

And Quartus a Brother

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Preacher: Rev Andrew Coghill

[0 : 00] Thank you.
 Thank you.
 Thank you.
 Thank you.
 Thank you.
[2 : 30] Thank you. Thank you.
 Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. And The we have no mention of him anywhere else except here and this is all we have of him and quarters a brother this is it this is all we've got i wonder how many believers or perhaps those who are not yet believers but many of us perhaps sometimes feel a bit like that we're not middle winners we're not up there on the podium with those who really excelled maybe we're not way down to the bottom either you know maybe we're not even we're not only maybe sort of doing our best and giving of our best and every now and then we we say after not too badly i've done so much better than i did before but nobody's ever going to notice it in your life perhaps in my life how many of us are like this quarters here no public fanfare no public mention just quietly included getting on with it no doubt how many sometimes feel like that what do we know actually of quarters i'm going to say nothing well that's not entirely true we do know a little about obviously with his name and the fact he's referred to as a brother we know his gender he is a man we know that his name meaning fourth quarters we've got that that almost certainly means that he is either a roman or a romanized greek you know it's not a jewish name so he's a gentile probably but we know only his name gender we know that he's a believer he's described as a brother and the way that paul is talking in this roman 16 he describes various people as kinsmen as brothers as sisters you know and somebody as his mother who clearly are not blood relations but they are brethren sisters mothers fathers in christ and quartus is a brother that means he is a fellow believer so we know he's a christian we know his name and we know that he's a christian we also know that he is actually whenever romans is being written from corinth is the most likely possibility not simply because of the little fruit note at the bottom of chapter 16 because the footnote remember it's not part of inspired scripture somebody may say oh it's written from corinth but they may not actually have been but the fact that chapter 16 verse 1 begins with i commend unto you phoebe our sister which is a servant or deaconess it might be translated of the church which is at cancria now cancria was the the settlement at the other side of the very narrow isthmus uh of which corinth was the other side corinth drew its power from the fact that i don't know if you've got a map at the back of your bible or not but the bottom bit of greece that sticks out at the bottom is a very this long narrow channel that sort of dissected with a very narrow neck of land in the middle just like you know just like you got here in tarbot there in harrison will be slightly bigger than that it's probably about 10 miles across altogether uh but compared to the rest of greece that's pretty now and you had corinth at one end and the other end of the land but you can't fear so these two towns between them they sort of controlled the the trade across the across the narrow isthmus of man that would have brought an awful lot of sea trade going across it to try and avoid sailing around the bottom end of greece so the fact that phoebe who is probably the one carrying this letter probably the one bearing the letter to rome and then at the end of it says i commend to you phoebe your sister a servant of the church at cancria why is she mentioned here especially unless you know he's been in the vicinity of cancria he's been in the vicinity of cancria he's been in

