

[Romans 16.1-5 Phoebe Commended & Prisca Greeted 203]

In spite of the fact that most people ignore—skip over—this passage full of names, mostly not even mentioned elsewhere in the Bible, there are important things we can learn from this chapter.

In any Bible study there are two phases. First we study a passage in light of its context, its historical background—that is, what did the original author intend to communicate and how would the original listeners have understood this passage? Doing this we derive the meaning that God intended; He inspired an author to write a message that He intended to be understood—and that is what we are trying to find. Having reached that point you have ask a second question: How does this passage apply to me? It is the same communication as to the original audience, but it may apply differently to us.



Now you are looking for things in the passage that apply to *any* time, but you cannot add anything that is not intended by the original author. Also you want to limit the application to the principles at hand, and particularly the ones in the passage we are studying. So there are many things we can apply from Romans 16—finding the original meaning the author intended, including God, the divine author. What was that one intended meaning or idea, the interpretation that God has? And *then*, there may be even an infinite number of applications that you can draw from the passage, even ones like a genealogy or other list of names. And, as time goes on in one's life, further applications may apply to us.

This should remind us that *all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness*, 2Timoteo 3.16. 'All' Scripture, not just those that are

easy to look at but also the genealogies y conclusions like Romans 16 with lots of names, so we don't want to neglect it as most people do.

We are still dealing with believers that lived in the city of Rome, and the greetings in this passage are for the believers there in the time of Paul. There are 4 parts to this conclusion: The purposes of Paul from which we can discern principles for our ministry as well, 15.14-21. Then Paul's plans, 15.22-33, where we found principles for our *strategy* for ministry. Now personal greetings of Paul, 16.1-24. The final conclusion is praise.

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A. Purposes of Paul	15.14-21
B. Plans of Paul	15.22-33
C. Personal Greetings of Paul	16.1-24
1. Greetings to Romans	16.1-16
a. Recommendation of Phoebe	16.1-2
1) Commendation	16.1

The first is a recommendation of Phoebe which includes a commendation. And we know from other literature and from the culture of that day...remember there were no motels or other really safe places to stay. There were some brothels or other places where questionable characters would spend time, but nothing for Christians. So often they would carry a letter from a church or a believer. That is what this commendation is here, Paul encouraging her acceptance by the Romans.

Most commentators feel that this Phoebe is probably the one that delivered this letter to the Romans. This was a very important task—this letter that has changed lives over hundreds of years, has been the focus of theology of the church—the most theological of all the books—is entrusted to this woman to deliver it.

The reason this chapter is a little difficult—and therefore skipped—is that there are so many individuals mentioned:

Features 16.1-16

1. 35 individuals mentioned
 - most of them only mentioned here—but inspired
2. 15 groups addressed (Zane Hodges) There may have been as many as 15 little churches, probably each with about 20 people. Hodges identifies them based on the greetings and some of the details.
3. 8-9 women

Another interesting feature is that there are 8, possibly 9 women are mentioned—which is very unusual in literature of the day, in fact in the treatment of Christianity towards women.

4. House churches

And there is mention of house churches; maybe not all of the groups are house churches, but some are mentioned, for example, in the house of Prisca and Aquilla.

5. Variety of individuals

Then there is a variety of individuals, besides differences of gender, men and women, there is a whole list of different characteristics that we can find.

Near the end there is a little passage of warning between the greetings. We wonder why the HS inspires the writer to include *specific* names and particularly ones that after the first Century people would not know anything about whatsoever. Of course we can see the importance that the HS gives to each one of His believers. We may not have our names in Scripture, and some we will look at are very obscure and probably in the eyes of the world unimportant and not worthy of being included.

But we have a little hint here, in terms of the HS, that even the least important from the world's perspective are highly prized and important to the HS and to God himself in that each one's name is specifically given. And we know from other passages that our names are in the *ultimate* book and I think God takes note of each and every one of us, treats us individually and sees us as highly important—enough to send His Son to die on the cross for even one of us. That's an application that you can take individually, no matter what your situation may be or who you are or what your background is. You know the Lord Jesus Christ and you are extremely important to Him and He is going to treat you individually; you are *separate* and *distinct* and have your own characteristics, name, personality which God has given us.

Even before getting into the text we can be reminded of the importance of each one in the list of names.

Applications

1. Importance of Each One

16.1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea;

This brings us to the very first one, Phoebe. Paul commends her. It is like a letter of recommendation that we would have from a previous employer when applying for a job. Paul is endorsing her. Notice he calls her 'our sister', so she is a believer in Christ. The word commend

συνίστημι (soon-ées-tay-mee) has the same meanings as it would in our culture. He encourages them that they take certain care of this woman who is traveling perhaps alone—but probably with servants to manage her things and watch out for her.

Terms

1. Commend - συνίστημι (soon-ées-tay-mee)
recommend, endorse, affirm

16.1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea;

And she is a *servant*, an interesting word. It has the idea of service, but also more technical, διάκονος (dee-á-ko-nos), that in other contexts is translated 'deacon'. There are some commentators that read more into that word that I think it carries or warrants; some think that she is the pastor at the church in Cenchrea. This is basically out of line with the NT in general. I am inclined to take to another level although 'servant' is the essence of that word. I think Paul is probably sending Phoebe because she has a central role in the church at Cenchrea based on this verse and what is in the 2nd verse as well. At least we can say that she is a servant who has a history of reliability and is one that can be trusted. She is a servant of the church in Cenchrea.

Terms

1. Commend συνίστημι (soon-ées-tay-mee) recommend, endorse
2. Servant διάκονος (dee-á-ko-nos) servant, deacon

Cenchrea is not far from Corinth where Paul is while writing this letter. Here is a satellite view of the area and you can just see the Corinth canal (long yellow arrows), which cuts through the isthmus, for medium-sized boats and ships. Cenchrea was one of the ports, Lechaem on the other side. In earlier time smaller boats would be



carried from one sea to the other; in other cases they would transfer the cargo of larger ships from one side to other to catch another ship. The canal wasn't created until after the 1st Century.

The political map shows its situation in southern Greece.



The canal is in the middle of the map labeled 'Corinth Canal' just to the right of the city of Corinth.

There are few archeological remains of Cenchrea today.



And then in verse 2, continuing the sentence, he requests assistance for her.

V. Conclusion on God's Righteousness	15.14-16.27
A. Purposes of Paul	15.14-21
B. Plans of Paul	15.22-33
C. Personal Greetings of Paul	16.1-24
1. Greetings to Romans	16.1-16
a. Recommendation of Phoebe	16.1-2
1) Commendation	16.1
2) Assistance	16.2

16.1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; 2 that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

Receiving as a believer in the Lord, as you would treat any believer, in a manner worthy of the saints. The application: this is how we should treat each other, with high respect—which is part of that first application that God views us highly and as important and worthy of great respect. So we should give special treatment to one another as brothers and sisters in Christ.

16.1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; 2 that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

He doesn't say what it is but we noted some of the needs of people that traveled in the 1st Century, and especially a woman, especially if she were alone. They would probably offer her a place to stay, meals that she required and any other needs, even financial, if she needed to travel.

16.1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; 2 that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

Then Paul adds that she has helped many; this is characteristic of who she is as a servant, probably beyond the church in Cenchrea. She

may even have had ministry in Rome, a prominent believer in the 1st Century....

16.1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; 2 that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

... 'and of myself as well'. So she has had a ministry in the life of Paul, and on that basis he is calling on the church in Rome to be of assistance to her.

This is one name with two verses devoted to her with quite a bit of detail. I think the NT allows for women to serve in an office, in the capacity of the office of a deaconess. 1 Timothy limits the eldership to men, but the deacon office could be occupied by a woman. Now it is not totally clear because the word 'servant' could just be main function and do not occupy an office—but in this context I think it could be a 'deaconess' which gives more credibility and authority and a greater basis for Paul to make the requests that he makes. Some take her having been a helper of many to mean that she had sponsored people financially—like Paul. Probably she was a business woman the traveled with business in different locations.

Applications

1. Importance of Each One
2. Value of Women

Some accuse Paul of denigrating women but the very opposite is the case. I think he places a very high value on them, noting that the first individual named is a woman of whom he gives a lot of positive descriptions. And being a woman in that culture she faced more obstacles than men and required protection and other help.

Most cultures have always suppressed women and devalued them and in many way done harm to them whereas the Bible has always elevated women to the place that God has designed for them. The *roles* are different—and they were created different—in marriage, the church and the culture. God has given women gifts and abilities that they can use to serve the body of Christ, in some ways that men cannot.

Women

1. Phoebe (1) entrusted with letter
2. Prisca (3) - fellow-worker; 4 of 6 times mentioned is first
3. Mary (6) & Persis (12) - hard workers

4. Tryphaena & Tryphosa (12) - workers. The high work ethic came from the Bible.
5. Rufus mother (13)
6. Sister of Nereus (15)
7. Junia (7) ??? male or female
Paul thusly valued women, mentioning so many, guided by the HS.

- V. Conclusion on God's Righteousness 15.14-16.27
- A. Purposes of Paul 15.14-21
 - B. Plans of Paul 15.22-33
 - C. Personal Greetings of Paul 16.1-24
 1. Greetings to Romans 16.1-16
 - a. Recommendation of Phoebe 16.1-2
 - b. Greetings to Individuals 16.3-15
 - 1) Prisca and Aquila 16.3-5a

Next it is Prisca and Aquila. Prisca is the formal name Priscilla.

16.3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; 5 also greet the church that is in their house.

We want to note the verb 'greet' that appears 17 times as a command of the 21 times used in the passage. It is a command, the aorist imperative in Greek being a firm command, the strongest way to issue a command. The present imperative is more common in Greek. So you could say that Paul is emphasizing these greetings.

Terms

1. Commend συνιστημι (soon-ées-tay-mee)
2. Servant - διάκονος (dee-á-ko-nos)
3. Greet - ἀπαύξομαι (ahs-páhd-zo-mah-ee)
17 or 21x - aorist imperative

Background (of Prisca and Aquila)

1. Left Rome - 49 AD, edict of Claudius ordering that all Jews be cast out of Rome, partly because they were having conflicts with Jewish people, so Prisca and Aquila probably had to leave Rome at that time. It seems, in Acts 18, Paul encounters them at Corinth.
2. At Corinth - Acts 18.2 *And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, having recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome. He came to them, 3 and because he was of the same trade, he*

stayed with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers.

