

Commentary on Romans Chapter 16, by Chuck Smith 10.31.21

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October memory verse, Romans 10:9-10 (NKJV)

⁹that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

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Chapter 16 is just personal greetings to many of those in Rome. We are going to go rather rapidly through it, just pointing out a few things.

First of all, Paul, commends unto you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church which is in Cenchræa ([Rom 16:1](#)):

She was a deaconess. Cenchræa was the port of the city of Corinth. She, no doubt, met Paul when he was ministering there in Corinth, but was serving there in the church. And some of those male chauvinists seem to have a little difficulty with this that she was there as a servant in the church.

Receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that you assist her in whatsoever business she has need of you: for she hath been a succorer of many, and of myself also ([Rom 16:2](#)).

Phoebe was probably going with those who were carrying Paul's letter from Corinth to Rome, and so he gives to her a letter of recommendation.

Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my helpers in Christ Jesus: who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles ([Rom 16:3-4](#)).

Now Priscilla and Aquila were gadabouts. They began in Rome. Our first encounter with them is when Paul came to Corinth and their trade was tent making, and because Paul was a tentmaker, he went to work with them in Corinth making tents in order that he might provide the food and all for his ministering party while they were there in Corinth. If you will remember when Paul was with them in Corinth, they had come from Rome because of Claudius' persecution of the Jews. So they had first been in Rome, no doubt had a business in Rome, but when Claudius began to persecute the Jews, they left

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Rome and came to Corinth. Now, there in Corinth they met Paul and they were established in the faith and they moved to Ephesus before Paul had a chance to come to Ephesus. While in Ephesus, this man who was mighty in the scriptures by the name of Apollos came to Ephesus and began to preach Jesus Christ unto the people, but Priscilla and Aquila took him aside and began to explain the Word of God to him more completely, for he had only known John's baptism. Then Paul followed and again met Priscilla and Aquila in Ephesus where he ministered with them. Now they go back to Rome and are in Rome at the time that Paul is writing this epistle, and so they have become close associates to Paul, beloved friends in Christ, and Paul writes to them in Rome.

Now the last place we find them is back in Ephesus again. They moved around and we do read that there was a church in their home in Ephesus, and here Paul greets the church that is in their house. Wherever they went, they would open up their house and invite people to come in and study the Word of God. Their house became the meeting place for the believers and they evidently were just outstanding, gracious people. And I am really looking forward to meeting Priscilla and Aquila. They are just the kind of people that you like to know. It will be fun to meet them when we get to heaven.

Greet the church that is in their house. And salute my well-beloved Epenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ. Greet Mary ([Rom 16:5-6](#)),

Don't know who she is.

who bestowed much labor on us ([Rom 16:6](#)).

I don't know who she was.

Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, whom also were in Christ before me ([Rom 16:7](#)).

Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, or whom the apostles know, who are noted by the apostles. Not that they are noted apostles, but they are noted by the apostles. "The other apostles who were in Christ before me," referring to Peter and John, "that they know this gal so greet her also."

So then Paul sends his greetings to these others, names that were meaningful, no doubt, in the church in Rome, but really don't mean anything to us.

Salute Rufus [verse 13] chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine ([Rom 16:13](#)).

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It could be the same Rufus, the son of Simon the Cyrene who was compelled to bear the cross of Jesus. Some believe that it is the same Rufus.

Now Paul gets down to sixteen,

Salute one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you ([Rom 16:14-16](#)).

It is interesting to me how that in different places they have different customs of greetings. We were down in Mexico a couple of weeks ago and down there it is customary for men to shake hands and then they hug and then they shake hands a second time. So when you are down there greeting the brothers, you will shake their hands, then you hug them, and then you shake their hands a second time. In Italy you kiss on either cheek when you greet them, and you kiss them on the cheek. And they greet one another with a kiss, and they are still doing that in Rome. Paul tells the Roman church to do that, "Salute one another with a holy kiss, or greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you."

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark those which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned; and avoid them ([Rom 16:17](#)).

