

Walking Through Romans to Christ

Romans chapter 16 “Travel Plans, Greetings, and Final Counsels” (15:22-16:27)

Righteousness by Faith Series

Opening/REVIEW: Last time we talked about what it means to receive one another as Christ received us, how to be one in Christ, the need of searching and learning from His word, and God’s desire to reach people of all nations—all the Gentile nations! In our lesson today, we’ll see about Paul’s travel plans, greetings, and final counsels to the people of Rome.

1. Paul’s plan to see those in Rome (ch.15, v.22-27)

- a. (v.22) “For this reason...” Paul was much hindered from coming to see those in Rome. What was it that was hindering him? It was the work of proclaiming the gospel to the gentiles in lands and places where the people had never heard the name of Christ! (Ref. vs.20,21).
- b. (v.23-25) Paul’s time to move on had come. He “no longer having a place” in those parts was ready to journey onward. First he was needing to head for Jerusalem to bring an offering to the saints there. Later, Paul planned to go into Spain, and to stop off in the City of Rome along the way to see those who were there. Paul had been staying for a short time of perhaps about 3 months in the house of Gaius who lived in Corinth (See Romans 16:23; 1 Corinthians 1:14). This letter to the Romans was written from there. At an earlier time, God had promised Paul that he would bear witness for Him in Rome (Acts 23:11). Paul really desired to go there!
- c. (v.26, 27) Paul was taking an offering to Jerusalem which the gentile saints had gathered for the believers there. Paul had been working on this for some time (Acts 11:27-30; 1 Corinthians 16:1-3).

2. Carrying on the work in earnestness, hoping for a little season of rest, and successful labors (v.28-33)

- a. (v.28-31) Paul pled for these saints in Rome to pray for him, “...that you **strive together with me in prayers to God for me...**” (v.30). It was always necessary to pray much! And it is always necessary to pray for one another. We should “pray always” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). There is a spiritual warfare going on between good and evil, and to win the battle we must be in constant prayer to receive strength from God. **Jesus Christ relied so much on prayer!** That was His strength, and it must be ours as well (Mark 1:35; 6:46; Matthew 14:23; 24:20; Luke 6:12; 21:36).
- b. (v.32,33) Paul desired, God willing, **to be refreshed together with the believers** from Rome. Truly, it can be a blessing to be together with those sincere believers of “like precious faith” (2 Peter 1:1). We have such a bond together in Christ, and it is so “blessed” to “dwell together in unity” with our brothers and sisters in the faith (Psalm 133:1).

3. Names of many faithful believers in Paul’s day are listed here in Greeting (ch.16 vs.1-16)

- a. (v.1,2) Apparently, Paul sent this letter by the hand of Phoebe, a beloved sister in the gospel, to those who were in Rome.
- b. (v.3-5) Priscilla and Aquila were a husband and wife ministry team who had worked together with Paul for a brief period of time in Corinth (Acts 18:2,18,26). They were originally from Rome, and had since gone back to Rome. There, they had a church in their house (also mentioned in 1 Corinthians 16:19). House church meetings were quite common in the early Christian church. Affording some other place of worship was not always so easily done.

- c. (v.7) Paul mentions some faithful laborers who were “in Christ before” him. All of us have received Christ’s call at different times in our lives. Let us labor for Him though from that moment we are called!
 - d. (v.13) “...his mother and mine”—not Paul’s real mother, but a person who was truly dear to him.
 - e. (v.16) Greeting with “a holy kiss.” This was a much more common type of greeting in Paul’s day, time, and surrounding cultures. Even the Apostle Peter recommended this gesture (1 Peter 5:14). However, it should be a “holy” kiss...not profane or dishonest as was that of Judas (Luke 22:48). And obviously not an unholy or sinful type of kiss, which is done immorally (Proverbs 5:3-5).
- 4. The good and simple gospel without divisions (v.17-20)**
- a. (v.17-18) There was always a need to watch out for false teachers and for those who would present doctrines or erroneous theories which were contrary to the words of pure Bible teaching. Paul counseled to “avoid” those who practiced this kind of seductive evil, and who allowed sin to be promoted under a false teaching of grace. God’s grace is never a license to sin or to disregard the Holy precepts of Jehovah’s Law! (Titus 2:11-14; 1 John 3:4)(See other such warnings of Paul in Acts 20:28-30; 2 Timothy 4:2-5). The Apostle Peter and also Jude counsel us with the same message of warning against false teachers (2 Peter 2:1-3, 19, 20; Jude 1:3,4). We should not allow ourselves to be divided upon such a point, but should remain firm in Christ’s truth!
 - b. (v.19,20) The church of Rome at this early time was known as a church who was “obedient” to the gospel truth of Jesus Christ. They obeyed God’s words and did not listen to the suggestions of Satan, the old serpent! Paul desired the Roman Christians to know well what was “good, and simple” concerning evil. They needed to be “wise” to follow God’s words. Satan deceived Adam and Eve in the garden so that they chose to break the express command of God! Paul says, don’t fall for the Devil’s tricks, and soon, Jesus will entirely crush that old evil serpent who suggests that we do evil by breaking God’s commands (ref. Genesis 3:4, 5, 11, 15; Revelation 12:9).
- 5. More people are greeted here (v.21-23)**
- a. (v.22) “Tertius” was Paul’s scribe who was used to write this epistle. It was a common practice for author’s to dictate words to a scribe in these days, who would then record word for word what was being said.
- 6. God will establish us in the faith if we let Him (v.24-27)**
- a. (v.25) The “mystery” of the gospel was proclaimed. What is this great and mysterious thing? It is that Jesus Christ, the living Son of God, should come into this world as a man, and then offer himself to die for us who are poor wretched sinners. (See also Revelation 13:8).
 - b. The gospel was “...**by the Prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations**” (v.26). This was the foundation for the faith of Jesus among all believers. It had better be our foundation as well (Luke 24:25-27,32,44,45; 1 Corinthians 15:2-5; 2 Peter 1:16,19-21). Our faith in Christ may be well established by seeing the prophetic word of God confirmed (also see Isaiah 46:9,10). We are to live in “obedience” to the faith of Christ!

Today’s Appeal: Will you decide today to follow Jesus Christ in “obedience” to His faith? _____ (and to receive the gift of eternal life through Him?)