They were a couple, business people and also had a ministry in Corinth. After that they moved to Ephesus. This is about springtime of 51 AD. Of course Paul was a tentmaker also.

3. Moved to Ephesus - Acts 18.18 *Paul, having remained many days longer, took leave of the brethren and put out to sea for Syria, and with him were Priscilla and Aquila. In Cenchrea he had his hair cut, for he was keeping a vow. 19 They came to Ephesus, and he left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.*

In a later passage in Acts 18, apparently Paul had them with him and left them at Ephesus. Here Paul was on his way to Jerusalem.

4. Moved back to Rome - Romans 16.3-5

They then moved back to Rome around 57 AD. when Paul wrote Romans, probably after the death of the emperor Claudius.

5. Back to Ephesus - 2 Timothy 4.19 Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

Then later on they are back at Ephesus where Paul greets them in 2 Timothy 4.19.

16.3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; 5 also greet the church that is in their house.

They worked together in the work...in Christ, so in ministry

16.3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; 5 also greet the church that is in their house.

They are very brave—perhaps had a part in delivering Paul on one occasion. Some commentators think it was in Acts 19 where Paul was about to be killed, and they are there at the time. And apparently ‘all the churches of the Gentiles’ also had reason to thank them. So they also probably had some wealth from their business. And they had a church in their house.

Applications

1. Importance of Each One
2. Value of Women
3. Ministry of All

We see in this list of people that all were in ministry. All of us have a ministry, and Paul calls a lot of attention to that, already in Phoebe and Prisca and Aquila.

Ephesians 2.10, after discussing salvación by faith and faith alone, and the depravity... God has designed us to do ministry and it is part of His design in eternity past. *For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.* Paul described some of them as being at the same level as himself. We can assume that the others were considered such also.

[Romans 16.3-9 Greetings to individuals 204]

Ministry

1. Servant to many - Phoebe (1)
2. Fellow-workers - Prisca & Aquila (3), Urbanus (9), Timothy (21).
Scholars differ on why Prisca is mentioned first: more mature/ older in the Lord. Had a more prominent ministry while he was earning a living, maybe more gifted, especially in teaching (Apollos), etc. But Paul considers fellow-workers in general on the same level as he himself.
We know nothing about Urbanus and he is also on the same level as Prisca & Aquila. We do know about Timothy—Paul writes an entire two letters to him. He is mentioned later in the chapter as a fellow-worker also.
3. Hard workers - Mary (6) & Persis (12). This is the idea of devotedness and persistence. Again, more women.
4. Workers - Tryphaena & Tryphosa (12)

16.3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; 5 also greet the church that is in their house.

We mentioned ‘in Christ’; he called some individuals ‘beloved’ which gives you the idea that there is unity in the body of Christ.

Applications

1. Importance of Each One
2. Value of Women
3. Ministry of All
4. Unity of body
Each of us has a function that is just as important as anyone in the body. That should free us to be fully involved in exercising whatever gifts the Lord has given us. We have examples of a variety of

examples of gifts in the list, and a few hints at it like ‘in Christ’ which occurs several times, Prisca and Aquila, Adronicus and Junias, Urbanus, Apelles. That doesn’t mean the others are not, but attention is called to these. Ampliatus, household of Narcissus, in the Lord, probably referring to believers that were in that household. We have already mentioned Tryphaena & Tryphosa, Persis...Rufus and Tertius. This indicates a unity in the body of Christ. Anyone that is a believer is ‘in Christ’ or attached to the body of Christ.

Unity

1. In Christ - Prisca & Aquila, Andronicus & Junis, Urbanus, Apelles, Ampliatus, household of narcissus, Tryphaea & Tryphosa, Persis, Rufus, Tertius.
2. Variety - Men & women, free & slave, wealthy & poor, eastern & western names, some Jewish, Latin, or Greek, married & single, leaders & unknown.

Also we see that there are men and women. Some of the names suggest people that were in slavery or were able to earn their way out of slavery and had bought their freedom. Or others that had acquired freedom through other means, some through birth. So we have free and slave suggested by some of the names. Wealthy and poor. And some of the names are eastern or western, Jewish—middle eastern, some Romans with latin names, some are Greek names.

So there is quite a variety of names which is kind of a testimony that in Christ there is a unity of these different types of people. This is part of what Paul was encouraging in Romans; we saw that in chapters 14 & 15, the unity of the body of Christ.

There are also some married, individual women—who may have lost husbands or single, there were leaders and some entirely unknown. So, there is quite of variety as seen in these 35 names, all united by being in Christ, the unity of the body of Christ. In fact we are united with them as well, and eventually we will have fellowship with everyone that is named in this list.

16.3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; 5 also greet the church that is in their house.

Then in verse 4, there is not anything in the book of Acts to explain it, but it could possibly be in Ephesus. Prisca and Aquila ‘risked their own necks’ for Paul. A possible incident is that Acts 19 situation when

they were attempting to kill him in the theatre; they might have helped Paul get out of that situation. He could have been killed on many occasions but that is the one closest to the time and location where Prisca and Aquila might have been.

16.3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; 5 also greet the church that is in their house.

He is thankful for the ministry and certainly the extending of themselves in risking their lives, but also...

16.3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; 5 also greet the church that is in their house.

...he thanks all the churches of the Gentiles. The churches are certainly thankful that Paul’s life was spared—which he attributes partly to Prisca and Aquila. But I think they also were thankful for the ministry that both of them have had in the Gentile world.

16.3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; 5 also greet the church that is in their house.

And also ‘greet the church that is in their house’. This is the first mention of a church that resided in a house. Keep in mind that there were no buildings. Christians did not meet in a church building until the 3rd Century. It was about 200 years before they started building external buildings; before that much of the ministry was in homes, with groups of 10-20 people which is the most houses could hold at that time. In summer maybe they could meet outside. There is a mention that they met on Temple Mount in Jerusalem, but remember that this was destroyed after 70 AD. We will learn of other house churches later.

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V. Conclusion on God’s Righteousness	15.14-16.27
A. Purposes of Paul	15.14-21
B. Plans of Paul	15.22-33

- C. Personal Greetings of Paul 16.1-24
 - 1. Greetings to Romans 16.1-16
 - a. Recommendation of Phoebe 16.1-2
 - b. Greetings to Individuals 16.3-15
 - 1) Prisca and Aquila 16.3-5a
 - 2) A Few Men & Women 16.5b-9

The rest are names that we are not very familiar with, a few men and a few women.

16.5b Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.

We only know that he was ‘beloved’ and...

16.5b Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia.

...the interesting thing about him is that he was ‘the first convert to Christ from Asia’ which was very important. Remember that Paul founded the church in Ephesus, and after two very close friends the one that he identifies is the first convert in Asia—who apparently is in Rome at this time when he writes. But this would be special to him, the first one that accepted Christ in the ministry of Paul, and he probably was in Ephesus although we know virtually nothing about him except that there is a bond between him and Paul.

16.6 Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you.

Mary: we don’t know anything about this Mary. There are probably 6 Marys in the NT. Obviously this is not the mother of Jesus, and probably not Mary Magdalene, probably not Mary with Martha; John Mark’s mother was Mary as well, but I don’t think she was in Rome. It was a common Jewish name, the Hebrew equivalent was Miryam (meer-yáhm). So, she was probably Jewish and we only know that she was a hard worker, a devoted individual. Keep in mind that it is not work in a job, it’s hard work in Christ in terms of the body of Christ.

16.7 Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

Then we have 2 individuals that we don’t know much about. The Junias could be male or female; some suggest it could be female because listed with Adronicus, such as his wife, or simply the two

associated with Paul as fellow Jews. Now there are some commentators that take ‘my kinsmen’ as relatives, cousins of part of a close family relationship, but more than likely it’s fellow kinsmen in terms of Judaism. Because there are several gentiles here, I think Paul is calling out some of the Jewish individuals by using that little phrase ‘my kinsmen’. But again we don’t have enough information.

If you take Junias as a woman that would be the 9th in the list. Adronicus’ name is Greek, so he would be a hellenistic Jew probably.

16.7 Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

And he calls attention: ‘my fellow prisoners’, so it was not uncommon, in the 1st Century, for believers to suffer for their faith. And when you see believers in prison, it’s not because they were law-breakers. In fact when he says ‘fellow’ prisoners, not just they might have shared a cell together, but ‘fellow’ in the sense that it’s the same *kind* as Paul, a prisoner because of his testimony as a believer.

16.7 Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

They were ‘outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me’. There are two possibilities: some see these two as apostles. Others have a hard time with that concept because of Paul and the 12 being the apostles. The other option is that the other apostles had a high regard for them. But it is not clear enough in the Greek to make a choice either way.

A word study on ‘apostle’ shows that there are 4 ways that the word is used in the NT: (1) the 12 who even have eschatological ministry, (2) some like Paul and Barnabas that seem to be an extension of the *office* of apostleship. And some would put Adronicus and Junias in that category. (3) is a reference to *false* apostles. (4) In terms of function, giftedness; not necessarily an *office*. That is the way I would take Adronicus and Junias in the sense of having the *gift* of apostleship and that gift would primarily be exercised in the founding of churches in this case in extended areas even outside of Judea, in Gentile territory like Paul and Barnabas.

... ‘who also were in Christ before me’, or we have two individuals who were older in Christ than Paul. So they possibly heard the Lord Jesucristo and maybe became believers with the ministry of Christ Himself. Also, along with Prisca and Aquila, fellow prisoners...we could look at passages in 1Peter that say, ‘don’t be surprised if you do

suffer for your faith', because that was quite typical and it was certainly very typical in the 1st Century, and it has been typical throughout church history. We believers in the Americas are an exception, an anomaly, in that seldom do we suffer for our faith in the same way as the rest of the church throughout church history and throughout the world. There are believers today under persecution.

Applications

1. Importance of Each One
2. Value of Women
3. Ministry of All
4. Ministry Work Ethic
5. Unity of Body
6. Suffering Typical

We can expect it and not be surprised by it.

