

Exegetical Notes - Romans 16:1-27  
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## **Romans 16:1-27**

(Paul dictated his letters to his personal secretary. This appears to be his ordinary practice. At the conclusion to a letter, he often attached a personal conclusion frequently written in his own hand. Romans 16 is Paul's personal conclusion to the Book of Romans. This conclusion shows that, while Paul was not the founder of the Roman church and had never visited there, he knew many people who were part of that congregation.)

### **Verses 1-2**

***1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchrea. 2 I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me.***

- The first person that Paul mentions in Romans 16 is Phoebe. She is listed as a "deacon" - probably not a formal title, but a servant, in the church at Cenchrea known for helping other people, including Paul. She must be arriving in Roman for some reason unknown to us, and Paul asked the Roman Christians to receive her into their fellowship.

### **Verses 3-5a**

***3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. 4 They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. 5 Greet also the church that meets at their house.***

- The second persons Paul mentions are Priscilla and Aquila (see Acts 18:2, 26, I Corinthians 16:19, 2 Timothy 4:19). This is a husband-and-wife team that worked beside Paul to spread the Gospel. They are now settled in Rome. Paul says that the entire church is grateful to God for the ministry of these two.
- There is a house church meeting in their home. The Roman church would have been composed of small house churches which met in various homes throughout the city.

### **Verse 5b**

***Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.***

- Next Paul sends greeting to Epenetus. Paul says that this person is his dear friend and was the first convert to Christ in Asia. He is not known other than in this reference.

### **Verse 6**

***Greet Mary, who worked very hard for you.***

- We do not know this Mary. It was a common name.

### **Verse 7**

***Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.***

- We do not know Andronicus or Junia.

### **Verses 8-15**

***8 Greet Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord.***

***9 Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my dear friend Stachys.***

***10 Greet Apelles, whose fidelity to Christ has stood the test.***

***Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus.***

***11 Greet Herodion, my fellow Jew.***

***Greet those in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.***

***12 Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord.***

***Greet my dear friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord.***

***13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too.***

***14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the other brothers and sisters with them.***

***15 Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the Lord's people who are with them.***

- We do not know these people.

### **Verse 16**

***16 Greet one another with a holy kiss.***

***All the churches of Christ send greetings.***

- This was the expected greeting among Christians. It is believed to have been limited to the same sex. Men kissed men, not women, and women kissed women, not men.

**Verses 17-19**

***I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. 18 For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people. 19 Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I rejoice because of you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.***

- In closing, Paul warns the Romans to be on guard against those who teach error and so cause division among the church. Error is not to be tolerated but exposed. People who teach error do not have the interests of the church at heart but are operating from selfish and corrupt motives. Their hope is to lead naïve people, weaker Christians, into error and disrupt the Church.
- Everyone knows that the Romans are given to sound teaching and must not be led into error. Their guard must be up.

**Verse 20**

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

- Paul is confident that God will protect the Roman church against the works of Satan and that Jesus is with them.

**Verses 21-23**

***21 Timothy, my co-worker, sends his greetings to you, as do Lucius, Jason and Sosipater, my fellow Jews.***

***22 I, Tertius, who wrote down this letter, greet you in the Lord.***

***23 Gaius, whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy, sends you his greetings.***

***Erastus, who is the city's director of public works, and our brother Quartus send you their greetings.***

- These persons, some of whom are well known to us, were with Paul when he was writing to the Romans. They all add their names at the end of the letter to send greetings to the church in Rome.

***25 Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, 26 but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith— 27 to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.***

- This is the closing benediction or blessing to the Book of Romans!

(These exegetical notes are the foundational study for the sermon entitled *Paul's Personal Greetings*. They have been prepared by the Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. All rights are reserved by *Cornerstone Fellowship*, Coatesville, Pennsylvania, & The Reverend Doctor Charles H. Jensen. They are used here by permission.)