

Romans Chapter 16

As Paul concludes his letter to the church at Rome, he does so with a roll call of those whose lives are a reflection of all that the Spirit has led him to write. The more than 40 names mentioned give us a greater understanding of the impact Paul had on people and shares with us the way Paul loved the people God put in his path.

A partial list of the faithful listed is presented with the comments Paul attaches to their name. As you read this list, consider your list of the faithful God has brought into your life and what identification you would attach to their names.

- Phoebe—has been a helper of many and of Paul
- Prisca and Aquila—risked their necks for the sake of Paul
- Epaenetus—the first convert in Asia
- Mary—worked hard for you
- Andronicus and Junias—outstanding among the apostles
- Ampliatus—my beloved
- Apelles—approved in Christ
- Tryphaena and Tryphosa—workers in the Lord
- Persis—beloved who worked hard in the Lord
- Rufus—a choice man in the Lord
- Timothy—fellow worker
- Tertius—wrote the letter for Paul
- Gaius—hosted Paul

I would like to share with you a Bible study I experienced during a revival led by Phil Waldrep in which he used Romans 16 to share three of the most needed elements in church relationships we must recapture. I hope it will rekindle a desire for each of us to express these things with one another on a regular basis. If we will be diligent in doing this, we will enhance and protect the atmosphere of Christ's love in this place.

This one of the most powerfully simplistic insights into a part of scripture we usually overlook. How appropriate that the Spirit would lead Paul to close his letter to Rome in a way that would prove to be timeless for us in this place at this time.

Three Ways Paul Loved People: Phil Waldrep

Paul Acknowledged People

- Called them by name
- Spoke in a way that proved his relationship with them
- It showed he was aware of what their lives had meant to him and the impact they had on the work of God.

Paul Affirmed People:

- Paul bragged on people
- One of the greatest ways to demonstrate love is to build another up by pointing out their importance in your life
- Never let another person God brings into your life go unaffirmed.
- Such encouragement can motivate someone to take that next step in faith

Paul Appreciated People:

- Many of those mentioned by Paul were women and slaves
- We spend so much time being appreciative for what someone has done for us or what we have received from others that we have lost the true nature of spiritual appreciation.
- Appreciate people, tell them you “appreciate them” and not that you “appreciate it.” “I appreciate you” means so much more than simply thanking them for something they did.

Romans 16:17-20

A Warning!

Evidently, there was a threat being posed or was approaching the church at Rome and Paul, being the wonderful pastor that he was, could not close without making them aware of the possibilities. Within this warning, Paul identifies the traits of a person within the church that we need to be aware of and avoid falling under their influence.

- We are to “keep our eyes on” for the purpose of avoiding
 - 1 Corinthians 5:9-13
- We cannot be so naïve in the church to believe that there are not those whose influence will damage the necessary unity within the church.

- It is obvious Paul is dealing with matters of doctrine and has moved away from the discussion on the weak and strong with regard to rules and freedom.
- These people bring division and provide stumbling blocks to the focus a believer must have on Christ.
- Anyone who has an effect on our life that pulls us away from what we know to be the truth of focus on Christ is to intentionally be avoided.
- Consider the traits of the person Paul is instructing the church to “watch out for” and to avoid:
 - They cause dissension
 - They hinder the movement towards Christ
 - They are slaves to self—only their way
 - They make sin sound good—smooth talkers—while deceptive, they are usually well-liked
- Our leader is Christ! Be cautious allowing anyone to have complete influence in your life. Be wise and do not unsuspectingly (simple-mindedly) accept what is said. Make all influence a matter of prayer and Holy Spirit led discernment.

Scripture: Romans 16:25-27

Theme: Benediction

- “To the only wise God”
- Let these words be your closing prayer to the study of Romans.
 - *Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, ²⁶ but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; ²⁷ to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.*