We have 5 applications: Each of us is important. Your name is in the book of life.

You women have greater value than any culture gives; the culture always diminishes women—in fact the so-called 'women's movement' does more damage than elevating them. It is only the Bible and Christ that gives the true value of women. They can be encouraged by that, and men should take note of that and be Biblical in giving the same value.

And we all have a ministry. We all have a place in the body of Christ; not only are we important but God has designed a place for us and the body does not really function to the extent that Christ would desire until all of us are a part of it.

The unity in the body—our background, men, women, free, slave, etc—wherever we are from, doesn't matter.

And we may suffer the consequences of being associated with Him.

[Romans 16.7-16 Greetings to Other Romans 205]

Adronicus and Junias were also prisoners. We don't know much about it. Like Christians everywhere, not for crimes committed, but for their faith.

Suffering

1. Risked life - Prisca & Aquila (3)
2. Fellow prisoners - Adronicus & Junias (7)

16.7 Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

Again, we don't know much. At least here it was before Acts 9.

16.8 Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord.

'beloved in the Lord', another application: already in chapter 15.14 where the conclusion begins, you see the *heart* of Paul. And you see his heart attitude very clearly in this greeting of these individuals. You see that he had a relationship with them. So we can add another application: having a heart attitude toward individuals, not a coldness nor aloofness, not a separateness, but Paul had intimate relationships with most of these people, even if with some less than others. But he describes each of them somewhat in things that were characteristic of that relationship. He called several of them 'beloved'.

Applications

1. Importance of Each One
2. Value of Women
3. Ministry of All
4. Ministry Work Ethic
5. Unity of Body
6. Suffering Typical
7. Heart Attitude

In fact the Scriptures present Paul as a *scholar*. And we have something of his background: he was a Pharisee and rather prideful, being accomplished, well-learned and would have been an OT scholar. So definitely a scholar. If that were all you knew about him you might think that he didn't have many relationships.

Also we know him to be an *apostle*, that God called him and gave him his very high position, and from this you might expect him to be aloof and separate, but that is not the case with Paul.

And, particularly here in the book of Romans we see Paul as a *theologian*. We have the most detail of all theology, especially all the spiritual aspects that are brought out in the book. Again, he isn't a high-level theologian that would make him separate from others. This conclusion gives you the very opposite of that attitude.

In fact, the conclusion gives us Paul as a *friend*, a personal, intimate friend. He addressed, in verse 5, 'beloved' Apaanetus, in 8 Ampliatu, in 9 Stachys and in 12 we already mentioned the woman Persis as well.

Beloved

1. Paul as Scholar - background
2. Paul as Apostle - position
3. Paul as Theologian - spiritual
4. Paul as Friend - personal

Apaenetus (5), Ampliatus (8),
Stachys (9), & Persis (12)

This all tells us that Paul had intimate and close relationships with many in the church. In fact we could include his description of the ‘mother of Rufus’ who was a mother to Paul, that is, she treated him like a son. And there are other verses that bring out this personal aspect. We think of Paul more in terms of his theology, sometimes overlooking this intimacy and devotedness to individuals by not seeing it in the passages.

Philippians 1.7 *For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.*

Notice how he starts the book and then later on he emphasizes this personal aspect. He has them in his heart. Only in Christ can we do that, get close to people.

4.1 *Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.*

Notice: ‘beloved’ again. That closeness he had with the Philippians. He addresses them as a church; he founded that church and had personal relationships that remained there.

1Thessalonians 2.7 *But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. 8 Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us.*

17 *But we, brethren, having been taken away from you for a short while--in person, not in spirit--were all the more eager with great desire to see your face. 18 *For we wanted to come to you--I, Paul, more than once--and yet Satan hindered us. 19 For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? 20 For you are our glory and joy.**

Notice the glowing way he describes the Thessalonians in a personal and intimate way. There is a heart attitude. And even though he didn’t found the church at Rome, he still had intimate relationships with some of the people, some of whom he probably met on other missionary journeys, other occasions. He writes not as a scholar, but certainly as a theologian and as a dear and close friend. That encourages us to develop relationship with one another in the body of Christ.

16.9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

We have already looked at this as an application: fellow worker in Christ. And we stressed the ‘fellow’ aspect of ministers, involvement in the lives of others in terms of ministry. We have already seen that phrase ‘in Christ’ several times. This is the Christ-likeness which occurs with several of them. These are major characteristics that Paul brings out.

Christ-likeness

1. In Christ - all
2. Work ethic - most
3. Courageous - suffering
4. Beloved - Epaenetus (5), Ampliatus (3), Stachys (9), & Persis (12)
5. Outstanding - Adronicus & Junias (7)
6. Approved - Apelles (10)
7. Choice - Rufus (13)

By way of application, these are things that we should be working on personally. Walking in the Spirit, that is in Christ. We saw the Work Ethic—that’s Christ-likeness, a devotedness, in ministry to one another, and there are many of them that are described with a high work ethic; courageous in the face of suffering, again, the only way we will do that is walking in the Spirit, but that is a characteristic of Christ in the way that He faced suffering in his experience. We just looked at the ‘beloved’, intimate relationships that we develop with one another—also Christ-likeness in the individuals. He describes Adronicus and Junias as out-standing, ie, they had a spiritual reputation because of the Christ-likeness they exhibited.

Applications

1. Importance of Each One
2. Value of Women
3. Ministry of All
4. Ministry Work Ethic
5. Unity of Body
6. Suffering Typical
7. Heart Attitude
8. Christ-likeness

We will see the word ‘approved’ of Apelles in verse 10, another attribute of Christ-likeness. That’s being *tested* and victorious in the midst of testing, the result of Christ getting us through difficult times. Then we will see Rufus described as ‘choice’ in verse 13. So Christ-

likeness is another application from the names of this passage. We want to grow and continue to display Christ-likeness.

16.9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

Again, ‘my beloved’. Other characteristic of Christ-likeness. So, these were a few good men and women in 16.5b-9.

V. Conclusion on God’s Righteousness	15.14-16.27
A. Purposes of Paul	15.14-21
B. Plans of Paul	15.22-33
C. Personal Greetings of Paul	16.1-24
1. Greetings to Romans	16.1-16
a. Recommendation of Phoebe	16.1-2
b. Greetings to Individuals	16.3-15
1) Prisca and Aquila	16.3-5a
2) A Few Men & Women	16.5b-9
3) Households and others	16.10-15

And now we have households and others, some of them grouped together, 10-15. Now we see some of the names that aren’t so well-known.

16.10 Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.

We have no idea who Apelles is, so the commentators don’t have much to say about him. But the word ‘approved’ we have seen already in Romans.

Terms

1. Commend - συνιστημι (soon-ées-tay-mee)
2. Servant - διάκονος (dee-á-ko-nos)
3. Greet - ἀσπάζομαι (ahs-páhd-zo-mah-ee)
4. Approved - δόκιμος (dó-kee-mos)

δόκιμος (dó-kee-mos) is the Greek word: with idea of being under test, but being victorious: You have gone through the fire, the suffering, you have experienced all that the world can throw at you, and you have been faithful. So that is a high praise that Paul gives to Apelles. He is the only one that Paul mentions in this way, but you could assume that there were others as well, like Prisca and Aquila who risked their lives. Again one of the characteristics that Christ wants to develop in us.

16.10 Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.

Then he says, ‘Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus’. The commentators speculate concerning Aristobulus—it was a common name and ‘the household’ which makes some think that he was a believer that was no longer alive, but still perhaps there was a church in his home. We already saw some of the home churches. Others speculate that maybe he was an unbeliever but his household was predominately believers and the church met there.

Some connect Aristobulus with Herod Agrippa who ruled Palestine in the early period of the church, 41-44 AD. Some see him possibly as a brother; again we really do not know—the name was not uncommon.

16.11 Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those of the household of Narcissus, who are in the Lord.

Another individual with an interesting name, Herodion. Some tie him with the household of Herod or his relatives. He could even be a slave; sometimes they gave names to slaves. At least he is ‘my kinsman’, more than likely another Jewish brother in Christ for Paul

16.11 Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those of the household of Narcissus, who are in the Lord.

Then we have another household: that of Narcissus. Nothing is known about him other than what we have here. ‘in the Lord’, clearly believers and the same could be said about Narcissus; he could have been a believer that died—here his household or a church that met in his house.

Remember that houses weren’t so large in the 1st Century. You could have a house church of 7-15 people. These were no huge churches, particularly the house churches mentioned. Even if the house was a very large one, we are not talking about hundreds of people.

16.12 Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, workers in the Lord. Greet Persis the beloved, who has worked hard in the Lord.

Two women: Tryphaena y Tryphosa and the main thing that Paul notes is that they are workers with a work ethic and also the little phrase ‘in Christ’—in the Lord here. They are at least sisters if not twins.

16.12 Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, workers in the Lord. Greet Persis the beloved, who has worked hard in the Lord.

Persis, we mentioned before, a woman and again, beloved—some affection and love between Paul and this woman. And again, the stress as we have seen, ‘who has worked hard in the Lord’, devoted to ministry, put time in, with effort, perhaps even suffering for her faith.

16.13 Greet Rufus, a choice man in the Lord, also his mother and mine.

Rufus, a choice man in the Lord. ‘Choice’ ἐκλεκτόν (ek-lek-tón), related to the word for election. A chosen, or elect man. There are several uses where it has the idea of being special or choice. Again remember that words have meaning based on their context. I think it’s just a phrase of praise; he had some admirable characteristics, and again, ‘in the Lord’.

Terms

1. Commend - συνιστημι (soon-ées-tay-mee)
2. Servant - διάκονος (dee-á-ko-nos)
3. Greet - ἀσπάζομαι (ahs-páhd-zo-mah-ee)
4. Approved - δόκιμος (dó-kee-mos)
5. Choice - ἐκλεκτόν (ek-lek-tón)

16.13 Greet Rufus, a choice man in the Lord, also his mother and mine.

But, notice, not only is he special in ‘choice’. Also ‘his mother and mine’. Paul viewed the mother of Rufus as having a motherly relationship with Paul. They may have fixed meals for him; they may have cared for him, housed him, nurtured him even, perhaps spiritually. So here is another *women*, even though she is not identified by name.

