

Romans 16:1-27

Romans Chapter 16 overview: The people listed in this chapter are an important testimony to Jesus Christ and to what Christianity is all about, during a time of great persecution of Christians. This is the end of Paul's letter and he is basically acknowledging people who helped him and made a difference. It is like the closing of a letter.

- 1 *I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church that is at Cenchreae:* Phoebe was the person who was going to carry this letter to the Romans.
- 2 *that ye receive her in the Lord, worthily of the saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever matter she may have need of you: for she herself also hath been a helper of many, and of mine own self.* Paul wants the Romans to give her a proper greeting as a saint, and he wants them to help her in whatever they can do. Paul wants the Romans to take care of her because she has been such a great helper to many people.
- 3 *Salute Prisca and Aquila my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus,* We met Prisca and Aquila in the 18th chapter. They took Paul home after his speech and enlightened him on some issues of the teachings he was preaching, quietly and without embarrassing him. They did not jump up in the middle of the sermon and yell "Hey, you're wrong!" They took him home and quietly discussed their differences.
- 4 *who for my life laid down their own necks; unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles:* Prisca and Aquila, by doing what they did for Paul, all the Gentiles should be grateful and thank them. They risked their lives to worship. Back in those days, they worshipped in people's homes. They didn't have churches back then.
- 5 *and salute the church that is in their house. Salute Epænetus my beloved, who is the first fruits of Asia unto Christ.* Evidently this individual is one of the first people Paul witnessed to and brought into his ministry.
- 6 *Salute Mary, who bestowed much labor on you.* We don't know which Mary this is, since Mary was such a common name then.
- 7 *Salute Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also have been in Christ before me.* These people were Christians before all of us and Paul is acknowledging their great work.
- 8 *Salute Ampliatus my beloved in the Lord.*
- 9 *Salute Urbanus our fellow-worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.*
- 10 *Salute Apelles the approved in Christ. Salute them that are of the household of Aristobulus.*
- 11 *Salute Herodion my kinsman. Salute them of the household of Narcissus, that are in the Lord.*
- 12 *Salute Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord. Salute Persis the beloved, who labored much in the Lord.* Paul is acknowledging all these people because the work they did back then was so important but they worshipped at the risk of losing their lives. They are very important people in the beginnings of Christianity. Paul wants them to be remembered.
- 13 *Salute Rufus the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.* We're not sure which Rufus this is referring to. Whoever this Rufus was, Paul thought enough of him to include a mention of his mother, and Paul treats Rufus' mom as his own.
- 14 *Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brethren that are with them.*
- 15 *Salute Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints that are with them.*

- 16 *Salute one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ salute you.* We don't kiss each other in this day and time. It is not our culture. It is referring to a holy kiss, not a husband-wife kiss. It is the brush-kiss on each cheek like they do in Europe. This phrase "churches of Christ" refers to geographical locations of people who worship Jesus Christ.
- 17 *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them that are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which ye learned: and turn away from them.* This is a real tough issue. Mark the people who are causing trouble and going against scripture teachings in the churches. These are people who argue and make issues of topics God has not made issues about. Paul says mark them, and don't have anything to do with them. "Turn away from them" he clear says. Don't cause trouble, don't argue, and get away from people who do. They will cause a division in your church, at your work, in your home. Get them out of your life.
- 18 *For they that are such serve not our Lord Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent.* You can influence some more than others. If you do a lot of public speaking, you can tell who listens to you and who just wants to argue by their body language and responses. Protect those who have not grown spiritually enough to not be able to tell yet who is going to lead them astray.
- 19 *For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I rejoice therefore over you: but I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple unto that which is evil.* The way you live is becoming public knowledge. Paul says to open you ears and grow in grace and knowledge from God's word. That's the only way you will grow is through a total surrender of your life. Be simple in evil means don't mix good and evil. Don't bring evil things into your house or life. Just stay away, don't get enticed by them, and guard and protect yourself always.
- 20 *And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.* "Shortly" is written in God's time, and one day to Him is a thousand years, so it has not happened yet. To God, Jesus Christ got here two days ago. But we can look forward to God taking care of Satan.
- 21 *Timothy my fellow-worker saluteth you; and Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.*
- 22 *I Tertius, who write the epistle, salute you in the Lord.*
- 23 *Gaius my host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the treasurer of the city saluteth you, and Quartus the brother.* Paul is staying at Gaius' home during this time.
- 24 *May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you. Amen.*
- 25 *Now to him that is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which hath been kept in silence through times eternal,* Paul is saying that what he's telling us about the church and the called out ones, this was a mystery, hidden knowledge at those times. There are no churches in the Old Testament, only in the New Testament. This knowledge of God and His word was kept secret up until now as Paul is writing this letter.
- 26 *but now is manifested, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known unto all the nations unto obedience of faith:* Paul makes a powerful statement: all this knowledge and the church has been revealed, now everyone may believe and have faith.
- 27 *to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory for ever. Amen.*