

SERMON NOTES

By Pastor John Paul Miller

In The Grip of God's Grace

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans

Romans 16:1-16 - "Paul, a Lover of People"

Romans 16:1-16, " I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also. Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epænetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ. Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us. Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord. Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household. Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord. Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord. Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them. Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them. Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you."

Have you ever received a letter or email that just seems to never end?

Paul is having a hard time saying good-bye to the believers in Rome.

Romans 15:13, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost."

Romans 15:33, "Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen."

Romans 16:20, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen."

Then, seven more verses, but I'm glad he kept on going!

Why?

Because, even though the 16th chapter may not look very interesting, it's packed with many precious truths.

It's been called, "one of the most instructive chapters of the New Testament because it encourages personal relationships of love in the church."

In it Paul mentioned 33 people by name. He greeted 24 people, all in a city Paul had never been to,

Paul was not only a soul winner, he was a friend maker.

What a lesson for us!

Think of the energy it took for Paul to "keep in touch".

Even though Paul was one of the greatest of intellects ... a true master of theology, he was also a caring man who loved people (1 Corinthians 13).

Paul was a 'People Person'.

No doubt he remembered their names because he prayed for them.

Charles Erdman – These greetings reveal the heart of Paul showing his tender affection, his appreciation of kindness, his warm sympathy, and his high value of human friendships.

Paul commended them, he greeted them, and he expressed his love for them.

Beloved:

vs. 5. *"Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaeetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ."*

vs. 8, *"Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord."*

vs. 9, *"Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved."*

vs. 12, *"Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord."*

So we see his great heart!

I. Paul's loving heart (seen in the friends he greeted)

Romans 16:1-16, " I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also. Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ. Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us. Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord. Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household. Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord. Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord. Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them. Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them. Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you."

First, we have a commendation (only one!) – Phebe (her name means ‘radiant’)

We owe so much to Phebe:

A. It is commonly held that Phebe was entrusted with the responsible task of carrying this letter of Paul's to the Roman Church.

- Never did a messenger carry a more important letter.
- LESSON: a simple act of service, and think of the blessings it has brought.

B. Notice the three things Paul says about Phebe:

- our sister (vs. 1)
- a servant – was she a deaconess?

She was not a pastor, elder, or overseer

- a succourer – Greek: *pros -tat-is* – we get the word patroness from this word. It's used of a female guardian.
- She was evidently a woman of means who used her wealth to support the church and the apostles.

In verses 3-16, we find Paul's many greetings:

LESSONS:

- A. Though most of the names in this list are unknown to us, they are not unknown to God, and are now in Heaven enjoying their eternal reward.
- B. God uses people of all races, rank, and gender
 - we see the diversity of the church
 - we see the unity of the church
 - four times we find the words, "in Christ" (vs. 3, 7, 9, 10)
 - five times we find the words, "in the Lord" (vs. 8, 11, and twice in vs. 12)
 - Paul used the family language of "sister" and "brother" (vs. 1, 14)
 - He mentions two experiences which strengthen Christian unity.
 - A. "fellow workers" (vs. 3, 9) – get busy working and you won't have time to fight.
 - B. "fellow sufferers" (vs. 4, 7)
- C. We need one another!

Be a friend maker
Keep in touch
Work together