16.14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the brethren with them. 15 Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

Then we have a whole list. We don’t highlight them; none of them do we know much about. These listed in verse 14 may be another house church... ‘and the brethren with them’.

15 Philologus might be a name or it might be descriptive. Philo-love, logos- word. Lover of the word perhaps; may be descriptive, but probably a name. Then the 9th woman, Julia. This could be another husband and wife. And Nereus and his sister—some see this as a family: husband and wife and two children. Again another woman not named, referred to as a female. Olympas, and all the saints who are with *them*, we have a list with others that are a part of that group, a strong possibility of a house church.

There are few more names later on.

16.16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

A concluding greeting: ‘one another with a holy kiss’. In the 1st Century this was a greeting with affection, of close fellowship and probably a physical greeting. Now, with culture change, in ours we generally use a handshake or a hug for more intimate relationships. This is not a sensual one but obviously spiritual: a holy kiss, affectionate, and common. In some countries, especially among believers, it is still common to greet one another with a little kiss on the cheek—in some Latin cultures even kissing on both cheeks. But even some places of central and eastern Europe. Paul uses the ‘greet with a holy kiss’ in other books as well.

V. Conclusion on God’s Righteousness	15.14-16.27
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B. Plans of Paul	15.22-33
C. Personal Greetings of Paul	16.1-24
1. Greetings to Romans	16.1-16
a. Recommendation of Phoebe	16.1-2
b. Greetings to Individuals	16.3-15
c. Concluding Greeting	16.16

Then he refers to ‘all the churches’ greeting the Romans. I think he was thinking of all the churches he founded: In Asia, Ephesus and surrounding ones, in Macedonia—Philippi, Thessalonica—that he had recently had contact with, the ones in Corinth—all the churches of Christ greet you.

16.16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Quite extensive greetings; obviously the longest that we have in the books of any other writers as well.

A closing application: How much do you have in common with Paul’s friends? Such as the Christ-likeness, for example. Think of the characteristics we saw: have you been *approved* in Christ, for example, are you *choice* in Christ?

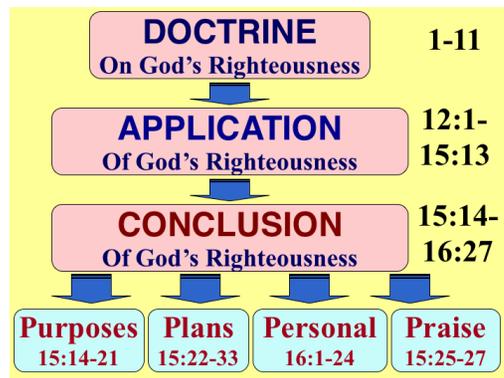
[Romans 16:17-20 Warning on False Teachers - 206]

We will find a couple of reasons for this section of warning about false teachers, and commentators disagree on why it is here, sandwiched in between Paul’s greetings to Roman Christians and those that are sent

on from those that are with him. We have a little warning, not very long which some scholars think was added later by someone else, but obviously the Holy Spirit wanted it in this spot making it available to us—to warn us as well. Certainly false doctrine/teaching has always been not only a challenge for believers throughout the church age but Israel battled the same problem in the OT and, unfortunately, on several occasions Israel fell into the false doctrine and worshipped false gods.

So this is an on-going problem for anyone that belongs to God—you might even say it started in the garden of Eden when Eve was deceived with false thoughts, so it is not something that is going away. And, as you know, in our age and time false doctrine is extremely prevalent; in fact good Bible teaching is a rare thing, unfortunately, and even within evangelical churches there is a lot of disagreement over even fundamental doctrines, so we have to be always on guard—and that is what Paul was doing in verses 17-20. He is writing to real people who lived in a real place, Rome, and we can see photos of the areas where he went.

We are in the conclusion of the book, the longest of any book of the Bible, 47 verses. 2 Thessalonians has exactly 47 verses as well, and the book of Titus has only 46 verses, Philemon having even less than that. It's a very long conclusion with four parts.



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1. Greetings to Romans	16.1-16
2. Warnings	16.17-20
a. Danger	16.17

First Paul explains his purposes, 15.14-21, his plans to visit, 15.22-33, not only the Romans but to continue with his evangelism of Gentiles—going to the extent of the Roman Empire—such as to Spain, stopping in Rome on the way. Then we have completed 16.1-24 which are personal greetings that Paul himself issues, and when we finish with this little warning we will see the following greetings and then conclude the book in words of praise that Paul offers in 16.25-27.

He starts in verse 17 showing his respect for them and consideration. He is not treating them like children, commanding them, or ordering them around, but with a word that we have seen before, παρακαλέω (pah-rah-kah-lé-o), not commanding or demanding but urging them.

16.17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

Again, these are brethren and he urges them to keep an eye on certain individuals.

Terms

- Urge - παρακαλέω (pah-rah-kah-lé-o) encourage, 12.1 It can be translated *comforting*, but in this context urging or encouraging. 'Encourage' would be a good translation. It occurs in the beginning of the application portion of Romans where in 12.1, using 'brethren' again, *I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice...same idea, encouragement to live out the Christian life, and here to pay attention to certain things.*
We also saw that same word in 15.30 *Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,*

16.17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

He is urging them to 'keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances'. So the encouragement is concerning dangers that the Romans would face. The commentators debate whether there were false teachers in Rome, and Paul is addressing that issue. It seems more like the fact that Paul had ministered in many places and in some of them there were problems at least with distortions of the truth if not overt false doctrine: in Corinth—where he is at this moment—they had all kinds of problems, primarily living out the Christian life, then problems

with the resurrection; Galatians—distortion of the gospel message itself, for example.

So I don't think there was necessarily a problem in Rome—unless there was with the differences between weak and strong believers which was not so much a doctrinal issue but more a practical issue. Probably there was not a problem with false doctrine; remember the high praise that he had for them; they were grounded in the Word which we saw in chapter 15. He knew that wherever he went false teachers followed and he would expect that wherever the gospel was proclaimed at least the Judaizers if not others would follow as well. So he is warning them to keep an eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances, one of the by-products of false teaching and doctrine.

Terms

1. Urge - παρακαλέω (pah-rah-kah-lé-o)
2. Keep eyes on - σκοπέω (sko-pé-o)

mark out, or take note of something or to identify

Another Greek word, that doesn't occur frequently. It takes three words to translate this: 'keep (your) eyes on'

The context of Acts 20: this is the end of the 3rd missionary journey, so a little bit after the writing of Romans, and Paul does not anticipate seeing the Ephesians anymore, so he meets with the elders and is essentially giving them, not only his farewell, but also his last words—his last encouraging things that he wants them to focus on. Notice what one of these things is:

Acts 20.29 *I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.*

In this case even from their own body, these are the elders, meeting in Miletus, but they will go back and continue their ministry at Ephesus, and they are to identify (not using the word itself) to make sure that they are aware of this as a persistent problem.

31 *“Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.*

'Be on the alert' ...and he reminds them of his ministry with them.

Philippians 3.18-19 *For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.*

We will see this reference to their 'appetite' later on in this passage, 16.17-20 as well. Same idea: be on guard, mark out, identify; be aware that false teachers will arise.

They cause 'dissensions', another Greek word that has the idea of divisions, controversies, etc. It occurs only 3 times and one of them is Galatians 5.20 which is one of the descriptions of the deeds of the flesh:

Terms

1. Urge - παρακαλέω (pah-rah-kah-lé-o)
2. Keep eyes on - σκοπέω (sko-pé-o)
3. Dissensions - διχοστασία (dee-khahs-tah-sí-a)
divisions, controversies, Galatians 5.20 *idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions.*

So the old nature or the flesh has a tendency for divisions and controversies, certainly one of the characteristics that mark out the false teachers.

Terms

1. Urge - παρακαλέω (pah-rah-kah-lé-o)
2. Keep eyes on - σκοπέω (sko-pé-o)
3. Dissensions - διχοστασία (dee-khahs-tah-seéah)
4. Hindrances - σκάνκαλον (skáhn-dah-lon)
stumbling blocks, 9.33 just as it is written, “BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF OFFENSE, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.”

Also the 'hindrances' they cause, the word σκάνκαλον (skáhn-dah-lon) which we have already seen, translated with 'rock of offense', things that will trip you up in terms of your Christian walk and your beliefs and your understanding of God's Word which will have damaging effects on you and other believers.

16.17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

And these 'hindrances' are 'contrary to the teaching which you learned'. I think he is referring to things that happened before they received this letter, obviously. The high praise was that he knew that the Romans were involved in discipleship and maturing of believers; it sounded like a very healthy church since he did not address any real problems. Any church will have a whole spectrum of believers, of course, but they were in the process of discipling and growing. So he

refers to those who would be ‘contrary to the teaching’ that they had learned.

16.17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

Then an imperative: ‘turn away from them’. Another Greek word: ἐκκλίνω (ek-leé-no).

Terms

1. Urge - παρακαλέω (pah-rah-kah-lé-o)
2. Keep eyes on - σκοπέω (sko-pé-o)
3. Dissentions - διχοστασία (dee-khahs-ta-seéah)
4. Hindrances - σκάνκαλον (skáhn-dah-lon)
5. Turn away - ἐκκλίνω (ek-leé-no)
avoid, reject

This is a strong word. When dealing with overt false doctrine—not mistakes or errors that all of us make—we avoid, and reject them. In fact leaders are responsible to deal with them, and if they are within the church to exercise a certain amount of church discipline.

So that’s the danger: false doctrine, not just disagreement of believers over practical issues, which is causing dissentions. This is an issue where *separation* needs to take place. We will see more of that in verse 18...

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B. Plans of Paul	15.22-33
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1. Greetings to Romans	16.1-16
2. Warnings	16.17-20
a. Danger	16.17
b. Description	16.18

... where he describes them,...

16.18 For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

... ‘for such men are slaves’, of what?

16.18 For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

‘not of our Lord Christ but of their own—literally their *bellies*—the same word we saw in Philippians 3.18-19. So they are sensual, self-centered, devoid of the Spirit—not mentioned here, but the life-style and description somewhat imply that they are unbelievers. Certainly they have that physical outlook, more concerned about their own needs than those of fellow believers.