the vicinity of colinth so that's most likely is where it's written from but wherever it's written from there is quarters with paul near enough to be able to send his greetings perhaps in the same location with him the same house perhaps or just part of the group that he works alongside he is a believer we've got his name and we know that he is there with paul from whatever romans is written and that he is there helping with the work we might speculate one more thing about him but we'll leave that one more thing aside until we leave it later on in a few minutes time we'll look at that but those are the three things we definitely know he's a believer his name is quartus he's there with paul he's helping with the work in corinth or whatever it is and he's sending his greetings three things really we just know about it of the many others mentioned in romans 16 and elsewhere we are told a little of what they did or some other detail uh about them you know we mentioned phoebe just now we know that she's a deaconess or servant the word the iacono simply means service or ministry in that sense which is it came here receiver and the lord and your sister whatever business she has priscilla and aquila my helpers who for my life laid down their own necks unto whom not only i give thanks for all the churches of the gentiles greet the church that is in their house so we know something of what they've done we know they've got a house church meaning in their home salute my well-beloved epinatus who's the first fruits of achia unto christ in other words he's the first one in the whole part of which corinth is the main city which trusted in jesus so that's something we know about him again that would suggest it's written from that area greek may who bestowed much labor on us we don't know who this maybe is she's almost certainly not one of the palestinian mayies but bestowed much labor on us andronicus and julia my kinsmen my fellow prisoners who have known among the apostles whether that means that they are themselves apostles in the wider sense maybe one of this two of the 72 that were sent out or maybe just it means that the apostles know about them and they take note of them they are they are well known amongst the other apostles they were in christ before me amhius my beloved in the lord our babe our helper in christ that is my beloved there's a little bit of something about almost everybody something they've done or something whereby they are known to paul or dear to paul he's trying to sort of personalize this letter as much as possible romans remember is a deeply theological letter we've got some of the most powerful theological statement in the whole new testament there in romans and yet at the end he's trying to make it more personal now trying to remember some of the christians who are there in romans by name because he knows them by name he knows them also by reputation but of course we know nothing save his name and his faith and that he is in there with paul in the midst of the work and sending his greetings to rome and yet here he is in the bible a distinction not owned by any one of us who might say oh yes i'm in the bible there's my name no people that have the same name as us you may be in the bible if your name may be or ruth or and or or what john or whatever it may be but it's not actually us is it people who have got the same name as us whom in any distant way we may be called after because it's always got a biblical name and how somebody after that but it's not us it's not us who are there in the bible quarters is there in the bible that's a distinction that you know saint columbus doesn't have saint george who may or may not

the slain the dragon doesn't have saint david of wales patrick the liar they're not there in the bible spartan's not there in the bible albert money mcchain isn't there in the bible but quartus is there we know his name we know his faith and we know that he's working there with paul sending his greetings to rome quarters a brother that brings us then to that one more thing we might speculate about quarters here in other words that no further mention is made of his name i remember once when i'm i've been at one of the colleges in aberdeen believe while uh not long after school the place where quite a lot of um middle teenagers were there as well some of them were wilder or more rowdier than others i wasn't of course but you know some were and when it came to the time i was leaving my my father was following the principle of it something and i had to i was moving on to the next stage and he said well i don't know if my son's been disruptive influence or not and the principal said well well he can't have been that bad because i haven't heard about him if he was that bad he would have been up in front of me along with the other wild ones and troublemakers and so on so it can't be that bad because i haven't heard anything about him in other words he enrolled at the beginning and i tried to go on with the work or the classes may not have been the best student or best people but he clearly wasn't in major trouble or else he'd have been up in my office we didn't hear any more about him because he wasn't in any major trouble now here's a wee hint then for quarters think oh well you know who wouldn't say if he was in more trouble that's not necessarily the case the fact that we hear nothing more about quarters means also that if he did blot his coffee book he didn't bought it in such a way as paul took note of or heard about or recognized anyway well that wouldn't be the case anyway well it might be you know think of the case of demas that we read about in colossians 4 verse 14 when people are busy sending greetings look the beloved physician and demons greet you now colossians is written pretty much about the same time as philemon because they're both sent almost certainly from colossi and if we think about the letter to philemon there you've got him at verse 24 again marcus astarcus demas lucas my fellow laborers the grace of our lord jesus christ be with your spirit so there is with paul sending greetings and that's all well and good you would think but as i'm sure some of you know in second timothy chapter 4 we read do thy diligence to come shortly unto me for demons hath forsaken me having loved this present world and is departed of the thessalonica the questions to galatia doesn't mean crescent has forsaken paul crescents may have been on legitimate missionary business likewise titus unto dalmatia with no evidence that titus fell away these guys the latter two crescents and titus may have been on legitimate christian work but they're still away but demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world and is departed unto thessalonica so although we've got demas there in the bible the last word we've got about demons in the last letter that paul ever writes means he has forsaken paul he's loved this present world more than he loved the lord and the gospel it would have been better for demas's reputation if he wasn't ever mentioned again because now that he has been we know that he fell away we know that he turned his back on the lord and upon his apostle it's not always better to have more detailed reference to oneself in scripture or anywhere else necessarily sometimes less is more we don't read any such

