**Romans Chapter 16**

# "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea;

* 1. Phoebe
     1. Φοίβη Phoíbē, means radiant, only occurs here.
  2. Servant - διάκονος diákonos
     1. Does her being a servant (diakonos), mean that she held an office as deacon in the church or that she is, over all, a servant in the church?
     2. The word diakonos occurs 29 times in the New Testament.
     3. "Paul calls himself a minister (diakonos) of the gospel in Col. 1:23, 25. Paul went to Jerusalem to serve (diakonos) the saints (Rom. 15:25). Mary spoke to the servants (diakonos) at the wedding in Cana (John 2:5). It is used for serving tables (Luke 17:8 and Acts 6:2). Jesus came not to be served, but to serve (diakonos) (Mark 10:45). The government is called a minister (diakonos) of God (Rom. 13:4). Tychicus is a minister (diakonos) of the Lord (Col. 4:7) as is Timotheus (1 Thess. 3:2)." (https://carm.org/womens-issues/there-were-deaconesses-so-there-can-be-female-elders-and-pastors)
     4. "Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain" (1 Tim. 3:8). And, "Let deacons be husbands of only one wife [lit. one woman man'] and good managers of their children and their own households" (1 Tim. 3:12).
  3. Cenchrea
     1. Cenchrea was in the harbor of Corinth in the Saronic Gulf, about 7 miles east of the city. (Zodhiates, Spiros. 2000. In *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.)
     2. Cenchrea is also mentioned in one other place in the N.T. in Acts 18:18.
        1. Acts 18:18, "Paul, having remained many days longer, took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. In Cenchrea, he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow."

# that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

* 1. This verse suggests that Phoebe was a godly woman who served the people in the church.
  2. Saints
     1. ἅγιος hágios; fem. *hagía*, neut. *hágion* (39), adj. from *hágos* (n.f.), any matter of religious awe, expiation, sacrifice. Holy, set apart, sanctified, consecrated, saint. It has a common root, *hág-*, with *hagnós* (53), chaste, pure. Its fundamental idea is separation, consecration, devotion to the service of Deity, sharing in God's purity and abstaining from earth's defilement." (Zodhiates, Spiros. 2000. In *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.)
  3. Just as she had helped others, Paul instructs them to help her. Those who serve the body of Christ ought also to be supported by the body of Christ. This support can be financial, prayerful, physical, or whatever else might be needed.

# Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,

# who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;

* 1. From verse 3 to verse 16, Paul sends greetings to different people.
  2. Aquila was the husband, and Prisca was the wife. But the order of their mention is always reversed so that she is mentioned before he is. This demonstrates her prominence.
  3. Prisca means ‘ancient.’
  4. Aquila (means 'eagle') and his wife Prisca, also Priscilla. The two are mentioned in Acts 18:2, 18, 26; 1 Cor. 16:19). Both worked to serve the Lord Jesus by helping people in the church and risked their lives in that service.
     1. "Priscilla is a diminutive of Prisca, a name for women in the Acilian gens. She may have been a noble Roman lady, but her husband was a Jew of Pontus and a tent-maker by trade. They were driven from Rome by Claudius, came to Corinth, then to Ephesus, then back to Rome, and again to Ephesus." (Robertson, A.T. 1933. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.)
  5. Aquila was a Jew and a native of Pontus (Acts 18:2).

# also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.

* 1. Notice that Paul says they have a church in their house. This is evidence that the term church is used in different senses of the body as a whole and specific locations.
  2. Epaenetus means 'praised.'

# Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you.

* 1. Mary is Μαρία María, not Mary, the mother of Jesus.
  2. Mary or Miriam means 'their rebellion.'
  3. She was a Jewish Christian in Rome.

# Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

* 1. Andronicus
     1. “Ἀνδρόνικος Andrónikos; gen. Androníkou, proper noun. Andronicus, a Greek name saluted by Paul in Rom. 16:7, and coupled with that of Junias or Junia. It is impossible, as this name occurs in the acc. case, to determine whether it is masc. or fem." (Zodhiates, Spiros. 2000. In *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, electronic ed. Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.)
  2. Junias – There is debate about this word in the Greek. This appears to be feminine in the Greek. Some have used this to show that women can be pastors and elders by saying apostles. But, it says "kinsmen" which is in the masculine form. See Was Junia in Romans 16:7 a female apostle in authority? (<https://carm.org/women-in-ministry/was-junia-in-romans-167-a-female-apostle-in-authority>)
     1. "The church father Chrysostom (died A.D. 407) referred to this person as a woman (Homily on Romans 31.7; NPNF 1, 11:555) but the church father Origen (died A.D. 252) referred to Junias as a man (MPG 14: 1289), and the early church historian Epiphanius (died A.D. 403) explicitly uses a masculine pronoun of Junias and seems to have specific information about him when he says that "Junias, of whom Paul makes mention, became bishop of Apameia of Syria" (Index disciplulorum 125.19- 20). (<http://www.cbmw.org/Journal/Vol-2-No-5/Willow-Creek-Enforces-Egalitarianism>)
  3. Apostles – there are different kinds in the New Testament
     1. Some apostles were only among the 12. They performed miracles. Some wrote scripture (Acts 1:21-22).
     2. Paul was an apostle (unique?) specifically commissioned by Christ. He performed miracles and wrote scripture (Acts 14:14; 1 Cor. 9:1; Gal. 1:1).
     3. Barnabas is an apostle. He performed no miracles, wrote no scripture . . . (Acts 14:14).
     4. Jesus is called an apostle. He performed miracles (Heb. 3:1).
     5. There are apostles in the sense of simply being sent. They are messengers. They perform no miracles (Phil. 1:19 John 20:19).
     6. It could possibly be that anyone who was involved in Christ's ministry before his death and saw him after his resurrection could be referred to as apostles (Acts 1:21-22).
     7. There are false apostles (2 Cor. 11:13; Rev. 2:2).

# Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord.

* 1. Amplias means 'large.'

# Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

* 1. Urbanas means 'refined or polite.'
  2. Stachys means 'a head of grain.'

# Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.

* 1. Apelles means 'called.'
  2. Aristobulus means ‘the best councilor’

# Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those of the household of Narcissus, who are in the Lord.

* 1. Horodion means 'heroic.'
  2. Narcissus means 'the daffodil flower' or 'stupidity.'

# Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, workers in the Lord. Greet Persis the beloved, who has worked hard in the Lord.

* 1. Tryphaena means 'luxurious.'
  2. Tryphosa means 'luxuriating.'

# Greet Rufus, a choice man in the Lord, also his mother and mine.

* 1. Rufus means 'red.'
  2. This might be the same person found in Mark 15:21, "They pressed into service a passer-by coming from the country, Simon of Cyrene (the father of Alexander and Rufus), to bear His cross."

# Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the brethren with them.

* 1. Asyncritus means 'incomparable.'
  2. Phlegon means 'burning.'
  3. Hermes means 'herald of the gods.'
     1. This might be the same person found in Acts 14:12, "And they began calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker."
  4. Patrobas means ‘paternal.’
  5. Hermas means 'mercury.'

# Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

* 1. Philologus means 'lover of the word.'
  2. Julia means 'sof haired.'
  3. Nereus means 'lump.'
  4. Olympas means 'heavenly'

# Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

* 1. The holy kiss was somewhat equivalent to our handshake. It was a greeting. Kissing each other on the cheek is still done in many countries.

# Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

* 1. Keep your eye on those who cause dissension and hindrances
     1. Dissension = διχοστασία dichostasía
     2. Hindrances = σκάνδαλον skándalon
     3. There are a lot of false teachers and people who sow discord among Christians.
     4. They are spiritual enemies who hinder the Lord's work.
  2. Contrary to the teaching which you learned
     1. Paul is telling the Romans to separate from those who cause problems in the Christian church because they contradict good biblical teaching.
     2. Therefore, individuals must know biblical theology.

# For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

* 1. These false teachers are not slaves of Christ in a good sense. They are slaves to their own appetites. The literal Greek for 'appetites' is bellies (κοιλία, koilía).
  2. Smooth and flattering speech
     1. 2 Tim. 4:3, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires."
     2. Many in the positive confession movement speak about how we are little gods, that God needs our permission to work here in the world, that we give permission for God to do things in our lives, and that our words have more power than Christ's words, etc.
     3. There are plenty of false teachers within the Christian faith.

# For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

* 1. Paul is rejoicing in the obedience of the people in the Roman church. Your obedience is to the Lord Jesus and the sound teachings of the faith.
  2. Paul goes on to say that we must be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil. This is another way of saying to remain sanctified in our Lord.
  3. We are to avoid false teachers, as well as sinful practices.

# The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

* 1. This is the blessed promise of the final victory over Satan. Though it is not yet, it is inevitable.