16.18 For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting..

And he goes on—‘by their smooth and flattering speech’. So they always have a message and often it is very appealing, ‘smooth’, and may even begin by praising you and flattering you, but if they are false teachers it is deceptive—which is the bottom line. Some of them may not be aware, may be convinced of their own deception, but the enemy behind them has the goal...

16.18 For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

...to deceive the ‘hearts of the unsuspecting’. And the ‘unsuspecting’ are generally believers that are not grounded in the Word, maybe new believers. Now in our culture there are a lot of people who have been believers for years and years and are still not grounded, and they would be unsuspecting as well. So one of the things we need is to ground people in the truth so that they can detect what is not true but actually is deception.

Here is the distinction that I mentioned before. I think Paul is dealing with *heresy* which we could define simply as a departure from clear understanding with a clear undermining of the fundamentals of the faith. There are a lot of verses referring to false doctrine; we will read some of them.

Distinction

1. Heresy - clear undermining of fundamentals faith
2. False teaching - spectrum
All make mistakes
Some depart to edge of heresy

I think heresy is different from false teaching. Let's look at some examples where heresy is involved. As far as false teaching: there is a whole spectrum; all of us make mistakes and may not have 100% doctrine, we don't have a total picture of all of Scripture, and there is no one that does, so we are all susceptible to mistakes. That's not what he is talking about here; we need to be careful because some are on the edge and we want to be sure to encourage them along the lines of sound doctrine and separate or reject them.

But heresy: we are to reject them essentially. That's why in the church we have the whole spectrum, some that have very sound doctrine and yet are susceptible to the falsehood; there are some that depart from the truth and we disagree with them. This is within the body of Christ. We are to encourage one another and not separate but keep fellowship and be careful with what we would classify as heresy. And some depart to the very edge of heresy. Which is the point I am making: there is a spectrum of dealing with other believers or other groups (not classifying another denomination as heresy, for example.)

Titus 1.9 *holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.*

This first characteristic of false teaching is really based on inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture and peoples' attitude toward it. This list actually includes some false teaching and heresy.

Characteristics of false teaching—and heresy

1. Scripture - 1 Timothy 4.1-4 *But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, 3 men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. 4 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude;*

'Doctrines of demons' are contrary to Scripture itself; that's a clear heresy. And notice that it's a departure, apostate. I would define it as one who knows what is correct and sound and Biblical and has departed from it and fallen into even doctrines of demons.

Jude 3 *Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to*

write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

2. Trinity - 1 John 2.22 *Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. 23 Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also.*

Denying the Trinity, the Father and the Son, the deity of Christ—these are the kinds of doctrines that are heretical, that thusly we would classify those that teach them.

3. Incarnation - 1 John 2.18 *Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour....22 Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. 4.3 *and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.**

The incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, a fundamental doctrine.

4. 2nd Coming - 2 Peter 3.4 *and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation."*

Even the 2nd coming is a fundamental doctrine. There are different views on when He comes—I wouldn't classify a-millennialism or post-millennialism as heresy, but what is denied here is the 2nd coming itself, not different views on whether He comes before or after the Tribulation, or disagreements over the pre-millennial coming of Christ.

5. Faith - 1 Timothy 4.1 *But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,*

Another example of where clear doctrine is denied or undermined.

Jude 3 *Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.*

6. Sound doctrine - 2 Timothy 4.3 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in*

accordance to their own desires, 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

Even aspects of faith and faith alone in the doctrine of salvation.

7. Godly living - 1 Timothy 3.1 *It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. 2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. 4 He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity 5 (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), 6 and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. 7 And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

Godly living, so it can involve practical areas.

8. Christian liberty - 1 Timothy 4.3 *men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared in by those who believe and know the truth. 4 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude;*

Even Christian liberty can be affected.

There are many more passages. They deal with quite fundamental doctrines. We have examples of *apostates* that are clearly noted.

Biblical examples: apostates

- √ Angels - Satan and angelic beings and Satan himself
- √ Israel - idolatry before the exile departed from God's truth and was idolatrous
- √ Kings - evil some classified as evil kings; they would have access to the law and some writings of the prophets, but still were evil in their reigns and idolatrous, departing from what God had said
- √ Pharisees - rejection in the NT, the Pharisee had rejected essentially the OT and its essence, particularly the Messiah and characteristics of the Messiah
- √ Disciples - many some call them out, some by name, departing from the faith
- √ Judas - a devil one of the 12; I don't think he was ever a believer. He is described by Jesus as a devil, but he was exposed to the Sermon on the Mount and the teachings of Christ

throughout His ministry...then he departed at the end. So this a serious issue.

- √ Antichrist - ultimate the ultimate antichrist will be the ultimate apostate. One of his characteristics is that he will be a religious leader, not just a political/economic leader but will have religion as a focus as well.

Contemporary examples of heresy

- √ Liberalism - Scripture much of liberalism has denied Scripture and in some cases has accepted all religions, eg, Buddhism and others that would be clearly outside, not even close to, Christianity. They deny many aspects of who God is and certainly some of them deny the deity of Christ, so there are lots of examples that exist within our culture.
- √ Morality - Spirituality there are a lot of examples of people who have departed in their morality, which illustrates that they have departed from the practical aspects and the spiritual.
- √ Heresy - Theology then there are specific heresies and individuals that keep appearing; they have all these new movements and draw a lot of people, sometimes the unsuspecting come out of good evangelical churches even in some of the best Bible-teaching churches.
- √ Cults - Theology very prevalent amongst us; their theology would be classified as heresy.
- √ Occult- Demonic this is spiritual as well, but demonic and growing in our culture.

So these are areas that we need to keep our eyes on and identify being cautious not only for our benefit but for the unsuspecting, people that are susceptible to false teaching, haven't been grounded in God's Word.

V. Conclusion on God's Righteousness	15.14-16.27
A. Purposes of Paul	15.14-21
B. Plans of Paul	15.22-33
C. Personal Greetings of Paul	16.1-24
1. Greetings to Romans	16.1-16
2. Warnings	16.17-20
a. Danger	16.17
b. Description	16.18
c. Discretion	16.19-20

And he closes the passage here with what I call 'Discretion'. I think that describes the Romans; they have discretion and that's what he is

warning them. He wants them to be discerning and use discretion and he actually praises them in 19 and 20:

16.19 For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

‘For the report of your obedience has reached to all’. Along with what he said in chapter 15, that high praise: *all goodness*, involved in ministries, so practical areas that are Biblical; *filled with all knowledge*: Biblically grounded; *able to admonish one another*: discipling, counseling, encouraging. Now he broadens it: your obedience (that reflected their sound doctrine) has been broadcast all over the empire. He began very early in the letter to praise them:

1.8 *First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.*

He is echoing what he said in chapter 1. They have a reputation of obedience of faith, of sound doctrine and rather than a warning he gives them praise. Their reputation could be damaged, their testimony affected, if they do not mark out these false teachers.

16.19 For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

Not only that, but they are a delight and source of joy to Paul.

16.19 For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

‘I want you to be wise in what is good’. Essentially, ‘continue in what you are doing, using wisdom, focusing on that which is positive and good’.

16.19 For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

An interesting little counter part to that: ‘innocent in what is evil’. Don’t get close to it, don’t get involved in it; continue to separate yourself from evil itself. So it’s high praise to encourage them to remain faithful to the sound doctrine that he has acknowledged.

For us: Titus 1.9 *holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.*

He doesn’t advise Titus to turn away from them, reject them. He is dealing with those on the other side of the line from the ones he mentions in Romans 16.17-18 who are not just in error, but actually departing from Scripture.

It is not surprising that in Romans one of the last things that Paul deals with is a very important issue—so much so that it is one of the last things that he mentions before he closes the book. We already saw the Acts 20 passage which was Paul’s last occasion with the Ephesian elders, but also in 2Timothy 3.13-15, the very last book that Paul writes and one of the exhortations to Timothy is basically the same thing he is saying here: be careful with these false teachers and false doctrine. This is the very last chapter that Paul wrote; in chapter 4 he anticipates his execution.

Peter does the same thing. The last book that Peter writes, towards the end of his life, the very last chapter, also deals with false doctrine and false teachers.

John, one of the last books of the Bible that is written, his 3 little letters: one of the smaller ones deals with the same issue, but here we read 1John 2.18-19. And the last book in the Bible, one of the last concerns in Revelation 22.18-19 is taking away and adding to Scripture; and other things he deals with in the book are false christs/messiahs/teachers.

Jude, also writing late in church history, desired to write a different little letter, concerned about false doctrine which he explains in verses 3-4.

And, the book of Hebrews, very similar: the last chapter, verse 9, warns concerning false teaching.

And, what does Jesus do in the Olivet Discourse? Matthew 24.34-35, false teachers again and also false messiahs.

These are the last concerns of the speakers and writers of the New Testament. It is a persistent problem that we need to be aware of. Essentially the only way to combat it is to focus on the truth.

Last concerns of ...

> Paul -2Timothy 3.13-15 *But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. 14 You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 15 and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

Acts 20.28 *“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29 “I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 “Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears. 32 “And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.*

> Peter - 2 Peter 3.14 *Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, 15 and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, 16 as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. 17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness,*

> John - 1John 2.18 *Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour. 19 They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.*

Revelation 22.18 *I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.*

> Jude - 1.3 *Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints. 4 For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.*

> Hebrews - 13.9 *Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings; for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited.*

> Jesus - Matthew 24.24 *“For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. “Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. 25 “Behold, I have told you in advance.*

Remember, these false doctrines bring dissension and division and stumbling. We need to focus on...

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

...The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. That is an interesting comment here. He hasn't mentioned anything about Satan, so he is going behind and looking at the source of false doctrine; ultimately it comes from him.

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

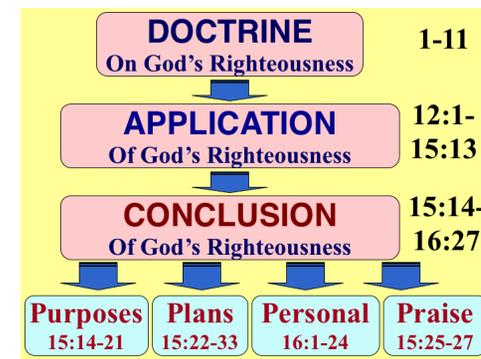
And even though it is a persistent problem, eventually the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet. I think that is an allusion to Genesis 3.

