn autois pantas hagiois (all the saints with them) indicates another house church. Hagious (ἅγιος, saints/holy ones) is Paul's standard term for believers—those set apart to God, made holy through Christ (1 Corinthians 1:2).

Philologus and Julia were likely husband-wife (names often paired). Nereus and 'his sister' (unnamed, perhaps propriety or she's less prominent) suggest family unit. Olympas rounds out the five. This house church, like v. 14's, comprised ordinary believers whose names Paul records for posterity—ensuring their service is remembered. The phrase tous pantas hagiois (all the saints) honors the unnamed multitude: faithful believers whose names we don't know but God does (Revelation 20:15, 'book of life').

Historical Context

Julia was extremely common name, especially among slaves and freedmen of the Julian family (Julius Caesar's clan). Nereus was common slave name (sea god). Olympas (shortened from Olympodorus) was also slave name. The prevalence of slave names in Romans 16 (at least 15 of 26 named individuals) confirms early

Christianity's appeal to society's lowest strata. Yet Paul honors them equally with aristocrats like Erastus (v. 23, city treasurer). In Christ, 'there is neither bond nor free' (Galatians 3:28)—a revolutionary social vision that ultimately undermined slavery, patriarchy, and class hierarchy.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does the inclusion of 'Nereus' sister' (unnamed) suggest about women's roles and recognition in the early church?
2. How does Paul's greeting of 'all the saints with them' honor the unnamed faithful whose service often goes unrecognized?
3. What would it look like for your church to cultivate house church-style intimacy and mission in smaller communities within the larger congregation?

Interlinear Text

ἀσπάσασθε Φιλόλογον καὶ Ἰουλίαν Νηρέα καὶ τὴν
Salute **Philologus** **and** **Julia** **Nereus** **and** G3588
G782 G5378 G2532 G2456 G3517 G2532

ἀδελφὴν αὐτοῖς καὶ Ὀλυμπᾶν καὶ τοὺς σὺν
sister **his** **and** **Olympas** **and** G3588 **which are with**
G79 G846 G2532 G3652 G2532 G4862

αὐτοῖς πάντας ἁγίους
his **all** **the saints**
G846 G3956 G40

Additional Cross-References

Romans 16:2 (Holy): That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

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