

Romans Chapter 16 Text	Commentary
<p>Personal Greetings</p> <p>16 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, ² that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.</p> <p>³ Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, ⁴ who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. ⁵ Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaphroditus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. ⁶ Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. ⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. ⁸ Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. ⁹ Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. ¹⁰ Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. ¹¹ Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. ¹² Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. ¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. ¹⁴ Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. ¹⁵ Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. ¹⁶ Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.</p>	<p>¹ Phoebe is a δίακονος (<i>diakonos</i>). A deacon. Masculine, but may also refer to a woman in this position. St. Paul worked along side many servants of God, including women like Phoebe.</p> <p>² She had been a προστάτις (<i>prostatis</i>) = helper, and translated here in the ESV as “patron.”</p> <p>³ Mentioned in Acts 18:2-3. Married couple. Prisca is Priscilla. Fellow workers of St. Paul. At Acts 18:26 Prisca <i>taught</i> Apollos. While woman may not be pastors, they may nevertheless be gifted in teaching the faith.</p> <p>⁴ Prisca and Aquila “risked their necks” for St. Paul. Literally, “placed their necks” as if preparing to be beheaded. Why? They were supporting the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There were and are many enemies. We risk our lives to be serious about spreading the Gospel.</p> <p>⁵ “The church in their house” = house churches. The Church in Rome was made up of many house churches.</p> <p>⁶ One of six Mary’s listed in the New Testament, and here, yet another important Christian. She “labored much” in the original. Are you getting the impression that St. Paul was not a one-man show? That would be good if you. He wasn’t.</p> <p>⁷ A fascinating preposition ἐν. It can be translated “among” like the ESV, or maybe “by” or other prepositions. Was SHE an apostle? Not one of the 12 for sure, but “apostle” was also used in a general sense as for example applied to Barnabas at Acts 14:14. Of course, it is possible that “Junia” might not even be a female even though the name is feminine. Could be “Junias”. What we do know is that elsewhere St. Paul clearly distinguishes between the roles of men and women (1 Co 14:33-35; Eph 5:22-33; 1 Tm 2:11-12). Historically, female apostles were unknown. Nevertheless, if Junia is a woman, like Mary, Prisca, and Phoebe, she was a important servant in the kingdom work.</p> <p>⁸⁻¹⁰ Vs. 10: “approved” = test, met, genuine from Greek and filtered, washed, purified from Hebrew.</p> <p>¹¹ Possibly a relative, or simply a fellow Jew.</p>

Final Instructions and Greetings

¹⁷ I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. ¹⁸ For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. ¹⁹ For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. ²⁰ The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

²¹ Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

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

²³ Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

Doxology

²⁵ Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶ but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—²⁷ to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen.

¹² Three more feminine names. “Labored much.”

¹³ Mk 15:21 says that Simon of Cyrene was the father of a Rufus! ἐκλεκτὸν = chosen or elected. His mother evidently also cared for St. Paul.

¹⁴⁻¹⁶ St. Paul did not write 1 Co 12 as theory. The body of Christ was real to him. We need each other. Middendorf: “In the OT...the kiss often serves as a...profound demonstration of kinship, loyalty, and unity in the faith. Evidently, Justin describes in *First Apology* the kiss before the Eucharist and with “chaste and closed” mouth.

¹⁷ First of all, this comes from within the Church! No romanticizing allowed about the 1st century Christian Church! Where there is sin, there is danger. Σκάνδαλα = cause for stumbling. How? By introducing anything contrary to Christian doctrine (teaching received from God’s Word).

¹⁸ Two ways: serve God or serve yourself. Jesus said, we will love the one and hate the other. Matthew 6:24: “No one can serve two masters.”

¹⁹ ὑπακοή = obedience. In this context to what? What is the litmus test? Wise to what is good, and innocent to what is evil.

²⁰ Gen 3:15 is in play. Christ’s work “quickly” (not “soon”) works throughout history protecting His people.

²¹ Timothy, his co-worker, to whom he writes 1 and 2 Tm. Also co-author of Php, 1 and 2 Th.

²²⁻²³ Tertius, St. Paul’s amanuensis, scribe. More co-workers and the concept of house church again.

²⁴ Sometimes an addition in brackets: “The grace of our Lord be with you all. Amen.”

²⁵⁻²⁷ An amazing closing doxology. Verse 25: Point blank: How does God strengthen us? The mystery = of salvation in Christ, not as in kept hidden, but beyond us; something only God could do. It is now disclosed in these last days. What does this revelation do for us by the power of the Holy Spirit? By the LISTENING of the faith, we remain in it! Ro 1:5. Ro 10:17. “The Only Wise God” & “through Jesus Christ!”