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

‘The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you’. Another one of those conclusions that we have mentioned.

The best guard against false teaching is knowing God's Word!!!

[Romans 16.25-27 Crushing of Satan and More Greetings 207]



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

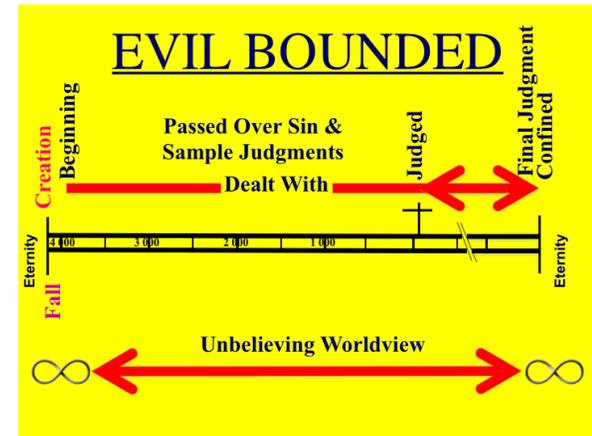
‘Crush’ is a strong Greek word. It means break something in a more literal, everyday sense, to batter something or can be translated ‘to bruise’, and that would be appropriate in this context, even though the translators used ‘to crush’, the same idea. Obviously ‘the God of peace’ is the one implementing the crushing and/or the bruising. But the whole idea goes back to Génesis 3.15:

Terms

1. Urge - παρακαλέω (pah-rah-kah-lé-o)
2. Keep eyes on - σκοπέω (sko-pé-o)
3. Dissentions - διχοστασία (dee-khahs-tée-ah)
4. Hindrances - σκάνκαλον (skáhn-dah-lon)
5. Turn away - ἐκκλίνω (ek-leé-no)
6. Crush - συντριβώ (soon-treeé-bo)
to break, batter, bruise, Génesis 3.15 *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.*”

I think that it is a direct allusion that Paul is making in reference to Satan. Notice the word ‘bruise’ there, and also notice the context; this is after the fall of man. And now God is confronting the man and the woman. The man blames the woman and the woman blames the serpent. God is dealing with the serpent here, and He makes a very far-ranging promise concerning what has just happened. All of mankind plunged into the fall of man and the resulting sin and transformation: the receiving of the fallen nature and now all the creation is affected, but this is one of the major prophecies of all of Scripture. Virtually all of the other prophecies almost expand it, so it is very far-reaching.

Now it’s not the first prophecy of the Bible. The very first was 2.17 where God predicts about the tree in the midst of the garden: *you will surely die* or, ‘you shall die dead’—the Hebrew infinitive absolute. That’s the first prophecy and now sin has entered and they have experienced *death*. But in the midst of their experiencing death, God promises that He will ultimately, in a final and total way deal with sin. And in that, if you have a Biblical perspective on sin and evil you are aware of what is illustrated on this slide:



There is going to be a conflict, this on-going enmity for the rest of history, essentially, this conflict between not just the serpent but the personage behind the serpent, who would be Satan himself, and the woman’s seed and the serpent’s seed or those that are related. So it assumes the fall of angelic creatures and it also assumes that the woman will bear children, and there is going to be a continuous battle between human descendants and the spiritual demonic realm which is going to go on and on until God deals with it.

Theologians call this the first announcement of the gospel, the protoevangelium because it tells us that God will ultimately deal with evil and sin. It is a little cryptic but it gives a description of this one descendent from the woman and ‘He shall bruise you’, the serpent on the head. In other words, it is going to be a fatal, crushing blow to the head which will cost that descendent some damage. And ‘you shall bruise Him on the heel’, not fatally. So, in a somewhat cryptic way it is as reference to the crucifixion and the work that Christ will ultimately accomplish in a final way, crushing the head of Satan himself.

So when we come to Romans 16.20, the God of peace will soon crush Satan—but notice, ‘under your feet’ as well. So mankind will have a part in it. And it is good to be reminded that when it comes to *evil*, the Biblical concept of evil is that evil is *bounded*. The worldly, secular or unbelieving viewpoint is that evil is just what exists. This timeline represents all of world history.

And the unbeliever has no concept of there being a *beginning* to evil—because basically he will deny creation and

fall, and it almost appears, from everyday experience, that nothing can change it. It has always been here; we can try our best, but evil will always be here. So it is kind of a ‘just-what-exists’ attitude toward evil. But the Biblical concept, beginning with what we have in Genesis 3, is that evil has a *beginning* which, in terms of humanity, begins with the fall of man. (There are other passages that speak of the fall of the unseen spiritual realm.)

In putting it on a timeline we have the fall of mankind that gives a beginning to evil. And if it has a beginning we might anticipate, believing in Genesis 3.15, that God is going to deal with it in a final way. So evil is *bounded* in the sense that it has a beginning and an ending. And in between, in world history you can view all of world history from the perspective of God dealing with evil. He intervenes at different points in time to deal with it, sometimes with individuals, sometimes with whole civilizations, sometimes with nations or other peoples. God has been dealing with evil throughout history, so the working out of Genesis 3.15, in some ways, has been gradual, but there will be an ultimate, final way to deal with evil.

So there is a beginning, and in Romans chapter 3 it says that God passed over sin—He did not deal with it until the crucifixion of the Lord, but historically God brings judgments, that is, He intervenes in judgment, the Genesis flood being one of those major judgments; in fact the one in Genesis 3 is the first judgment and then there is a series of others. So when God intervenes to deal with sin he does through judgment; but He also delivers. So, every judgment is also one of deliverance: in the Genesis flood, in the garden of Eden, Sodom and Gomorrah, etc. These are just samples of God dealing with evil, and on the cross sin and Satan was judged in a complete sense you might say, and in an ultimate sense, although sin continues and between the crucifixion and the end of history, God continues to deal with evil and eventually will deal with it in a final judgment.

So this is a summary of world history—in fact, all of Bible history on one slide. The last of it will be the final, Great White Throne Judgment, the last event in world history when God will deal in a final an ultimate sense Genesis 3.15. And if you read Revelation 20 you see that evil is *confined*; so that’s what we mean by the concept of evil being bounded. God has dealt with evil, continues to do so and we look forward to the day when He will complete it. Paul allude to that from Genesis 3.15. The ‘soon’ refers to the imminent return of Jesus Christ to complete

the plan of God and eventually deal with evil. Satan will, in fact, be crushed just as Genesis 3.15 initially predicts.

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

He concludes here with a little bit of benediction: ‘The grace of our Old Jesus be with you’. We have already mentioned that it almost seems like Paul is trying to conclude his book, and then he thinks of something else and goes on talks more. This is one of those occasions here where we still have verses 21-27 before we have the final conclusion.

And the emphasis throughout is the grace of our Lord Jesus; and the desire of Paul is that we will continue in it, that is, that we will continue to live our lives in the grace that we have been granted as a result of justification and through the process of sanctification. It is an encouragement to know that God is sovereign, has a plan in which He is in the process of executing it. We can interpret world history from that perspective: no matter how evil and corrupted our culture becomes, we can be assured that our Lord will ultimately, totally and finally deal with sin—and this verse tells us that even though the Romans may experience false teaching and false doctrine there is a person behind all those false teachers and God will ultimately deal with the source of these doctrines and teachings, Satan himself.

So it is a very reassuring and encouraging verse to focus on especially in the midst of temptation, our own struggle and in the midst of discouragement, to know that it is all going to be dealt with, will come to an end, and that God is sovereignly working day by day in our experience.

And that leaves us with that paragraph of Paul’s companions greetings, verses 21-24.

V. Conclusion on God’s Righteousness	15.14-16.27
A. Purposes of Paul	15.14-21
B. Plans of Paul	15.22-33
C. Personal Greetings of Paul	16.1-24
1. Greetings to Romans	16.1-16
2. Warnings	16.17-20
3. Greetings from Companions	16.21-24

There are still some insights, just as we saw in the first 16 verses.

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

The first is the most familiar of the 35 names that we talked about. Paul writes 2 entire books to Timothy and Paul mentions him on several occasions in many of his letters, so Timothy can be considered one of the major characters of the New Testament. We will look up one passage and we can summarize the rest. He describes Timothy as ‘my fellow worker’, a phrase he has used in reference to others. He is talking about ministry and it is work, effort, devotion; in fact of all the people mentioned in the NT, Timothy is probably the closest to Paul and he is treating the Romans as well. So at this point Timothy appears to be in Corinth where Paul is writing this letter. Acts 16.1-3 is the beginning of the career and ministry of Timothy:

Timothy

1. Joined Paul at Lystra - Acts 16.1-3 *Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek, 2 and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium. 3 Paul wanted this man to go with him; and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek.*
That is our introduction to Timothy, apparently converted on the first missionary journey, and now Paul, in the beginning of the 2nd journey will take Timothy with him. He is well-spoken of...a little of his heritage: a Jewish mother and Gentile father...a disciple...here you can follow his career:
2. Sent to Corinth from Ephesus - 1Corinthians 4.17
He mentions that he is sending Timothy to Corinth...
3. Possibly with Paul in Macedonia - Acts 19.22
Continuing on Paul’s missionary journeys, it is possible he was with him in Macedonia on the 3rd journey.
4. Returned by time writes 2Corinthians - 2Corinthians 1.1
He returns back to Ephesus by the time that Paul writes 2Corinthians.
5. Back to Corinth - Acts 20.1-4f
Then it appears in Acts 20 that Paul sends him back to Corinth from Ephesus.
6. Later sent to Philippi - Philippians 2.19-24
Paul writes a prison letter at the end of Acts to the Philippians where Timothy is or will be sent to Philippi.
7. Then to Ephesus - 1&2Timothy
We don’t have a record of it, but it appears that when Paul writes 1st and 2nd Timothy he is at Ephesus.

A lot of ministry and travel; Paul trusted him. He is not called an apostle, not called a ‘pastor’. I would call him an apostolic representative—not quite an apostle but a representative of at least Paul, *the* apostle, and very much trusted with a lot of ministry. You can do further study on Timothy.