[15 : 49] sallying of the little known name of quarters with any such falling away he remains and only still is his quarters a brother we know his name we know his faith and we know that he is there with paul sending his greetings to god little known but not unknown not in the complete sense that's 15 of course we read verse 18 known unto god are all his works from the beginning of the world but that is true with works it is true so much more with people jesus says remember john 10 verse 3 he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep to him the porter openeth and the sheep hear his voice and he calleth his own sheep by name and leadeth them out he calleth his own sheep by name and quarters a brother that's all we've got but we know his name and the lord knows him by name he knows his own sheep he brings his own sheep out now being a brother in christ it doesn't mean quarters came out of the womb confessing the name of jesus he wouldn't have done for every brother in christ every sister in christ there was a time when we may have been brethren nearer or closer but weren't brethren in the sense of faith jesus owned brethren according to the flesh remember and he had at least four we know their names but we read in john 7 verse 5 for neither did his brethren believe in him because his brethren had sent him to part hence going to judea and thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest for there is no man that doeth anything in secret and he himself seeketh to be known openly if thou do these things show thyself to the world don't leave us in doubt for neither did his brethren believe in him but we know that later on they did we know that later on they came to faith in their physical brother who was to become their spiritual brother jesus they trusted and believed in him latterly there was a time when they didn't and then there was a time when he did and that is true for every single one who's a believer in christ there's a time when you weren't you may have been brought up with it and it may have been your culture and your background and it may have been you know doing the books in a family home or whatever but there was a time when he wasn't your personal savior maybe that is still the case today there was a time when you did not believe and then there was a time you did if you're in christ and instead of being one unknowing of christ but still known of him he became a brother a sister remember that we read in hebrews and we often make reference to this chapter over hebrews 2 11 and 12 for both he had sanctified and they who are sanctified are all of one for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren saying i will declare thy name unto my brethren in the midst of the church will i sing praise unto thee jesus is not ashamed to be called the brother of those who trust and believe in him there was a time when they didn't and then there came a time when they did you perhaps me everyone who trusts and believes in the lord now there was a time when they didn't and then they became a sister a brother like quarters a brother that's all we've got on him jesus says in his teaching matthew 10 verse 29 are not two sparrows sold for a father and one of

them shall not fall on the ground without your father but the very hairs of your head are all numbered fear you not therefore you have more value than many sparrows i'm not two sparrows sold for a father now i'm not quite old enough to remember a father i can remember the old money when i was still young they were just bringing in decimal coinage and i can remember when there was still the fluidity between the 10 pence piece and the two shilling piece and the one shilling and the five p i can remember the old sixpences and the old throttney bits and the old big copper pennies with britannia in the background and then you had a half penny but half of a half penny was a brother it was a quarter of a penny a fourth quartus means fourth are not two sparrows sold for a fourth of a penny for a for a farthing and yet not one of them falls to the ground without your father fear you not therefore you have more value than many sparrows whosoever therefore shall confess me before men him will i confess also before my father which is in heaven but whosoever shall deny me before men him will i also deny before my father which is in heaven not through 10 32 and 33 we do not read but quarters later on denies the lord unlike demas unlike some others rolled out unlike people perhaps that we have known who began with the lord perhaps he professed the lord but for one reason or another he fell away now we don't know the eternal destination of any individual soul we don't know whether they turned to the lord in their dying breath or at the last minute but we know all those all of us know of those perhaps from our childhood from our younger days or more recent years who have known the lord loved the lord professed the lord fell away we don't read that about quarters who so ever therefore shall confess me before men him will i confess also before my father which is in heaven that's what quarters has done that's why he's a brother he's a believer it's all that we know about them but that's what he is he's not spectacular he's not up there with the apostles he's not of notes of only apostles like andronicus and julia he's not the one who has the church meeting in his house like like priscilla and aquila he's not described as the beloved like stackets or our helper in christ like our being he's not described as paul's kinsman or those who've labored much in the lord he's just little quarters one fourth two sparrows so for a fourth of a penny with your worth much more than that says the lord for quarters there is no pomp no flag no ceremony no great public declaration our great tears no glory no medals just quiet faithfulness as far as we know all the way through to the end we don't read that about demons don't read that about judas but we don't read anything to the contrary about quarters this is all we've got and we might say in a sense it is enough now that doesn't mean of course only those who are mentioned in the bible and in heaven of course

