

MINING THE MESSAGE



<i>Title</i>	LIFE: Christ-Centered Unity
<i>Scripture</i>	Romans 16:1-16
<i>Speaker</i>	Jeff Terrell
<i>Big Idea</i>	Christ unites diverse believers into one family, and every member is called to display that unity through service, sacrifice, and solidarity.

OUTLINE

1. Christ Produces Unnatural Service (1–2)

Serving and Being Served

- Read Romans 16:1–2. Phoebe faithfully served others, yet Paul asked the church to welcome and assist her. What does this reveal about our need for one another within the church?
- How can pride, independence, or a sense of ownership over a ministry keep us from receiving help or making room for others to serve?

Using What God Has Given Us

- Read 1 Peter 4:10–11. How should recognizing our gifts and resources as God's stewardship change the way we approach serving the church?
- Pastor Jeff emphasized serving proactively rather than waiting to be asked. Where might God be calling you to recognize a need and take initiative?

2. Christ Produces Unnatural Sacrifice (3–12)

Faithfulness When Sacrifice Is Costly

- Read Romans 16:3–5. Prisca and Aquila risked their lives for Paul and opened their home to the church. How does their example challenge a view of church involvement shaped primarily by convenience?
- What comforts, preferences, or personal priorities are most difficult for you to surrender when serving Christ and His church requires sacrifice?

The Motivation Behind Our Sacrifice

- Read 2 Corinthians 5:14–15. How does being compelled by Christ's love help us remain faithful when ministry becomes exhausting, results are unseen, or people disappoint us?
- Pastor Jeff cautioned against making ministry decisions without biblical counsel. When facing discouragement or exhaustion, how can we discern whether God is calling us to persevere, make a change, or take needed rest?

3. Christ Produces Unnatural Solidarity (13–16)

United Beyond Our Differences

- Read Ephesians 2:14–19. How does Christ's work of reconciliation challenge the barriers we naturally create between people of different backgrounds, experiences, or social standing?
- Are there people within the church you struggle to connect with because they are different from you? What might change if you genuinely viewed them as family in Christ?

Making Our Unity Visible

- Read Romans 16:13–16. Paul describes Rufus's mother as his own and calls believers to greet one another with a holy kiss. What do these expressions reveal about the depth of unity God intends for His church?
- If someone observed your relationships at Ascend, especially with people outside your closest friendships, what would they learn about the unity Christ produces?

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Accountability Worksheet

1. Are you using your gifts, time, and resources to serve others faithfully, or have comfort, pride, or the desire for recognition held you back?
2. Have you allowed discouragement, inconvenience, or unmet expectations to weaken your commitment to Christ and His church? What would faithful obedience look like?
3. Is there someone within the church you have distanced yourself from, judged unfairly, or failed to love as a brother or sister in Christ? What step should you take toward them?
4. Pastor Jeff asked what Paul might say about us if our names appeared in Romans 16. What would your current priorities, relationships, and service reveal about your love for Christ, and what needs to change?