



Romans 16:1-16

GREETING THE SAINTS

I think that many even of those who have the appearance of being extremely good men hasten over this part of the Epistle as superfluous, and having no great weight in it. And I think that the same befalls them in regard to the genealogy that is in the Gospel. For because it is a catalogue of names, they think they cannot get any great good from it. Yet the gold founders' people are careful even about the little fragments...for it is possible even from bare names to find a great treasure. ...There is nothing superfluous, nothing added at random in the Scriptures. For if these names had no use, they would not then have been added to the Epistle, nor would Paul have written what he has written.

—John Chrysostom (AD 349-407)

Introduction (1:1-17)

SIN: The Problem of Humanity (1:18-3:20)

SALVATION: The Gift of Grace (3:21-5:21)

SANCTIFICATION: The Growth of Faith (6:1-8:39)

SOVEREIGNTY: The Plan of the Ages (9:1-11:36)

SERVICE: The Life of Worship (12:1-15:13)

Conclusion (15:14-16:27)

In Romans 16:1-16, Paul mentions 27 people by name. Though he had never visited the church in Rome, Paul knew many of the believers there through prior interactions and through the reports that he had heard from others (1:8).

From this list of names, and from Paul's commendation and greetings to each one of them, we can learn five principles that apply to our relationships in the church today:

1. Relationships within the church are _____ to the healthy functioning of the church (Acts 2:42-47).

Our sister (16:1)

His mother and mine (16:13; cf. Mark 15:21).

My beloved (16:5, 8, 9, 12).

My fellow workers (16:3, 9).

Risked their own necks for my life (16:4).

This 16th chapter is neglected by many to their own loss. It is by far the most extensive, intimate and particular of all the words of loving greeting in Paul's letters.

—William Newell

Many people ignore this chapter because they see in it nothing but a list of names of people long since dead and gone. But in many ways this is one of the most exciting chapters in Romans

—Ray Stedman

The term "disciple" is not used again in the NT after Acts 21:16. The preferred description for believers becomes "brothers and sisters" in Christ.

Paul was a friend maker as well as a soul winner. He did not live an isolated life; he had friends in the Lord and he appreciated them.

—Warren Wiersbe

Fellow Workers. Greek, *synergos* "a companion in labor" (Vine).

The world does not understand theology or dogma, but it understands love and sympathy.

—Dwight L. Moody

You can give without loving, but you can not love without giving.

—Amy Carmichael

2. Verbal encouragement is _____ and public commendation is often appropriate (cf. Hebrew 3:13).

Phoebe (16:1-2)

Priscilla & Aquila (16:3-5a; cf. Acts 18; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19)

Andronicus & Junia (16:7)

3. Unity in diversity is a _____ display of the body of Christ (cf. 12:4-5; 1 Corin. 12:12-27; Gal. 3:26-28).

Jews, Romans, and Greeks

Slaves, freedmen, and wealthy

Men and women

Married and single

Young and old

4. Every believer is _____ to the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:16; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

Some helped others financially

Some opened up their homes

Some worked hard in ministry

Some went out as missionaries

Some lived lives of notable character

5. Our love for one another is to be displayed in some form of _____ touch or affection (1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26; 1 Peter 5:14).

Phoebe [“radiant”] was probably the bearer of the letter, as some of the ancient subscriptions to the letter indicate.

—Thomas R. Schreiner

During the first centuries of the church, the role of a woman servant (diakonos) was to care for fellow believers who were sick, for the poor, for strangers, and for the imprisoned. They also were responsible for helping baptize and disciple new women converts. —John MacArthur, Jr.

Andronicus and Junia never met the risen Christ; and were never taught and tutored in the gospel by the bodily-present Christ, and sent out with his authority, as Paul and the Twelve were. So we can call people who have been sent as missionaries “small-a” apostles—but not “capital-A” apostles, who had, and have through the words of Scripture, absolute authority. —Tim Keller

Aristobulus was most likely the grandson of Herod the Great and a friend of Emperor Claudius. **Narcissus** was probably the famous advisor of Claudius who had great influence and wealth. Neither of these two men were believers (as far as we know) but many slaves and members of their household apparently were.

Worked Hard. Greek, *kopiao*, “to labor with wearisome effort.” Also used of athletes in training.

One cannot fail to be slightly amused by the allusion of these workers in the Lord, “Dainty” and “Delicate.” —John Knox

Greet. Greek, *aspazomai*, “to embrace, draw to one’s self.”