that's not the case we just mentioned a whole string of other people robert money mc chain and and spurgeon and all these other saints of the lord and john knox and all these other ones who will be with the lord in glory well they don't mention the bible but they serve the lord in their day and quartus's day was the day that overlapped with paul overlapped with the time when paul is writing that magnificent theological work the letter to the romans one of the most significant books in the entire bible and while paul is writing it out there's tarchius copying it out for him i tarchius who wrote this epistle salute me in the lord he's the secretary he's the the word smelt that paul is dictating to quartus isn't that he's just a brother but he's there his time overlapping with paul's time and his writing to the romans and in this time he's being faithful and there's no fanfare there's no signing there's no medals there's no flags there's no big deal for quartus and you may be living out your christian life they are thinking there's no big deal there's no great flags of ceremony i am never going to be one that people write the books about saying there's a bible and this was the person that started it off because they were so devout and they prayed so much and this was such a wonderful christian who was so inspirational or this person or that person people will never write books about me you might be thinking people will never trumpet how faithful i was to the lord or tell stories like they do about some of the great saints of the past i'm just me when i'm gone nobody except maybe my family will remember me i'm not special i'm not i'm not anything spectacular at all i'm just me just if i'm in christ i'm somebody's brother in christ somebody's sister in christ in glory we will know each other perfectly personally individually and the reason we know that is partly because as you said many times in the past because of the amount of transfiguration because where jesus is flanked by moises and elijah the personification of the law and the prophets all leading up to the messiah and peter he's there with the other side he's being blinded almost by this light and he says lord it's good for us to be here let's make three tabernacles three little booths one for you one for moises one for elijah he knows it's moises he knows it's elijah but nobody says to me this is moises this is elijah most of the apostles nobody says that they just know it's them this is their glorified spirit it's not their physical bodies because they haven't had their resurrection of the body yet jesus hasn't yet risen from the dead at that point so if he hasn't nobody else has just their glorified spirits as the hebrews puts it general assembly of the firstborn the spirits of just men who perfect it's their glorified spirits but the disciples recognize them men whom they have never seen who have left the sea of time hundreds of years before they were even born but they know who they are immediately that's moises that's imagine let's make tabernacles for them so they can stay with jesus with us on the mountain they know exactly who they are and if they know that for people that they have never seen as them then we will too we will know those who we see perhaps those who we knew as old people perhaps they'll be younger perhaps little children will be grown up further in heaven we don't know that but we know we'll know we'll know jesus when we see him we'll know moises and elijah and peter and all the others that are there we'll know joshua and gideon david the king and solomon the builder of the temple and peter as i mentioned

the leader of the apostles and paul the apostle of the gentiles whose letter we're talking about just now here oh meet matthew the tax collector who will know who he is and thomas the doubter who became convinced and what a comfort it is to assure you that was one of jesus disciples said i won't believe i'm not going to believe you know just imagining unless i see the marks in his hands and feet and put my hand into his side and feel the wounds i won't believe he was convinced by the evidence that jesus presented to him and the most serious doubt that of all was overcome isn't that good to know thomas the dad who became convinced mary magdalene out of whom were cast seven bells every other sister in christ every father and god every mother in israel and all that they ever did and all that is ever known about them and declared about them it'll all be there and you'll see them and will know them all peter and moises and elijah and david and solomon all of them and chorus let us pray