



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Letter of St. Paul to the Romans

Chapter 16

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Introduction

- In this chapter, St. Paul closes with miscellaneous instructions, greetings, warnings, and a doxology
- Of particular note are his comments concerning Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea (1-2)
- Also, his greetings to Priscilla and Aquila remind us of how instrumental this couple was in spreading the gospel (3-5)
- The remaining greetings were to others who helped in the growth of the church (6-16)



Introduction

- A final warning is given against those who cause divisions (17-18)
- Also St. Paul wants to ensure their continued obedience to the gospel (19-20)
- St. Paul's companions at Corinth add their greetings (21-24)
- St. Paul closes this wonderful epistle with an expression of praise to God (25-27)

Commendation Of Phoebe (16:1-2)



- Evidently Phoebe, a sister in Christ, is the bearer of the letter
- In this list of persons greeted, a number are women, and the greetings show how highly St. Paul esteemed women's service in the church
- A servant. The word is diakonia (deacon) in the Greek
- There are deaconesses in the church, and St. Paul, in giving her a recommendation, mentions her office

Commendation Of Phoebe (16:1-2)



- St. Paul wrote this letter in Corinth; Cenchrea was its seaport, on the Aegean Sea, about nine miles from the city. A small town with the old name still marks its site
- Give her a Christian welcome
- It is supposed that some kind of legal business called her to Rome
- As a deaconess, she helped many, among whom was the apostle himself

Greeting Roman Saints (16:3-16)



- These active fellow-workers had first aided St. Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:2). Then they went to Ephesus, and prepared the way for his work there (Ac 18:26). They had now returned to Rome, their former home
- The fact that the name of the wife comes first here, and in Acts 18:2, seems to imply that she was more recognizable. They are also named in 1 Cor 16:19 2 Tim 4:19

Greeting Roman Saints (16:3-16)



- It is evident that at some time they had endured great peril for St. Paul's sake
- All the churches of the Gentiles are under a debt of gratitude to Priscilla and Aquila
- As the early Christians had no houses of worship, they met in the homes of prominent brethren
- In Rome they met in the house of Priscilla and Aquila
- Epaenetus. He is not mentioned anywhere else

Greeting Roman Saints (16:3-16)



- May be he is of the family of Stephanas, the first converts of Achaia (1 Cor 16:15)
- A large number of those named were personal acquaintances of St Paul's. Some had rendered him special service; many were, no doubt, his own converts
- Of most of them we know nothing, save that he places them in this honorable roll
- Andronicus and Junia, fellow prisoners for Christ

Greeting Roman Saints (16:3-16)



- They were favorably known to the apostles
- As if he envies them for having known Christ before him
- My beloved in the Lord: an expression of dear Christian affection
- Our fellow laborer: Mine and Timothy's 16:21
- Approved in Christ: the tried Christian
- Aristobulus was either dead, or an unbeliever

Greeting Roman Saints (16:3-16)



- The household is, perhaps, his slaves
- At the time St. Paul wrote, a favorite of Nero, named Narcissus, was all powerful in Rome
- He probably meant a number of his servants having accepted Christ
- These are the names of women
- From the fact stated of them, there were probably deaconesses

Greeting Roman Saints (16:3-16)



- Some have supposed this to be the Rufus mentioned in Mk 15:21. His father was of Cyrene
- St. Paul had certainly met Rufus' mother elsewhere. He says she had been a mother to him
- Hermas: supposed by some to have been the author of The Shepherd of Hermas
- V. 15 Probably another household church, which met with those just named
- Holy Kiss: the Divine Liturgy



A Final Warning (16:17-20)

- The Judaizers or other false teachers, disturbed the Gentile churches by urging them to keep the law of Moses, or by teaching some heresy
- They were not to listen to them, and were to avoid them
- These men, like many other false teachers, were more devoted to their own appetites than to Christ
- The simple: the innocent and the unsuspecting



A Final Warning (16:17-20)

- Your reputation as Good Christians is so well known that you ought not to be deceived by these false teachers
- You need the wisdom to discriminate between truth and falsehood. However, with regard to evil be ignorant of it as much as possible
- The God of peace shall crush Satan: shall give you the victory.
- We must fight with hope in victory

Greetings From St. Paul's Companions (16:21-24)



- Timothy was with St. Paul at this time Acts 20:4
- Lucius, possibly, of Cyrene (Acts 13:1)
- Jason, possibly the one named in Acts 17:5
- Sosipater. The same as Sopater. Acts 20:4
- Countrymen: Jews
- St. Paul dictated the letter, and Tertius acted as a scribe

Greetings From St. Paul's Companions (16:21-24)



- St. Paul baptized a Gaius at Corinth (1 Cor 1:14)
- He was noted for his hospitality
- Erastus the city treasurer, a man of high position. The name occurs in Acts 19:22 and 2 Tim 4:20
- At the close of his greetings, St. Paul adds his benediction
- He had already given it in Rom 16:20, It is now written with his own hand (2 Thess 3:17)



St. Paul's Doxology (16:25-27)

- They are commended to God
- According to the theme of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which I preach
- The mystery of the gospel: the salvation of the Gentiles
- A mystery is a divine purpose that had been kept secret
- When God's glorious purpose was revealed, the mystery was made known



St. Paul's Doxology (16:25-27)

- The foundation of the apostolic office was according to the commandment of God
- A new dispensation infers no change in God
- Known unto him are all his works, and every variation of them, from eternity
- Made known to all nations: Not barely that they know, but that they enjoy it also, through obeying the faith
- To God the only wise: He is the source of all wisdom



Conclusion

- How does St. Paul describe Phoebe?
- How does St. Paul describe Priscilla and Aquila?
- How does St. Paul describe those who cause division and offenses?
- Is the "mystery" referred to in verse 25 still hidden?
- What is the objective of the gospel according to verse 26?