# Timothy my fellow worker greets you, and so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

* 1. Lucius means 'light, bright, white'
     1. this might be the same Lucius mentioned in Acts 13:1, "Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul."
  2. Jason means 'one who will heal.'
     1. this is probably the same Jason of Acts 17:5, "But the Jews, becoming jealous and taking along some wicked men from the marketplace, formed a mob and set the city in an uproar; and attacking the house of Jason, they were seeking to bring them out to the people."
  3. Sosipater means 'savior of his father or preserved father.'

# I, Tertius, who write this letter, greet you in the Lord.

* 1. Tertius means 'third.'
  2. Tertius is the amanuensis. It is someone who wrote what Paul dictated.
  3. Scriptures
     1. 2 Thess. 3:17, "I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand, and this is a distinguishing mark in every letter; this is the way I write."
     2. 1 Cor. 16:21, "The greeting is in my own hand—Paul."
     3. Col. 4:18, "I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my imprisonment. Grace be with you."

# Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus, the brother.

* 1. Gaius means 'lord.'
     1. This might be the same person found in 1 Cor. 1:14, "I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius."
  2. Erastus means 'beloved.'
     1. This might be the same person from 2 Tim. 4:20, "Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus I left sick at Miletus."
  3. Quartus means 'fourth.'

# The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

* 1. Note: early manuscripts do not contain this verse.
  2. There are many concluding benedictions in Paul's epistles
     1. 1 Cor. 16:23, "The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you."
     2. 2 Cor. 13:14, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all."
     3. Gal. 6:18, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen."
     4. Eph. 6:24, "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible love."
     5. Phil. 4:23, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."
     6. Col. 4:18, "I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my imprisonment. Grace be with you."
     7. 1 Thess. 5:28, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."
     8. 2 Thess. 3:18, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."
     9. 1 Tim. 6:21, "which some have professed and thus gone astray from the faith. Grace be with you."
     10. 2 Tim. 4:22, "The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you."
     11. Titus 3:15, "All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all."
     12. Phile. 25, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."

# 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,

* 1. This is the final closing benediction of this epistle.
  2. Paul tells us that God can establish us, but what does this mean. A good explanation is found in 1 Peter 5:10, "After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you."
  3. The book of Romans (7,111 words) is Paul's longest epistle.
     1. 1 Corinthians is 6,830 words, 2 Corinthians is 4,477, Galatians is 2,230, Ephesians is 2,422, Philippians is 1,629, Colossians is 1,582, 1 Thessalonians is 1,481, 2 Thessalonians is 823, 1 Timothy is 1,591, 2 Timothy is 1,238, Titus is 659, Philemon is 335. If you include Hebrews, which may have been authored by Paul, add 4,953 words.
  4. The revelation of the gospel was hidden in the Old Testament, though not completely undetectable.
     1. Atonement by blood, Leviticus 17:11 with Hebrews 9:22
     2. Begotten Son, (Jesus) Psalm 2:7 with Acts 13:33 and Heb. 1:5
     3. Crucifixion, Psalm 22:11-18; Zechariah 12:10 with Luke 23:33-38
     4. Eternal Son, Micah 5:1-2; Psalm 2:7 with Heb. 1:5; 5:5
     5. God among His people, Isaiah 9:6; 40:3 with John 1:1, 14; Col. 2:9
     6. The sacrifice of the Son, typology found in Genesis 22 with John 3:16
     7. Sin offering, Exodus 30:10; Lev. 4:3 with Rom. 8:3; Heb. 10:18
     8. Resurrection of Christ, Psalm 16:9-10; 49:15 with John 2:19-21; 20:25-28
     9. Substitutionary atonement, Isaiah 53:6-12 with Matt. 20:28; 1 Pet. 2:24
     10. Justification by faith, Gen. 15:6 with Rom. 4:1-5

# but is now 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;

* 1. the manifestation of the gospel of Jesus Christ was present to the people of the first century.
  2. Paul points out that the Old Testament prophets, under the decree and sovereignty of the eternal God, proclaimed what has now been revealed, the gospel.
  3. The gospel has been made known to all nations. This is an exaggeration, a hyperbole. This is important because the Jews believed the Messiah was only coming for Israel (Matt. 15:24).
  4. But there are people within all the nations of the world who will come to the faith of Christ.

# to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen."

* 1. Here, Paul distinguishes between the Father and the Son.
  2. Some would use this to say that God the Father is the only true God and that Jesus is not God in the flesh.
     1. Jude 4, "For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ."
  3. The glory of God will be forever. The literal Greek says, χρονοις αἰωνιοις, chronos aioniois, which is eternal times.
  4. Amen means so be it. It is a statement of absolute trust and confidence. It occurs 129 times in the New Testament.