A couple of others mentioned here:

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

We don’t know who this Lucius is. There are some suggestions from the commentators: one says that it is another name for Luke who was with Paul on many occasions on the journeys—like the ‘us’ in Acts when Luke refers to them together. But probably it is not likely; there are others with that name and at least one other passage that refers to a ‘Lucius’. He could have been with him at the time.

Then he mentions Jason and Sosipater whom he calls his ‘kinsmen’, so more than likely, in these contexts, not relatives in a ‘blood’ sense, but in terms of a Jewish background. So they are probably fellow Jews. Timothy was half Jewish, but these three are ‘kinsmen’, Jewish.

16.22 I, Tertius, who write this letter, greet you in the Lord.

Then he says, in verse 22, ‘I Tertius, who writes this letter’. Didn’t Paul write the book of Romans? It appears, whoever he is, Tertius was like a secretary, an amanuensis, who actually wrote down the words that Paul probably dictated to him. He probably had better penmanship than Paul and could record rapidly enough to record everything Paul said. This is not unusual; there are hints in other passages where Paul uses individuals like Tertius.

16.22 I, Tertius, who write this letter, greet you in the Lord.

Sometimes Paul actually refers to someone else writing other portions. Galatians 6.11 suggests that this book was also written by someone else: *See with what large letters I am writing to you with my own hand.* Or 1Corinthians 16.21: *The greeting is in my own hand—Paul.* Other examples of the use of a secretary.

12.22 I, Tertius, who write this letter, greet you in the Lord.

But Tertius greets you in the Lord, in the power of the HS and as a fellow believer sends his greetings. It is believed that probably the last paragraph Paul wrote himself.

12.23 Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus, the brother.

Then there is a mention of another individual. Gaius is called a 'host to me and to the whole church'. So in Corinth it appears that this Gaius perhaps had some wealth, some ability to show much hospitality to the whole church. Some scholars think the church met there, but I think the church at Corinth was large enough that, like the one in Rome, would have acquired several other locations other than one meeting place. Again, a lot of these, as in that first group of greetings, the scholars speculate quite a bit. So we don't know, at least we do know that he is hospitable and that Paul is probably staying with him and maybe this whole group that send their greetings are with Paul, and certainly Tertius who is writing the dictation.

When he says 'the whole church' more than likely, as Christians traveled in the first century, one of the places they could stay would be at the home of Gaius. We had an example of that in Phoebe being sent with recommendation from Paul so that she would be taken care of in Rome.

There are three Gaius' mention in the NT and they are probably different. One is mentioned in Acts 20 who is from Derbe, in eastern Asia minor whereas Corinth is west, on the other side of the Aegean Sea. There is another one mentioned in 3John verse 1, 'to the beloved Gaius', also from Asia minor. And then this one in Romans 16 is the one mentioned in 1Corinthians 1.14, probably one of the very first converts of Paul there, so obviously he is from Corinth, '...I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,'

12.23 Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus, the brother.

Then we have greetings from an 'Erastus', an interesting character, one of the high officials that apparently was a convert to the Lord Jesus Christ: the city treasurer, so high in the city government. But Erastus is important for a couple of reasons as well, somewhat externally. There is an inscription on a stone at Corinth that has his name. This inscription is on the remains of an ancient theatre; remember, any significant city from Greek times would have a theatre. The wording is in Latin which was the language spoken in the first century, que you can barely make out the letters of 'Erastus'.

Then there are some abbreviations that say Erastus 'commissioner for public works, made this pavement at his own expense'. Now it is possible that this might have been a *promotion* from treasurer later on, Some scholars believe that it is the same Erastus mentioned in the Romans passage. Other scholars claim that it was a *demotion* from

treasurer as a result of proclaiming Christ. We have no historical accounts to determine what he was. But it is interesting that there might be some archeological evidence for the very same guy mentioned in Romans.

12.23 Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus, the brother.

Then we have another individual, Quartus, the brother—perhaps the brother of Erastus, or of Gaius and Erastus, we do not know anything about him.

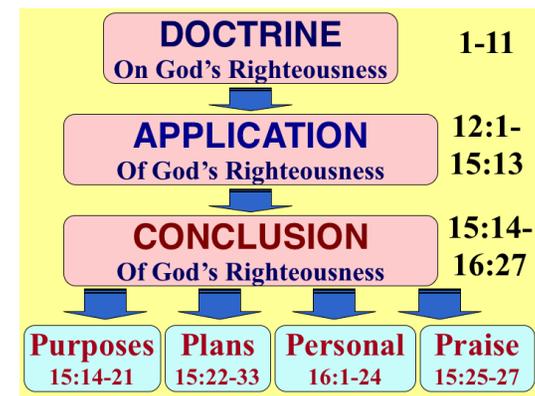
12.24 [The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.]

Then the concluding verse which is in brackets because most of the scholars believe that it was not part of the original text, although that same phrase, 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all', we have already seen it, and if not authentic in terms of verse 24, we already have that verse. So it is authentic in the sense that it is already included, a duplication of what is in a prior verse.

That concludes this paragraph and we can make an application:

Our Lord will sovereignly complete the plan He predicted 6000 years ago!!! Going all the way back to Genesis 3.15, we are still in the middle of the unfolding of the plan of God, the unfolding of events of world history that is under the sovereign control of God who will *soon* crush Satan under our feet. We struggle with him, but it appears that we may be a part of that crushing process. That is a good application to keep in mind when we are in the middle of battle spiritual issues as well.

[Romans 16.25-27 Glorifying God Omnipotent and Omniscient 208]



Today we finish the study of Romans with Paul's closing about glorifying God, the last 3 verses being full of the glory of God. This is the chief end of man—to bring glory to Him. He is worthy of glory. You can think in terms of God's inherent glory, ie, He is glorious *in and of Himself*, and worthy of praise because of who He is. We also talked about *ascribing* Him glory. I like that word rather than 'giving' Him glory because we can't *add* anything to God, not even glory—not even to his inherent glory. But we are encouraged in Scripture and we see the example in Paul in this passage where he glorifies God—we call that *ascribing* glory to God.

This is our last look at Rome for now, and the believers in the first century. We have noted the Purposes, the Plans and the Personal greetings of Paul, and now we will focus on the Praise to God (using this word to keep the alliteration instead of the word Glory).

V. Conclusion on God's Righteousness	15.14-16.27
A. Purposes of Paul	15.14-21
B. Plans of Paul	15.22-33
C. Personal Greetings of Paul	16.1-24
D. Praise to God	16.25-27

This passage is not an easy (long) sentence to analyze. By definition a sentence is a complete thought; this is how God has structured all language, not just English. In this case it begins in verse 25 and ends at the end of verse 27.

First we look for the grammatical subject. Verses 25 and 26 have dependent clauses and prepositional phrases which are not the independent clause that would have the subject and verb.

16.25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, 26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; 27 to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.

Sometimes it is easier to find the subject and verb if the clauses and phrases are listed, indenting those that refer to the one above it. An example would be:

16.25
Now to Him
 who is able to establish you
 according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ,
 according to the revelation of the mystery
 which has been kept secret for long ages past, 26
 but now is manifested,
 and by the Scriptures of the prophets,
 according to the commandment of the eternal God,
 has been made known to all the nations,
 leading to obedience of faith; 27
to the only wise God,
 through Jesus Christ,
(be) the glory
 forever. Amen.

Leaving out most of the modifiers and explanations (major ones underlined), we could say: **...to Him...the only wise God...glory...**

Note that there is no verb in the sentence. This is common in Greek when it is obvious, especially if it is the verb 'be'.

The subject is **Glory** (easily found in Greek because it is the only noun in the nominative case), and the verb is (understood) **be**. Simply, Paul is *ascribing* glory, saying that he recognizes this attribute or perfection of God. Two aspects or perfections here are *omnipotence*: He is always able to do all things; and to the only wise God because He is *omniscient*: He knows how to deal with all that he knows.

We can break down like this to show the essence of the passage:

Structure

Glory (be)	27
to Him who is able to establish you	25
according to Gospel and preaching	
according to revelation of mystery	
...	26
to only wise God	27
So Glory be to God omnipotent	
and to God omniscient	

V. Conclusion on God's Righteousness	15.14-16.27
A. Purposes of Paul	15.14-21
B. Plans of Paul	15.22-33
C. Personal Greetings of Paul	16.1-24

- D. Praise to God 16.25-27
 - 1. Praise of God Omnipotent 16.25-26
 - a. Establishment of Believers 16.25

The Establishment of Believers, verse 25, is at the heart of why we praise God—for what He has done. And this is a Doxology:

Doxology

1. Term - δόξα (dók-sah) = glory
 λόγος (ló-gos) = word
 It is tempting to look at the two separate words that have been put together and try to guess the meaning. However, this does not always ‘work’—like the word pineapple in English. It does not make sense to think of a pine tree and an apple. We have to look at the context. But here we can use etymology: the word ‘glory’ and the word ‘word’. Doxology = words attributing glory.
2. Many - These first 5 are doxologies at the end of the 5 parts of the Psalms.

- Psalm** 41.13 *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, From everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen.*
 72.18-19 *Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, Who alone works wonders. 19 And blessed be His glorious name forever; And may the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen, and Amen.*
 89.52 *Blessed be the LORD forever! Amen and Amen.*
 106.48 *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, From everlasting even to everlasting. And let all the people say, “Amen.” Praise the LORD!*
 150...6 *Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!*
- Romans 11.36 *For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.*
- Ephesians 3.21 *to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.*
- Philippians 4.20 *Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen.*
- 1Timothy 1.17 *Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.*
- 1Peter 5.11 *To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.*
- Jude 24 *Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, 25 to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.*

Also the *ángeles* glorify God in a doxology: in Luke 2.11, dealing with the birth of Jesus, and then in verse 13 *And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, 14 “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.”*

Another angelic doxology is at the end of the Bible, Revelation 5.11 *Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, 12 saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.” 13 And every created thing...I heard saying, “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.”*

Other examples, besides Paul, include Peter and Jude. These all give you a feel of what a doxology is. The glory of His omnipotence is that He is able to *establish us*:

16.25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,

...we look at this word ‘establish’. You could actually look at this concept of the whole book of Romans. The unbeliever is unstable, doesn’t have security, does not have a foundation to stand on; he is always seeking something, he is unfulfilled and people find different ways to try to fill that void. But the believer is *established*. The Greek word can be translated in different ways but they all tell us something about how we are in Christ: confirmed, strengthened, set immovable, settled and established—which we saw in chapters 1-5. Then in chapters 6-8, living life out, is the story of how we are *sanctified* and set apart to be stable and grow in that stability, being strengthened along the way. I think that is what is behind what Paul is saying here as a conclusion: it is God who has done this, it is only by Him and it is by grace—there is nothing we can do to establish ourselves, every effort falling short, and this is reiterated in several other passages.

Terms

1. Establish - στηρίζω (stay-réed-zo)
 to confirm, strengthen, set immovable, settle, establish
 Notice in each of these passages that it is God doing it:

1Thessalonians 3.2 *and we sent Timothy, our brother and God’s fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith, 3 so that no one would be*

disturbed by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we have been destined for this.

3.13 *so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.*

2Thessalonians 2.16 *Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, 17 comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.*

1 Peter 5.10 *After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.*

What Jesus promises Peter after Peter has denied Him three times:

Luke 22.32 *but I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”*

It is only in relationship to God we gain this stability and satisfaction, but as we grow we can live in an unstable, unpredictable, threatening world—and He can strengthen us and, in fact, use all those things to bring stability. That is the heart of what is in this whole verse, and that is what he is praising here—what God has done, the omnipotent, all-powerful God, not dependent on circumstances as we are, but He can give us stability.

Then we have a long list as the basis for that. First the gospel and preaching.

- V. Conclusion on God’s Righteousness 15.14-16.27
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- 1. Praise of God Omnipotent 16.25-26
- a. Establishment of Believers 16.25
- 1) Gospel & Preaching

16.25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,

‘according to my gospel’: that is the heart of the book of Romans, what we have been talking about throughout. It’s that justification, the

sanctification—the outworking of the justification that God has granted us. That’s the basis of this ‘establishing’. And this is the first aspect in the Structure of the passage.

Structure

- Glory (be) 27
- to Him who is able to establish you 25
- according to Gospel and preaching

The content of the Gospel and the preaching Jesus Christ—not what He does; He is the content of and the heart of the Gospel, so the two go together. The gospel involves the preaching of what Jesus accomplished on the cross on behalf of needy, lost people, people who are in desperate need of this stability, this eternal life that only comes through Jesus Christ.

6.25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,

And then it is also according to the Revelation of the Mystery:

- V. Conclusion on God’s Righteousness 15.14-16.27
- A. Purposes of Paul 15.14-21
- B. Plans of Paul 15.22-33
- C. Personal Greetings of Paul 16.1-24
- D. Praise to God 16.25-27
- 1. Praise of God Omnipotent 16.25-26
- a. Establishment of Believers 16.25
- 1) Gospel & Preaching
- 2) Revelation of Mystery 16.25b-26

6.25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,

What is this ‘mystery’? We have encountered this before.

Terms

1. Establish - στηρίζω (stay-réed-zo)
to confirm, strengthen, set immovable, settle, establish
2. Mystery - μυστήριον (moo-stáy-ree-on)
something previously unknown and now made known by

revelation. This is the concept of ‘mystery’: something not revealed in the OT and now made known—by revelation—certain things that God has not unfolded in the OT.

So the word does not have some of the ideas that we have in our English word—it is not something mysterious or strange or odd, but simply something that was previously unknown and now is made known by revelation. And there are several things that are ‘new’ or expansions of something that were taught in the OT; some aspects of them were unknown.

Here a few of them when are mentioned with the word *μυστήριον* (moo-stáy-ree-on). Jesus uses this word in Matthew 13. He is going to give new teaching to His disciples via parables. He describes these as parables of the Kingdom or the mysteries of the Kingdom, that is, he is going to talk about a form of the Kingdom that is not revealed in the OT. The Kingdom that the disciples anticipated was earthly, was visible, physical, something like the kingdom of Israel in the OT. There are differences in that the king will be sinless that will reign and over that Kingdom, but it will be an earthly, visible Kingdom.

Since the Messiah was rejected, Matthew 12, the turning point in that gospel, now Jesus is going to reveal something of an interim period of time that He describes as a mystery of the Kingdom. It is not the Millennial Kingdom, which the a-millennialists take, but it’s a form of God ruling with the king being absent and these parables give an explanation of an age between the first coming and the second coming of the Messiah. And it is called a mystery because it is not revealed in the OT; it is something new and it comes about after the rejection of the Messiah.

Mystery

1. New form of Kingdom - Matthew 13 ...3 *And He spoke many things to them in parables, ...10 And the disciples came and said to Him, “Why do You speak to them in parables?”*
11 Jesus answered them, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted....14 “In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, ‘YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE;
15 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, ...16 “But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. 17 “For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see,

and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it....

One of the central passages is Ephesians 3. It talks about Jew and Gentile as being equal in the church. Now the church is not revealed the OT and this particular aspect is not revealed; it’s not the gentile salvation—in fact all the way back to the Abrahamic covenant that the Jewish people would be a blessing to the nations, implying that the Gentiles would have opportunity to know God. And Galatians makes it clearer that Jesus fulfills one aspect of the Abrahamic covenant in that He is that blessing of salvation. In Ephesians 3.6 it not of their salvation, but the equality is very specific.

2. Jew/Gentile = (are equal) in Church - Ephesians 3.3 *that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief....5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; 6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.*

Notice several aspects in that passage: 1) you could even consider that a definition of the word *μυστήριον* (moo-stáy-ree-on) in that it was not known ahead of time and it is known by revelation; in fact Paul received it by revelation. And 2) it gives you the idea that Jew and Gentile are on an equal standing before God. Actually in the future it will be something like the OT; the nation of Israel, during the Millennial Kingdom is going to be the prominent nation. But during the church age, there is this equality of Jew and Gentile, and that’s the mystery. There are other passages relating to the church:

3. Indwelling presence - Colossians 1.25 *Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, 26 that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations, but has now been manifested to His saints, 27 to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.*
In the OT there were selective individuals with the Holy Spirit indwelling them; and sometimes we read of the HS ‘coming upon’ someone. But it is in the NT, on the day of

Pentecost, for the very first time for those that were regenerated and every one of them had an indwelling presence. Colossians 1 talks about the 'mystery' of the indwelling presence of the HS and Christ Himself. It was not the case, and not revealed in the OT.

4. Israel set aside - Romans 11.25 *For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery--so that you will not be wise in your own estimation--that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;*

In Romanos 11.25 we saw the mystery relating the nation of Israel and a partial hardening which is a new aspect that is not in the OT.

5. Rapture - 1Corinthians 15.51 *Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.*

Paul called the Rapture a mystery; it is not revealed in the OT and pertains to the church.

6. Future Babylon - Even future Babylon, Revelation 17.5, some aspects are not revealed in the OT but are in the NT.
7. Consummation of All - And, the fact that in the Messiah all things will be consummated. The word in Ephesians 1.9-10 expands that concept. *He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him 10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.*

16.25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,

Paul probably refers to aspects the church calling it the revelation of the mystery which has been kept long ago. It relates to this gospel message—not the fact that people, Gentiles, didn't have access, but aspects of that salvation that are new, different in the NT and not in the Old Testament.

16.25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, 26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;

He is going to spend all of verse 26 expanding on this mystery now manifested in the church age and it is by the Scripture of the prophets. We know it from the Word of God and I think what is in view here is the NT. There are different views on the 'prophets', but in this context, remember, the church is founded upon the apostles and the prophets, so in this context I think he is referring to the NT prophets, of whom Paul was one. It would include others as well: probably Peter, Matthew, other disciples, so now it is made known through, I think, the NT Scriptures as a result of inspiration and the inerrancy of NT prophets.

16.25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, 26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;

And it is 'according to the commandment of the eternal God', that is, He is the one that sovereignly is orchestrating things. Note that the word 'commandment' there is different. It is not the common one that refers to the OT commandments in the law. It is actually used in a military context, that is, God is commander as the ultimate sovereign. He is the one that issues the command to not only receive this revelation, but to implement it as well.

Then we have 'the eternal God' who is the focus of the whole passage.

16.25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, 26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;

And notice this phrase: 'has been made known to all the nations'. That is a new aspect as well. This broad gospel message issued by God that has aspects that pertain to all the nations, not just the nation of

Israel. And that encompasses chapters 9-11 where we have more detail. So we have an expansion of the whole book, essentially, of Romans, encapsulated in verses 25 and 26.

16.25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, 26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith;

Another interesting phrase ‘leading to obedience of faith’. The outworking of this gospel message, the idea of sanctification, the by-product or the end-product of justification that he deals with in chapters 6-8: the gospel in the first 6 chapters, man’s lostness and the free gift of salvation, and then we have stress with several little phrases in here that talk about sanctification, and it’s to all the nations which would summarize chapters 9-11.

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1. Praise of God Omnipotent	16.25-26
2. Praise of God Omniscient	16.27

16.25 Now to Him who is able to establish you...27 the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.

And on that basis of praise being offered to Him who is *able* to accomplish all of this, to establish us.

Structure

Glory (be)	27
to Him who is able to establish you	25
according to Gospel and preaching	
according to revelation of mystery	
	26
to the only with God	27

Then we have praise of God omniscient. ‘Now to Him who is able to establish you...27 to the only wise God’ and the mediator or it’s through what Christ has accomplished, through Jesus Christ.

16.27 Now to Him who is able to establish you... the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.

The main emphasis here: ‘be the glory forever’, so this is an eternal glorification of God and we want to participate in it. And the appropriate way is ending the book of Romans...

16.27 Now to Him who is able to establish you... the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.

‘Amen’. All of this is *truth*. That is the essence and meaning of the word ‘amen’. It is actually a Hebrew word that means ‘Truly’ or ‘True’ and then it is transliterated into Greek and has obviously the same idea. Then it is transliterated again—into English. So all of this is truth, absolute truth, and we acknowledge it by saying ‘Amen.’

Three reasons why we exist:

- #1 Glorify God,
- #2 Glorify God,
- #3 Glorify God!!!