There are always those that have some weird trip to lay on the body of Christ. And they feel that it is their God-given duty to lay this weird understanding on the body. Now, I feel that if God has given you a special understanding of the scripture, some insight which is sort of unique and different, but God has given it to you and it is important that the entire church receive the same understanding that you have, I think it would be well for you to, first of all, allow us to observe how this understanding has brought you into a closer, deeper relationship with God. How it has benefited your own walk and made you more in the image of Christ, walking in love. When we have the opportunity to see how this truth has transformed you into the image of Christ, then we will be coming and saying, "Tell me brother. Share with me, what is it that makes you different?" But just to go laying your trip on people when it hasn't had any fruit in your own life causes me to wonder, "Do I need to have that same understanding that you have? What has it done for you?" I think that that is only fair. Unfortunately, those that get these weird trips don't think it's fair and they just have to lay their trip on everybody. "But mark those which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine," the basic biblical doctrines that you've been taught. No scripture or prophecy is of any private interpretation.

I don't think, really, that we need new revelations. I feel that we need new experiences in the old revelations. That God has given to us all that pertains to life and to godliness in His Word. It is all there. I don't need some new great

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revelation from God. What I need is a new experience. There are things in there that I have not yet experienced. I have still got a ways to go to experience all that is here. I don't have to go outside of the scripture to some balmy experience. I would like to experience more of what is in the Word, rather than going to extra scriptural experiences. And I will confess to you, I am extremely leery of any extra scriptural experience. Nor am I interested in any extra scriptural experience. If you come up to me wild-eyed and say, "Last night at three in the morning there was a bright creature sitting on the foot of my bed and he woke me up and the room was all illuminated with his brightness. I was frightened, and I said, 'Who are you?' He said, 'I am Gabriel.' And he began to tell me glorious things about the things of God and he tells me, 'We don't have to pray anymore. All we have to do is claim it. All we have to do is blab it and grab it.'" I will say, "No thanks, friend." I don't care if Gabriel did tell you that, it is contrary to what God's Word has told me. So mark those.

For they are such who serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own desires ([Rom 16:18](#));

I do believe that it is incumbent to that minister, servant of God who is living from the ministry, I believe that it is incumbent upon him to live a very simple life. I do not believe that he should be spending a lot of money extravagantly on fancy clothes, fancy cars, fancy this or that. I think that the servant of God should live a simple life. I believe in that. I not only believe in that, I practice that. Now God has blessed us financially. I thank God for the blessings that He has given to us. I thank God that we have all that we desire and thus, I feel that I am extremely rich. But I do believe that as a servant of Jesus Christ, a minister of the gospel, that it is important that I live simply and not extravagantly. Lest I could be accused of being one who is serving his own desires and not really serving the Lord Jesus Christ.

they by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple ([Rom 16:18](#)).

It is such a heartache for me to watch these guys on television, deceiving the hearts of the simple believers. Oh, fair speech is to be sure, clever, humorous, interesting, but the emphasis is wrong.

For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you to be wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil ([Rom 16:19](#)).

That is a good rule: be wise in things that are good, but be dumb in things that are evil. How do you take a fix? I don't know and I don't care. I'm dumb in the

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things that are evil. I'd just as soon remain dumb, simpleminded as far as evil things are concerned.

When I was in seminary a bunch of guys wanted to go down to the burlesque theatre, because they had to know what we were going to preach against. I said, "Now that is stupid." Let's understand all of the evil, let's delve into it and understand it's working so that we will be able to really be knowledgeable when we preach against these things. No. Be wise concerning that which is good, but be simple concerning that which is evil. Thank God for that mind that is pure and unknowledgeable of things that are evil.

And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen ([Rom 16:20](#)).

Paul has the hardest time ending this epistle, this is the second amen now. One more thing you know.

Now at this point, Tertius, who was the man who Paul was dictating the epistle to puts in his own little greeting.

I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord ([Rom 16:22](#)).

You remember Paul brought attention to the Galatian epistle, "Do you notice what large letter I have written to you in my own hand?" So for the most part Paul dictated his epistle. Tertius was the fellow who Paul dictated this epistle to, but he greets them. "I greet you in the Lord."

Gaius mine host ([Rom 16:23](#)),

Now you remember, Gaius was one Paul baptized there in Corinth. "I thank God I didn't baptize any but Crispus and Gaius."

Gaius my host, and of the whole church, salutes [or greets] you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city is greeting you, as Quartus a brother. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began ([Rom 16:23-25](#)),

This glorious mystery, really, of the gospel of grace coming to the Gentiles, Christ indwelling us, our hope of glory.

But now this mystery is made manifest ([Rom 16:26](#)),

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It was once not revealed, but God is now revealing it.

and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, has made known to all nations his glorious truth that they might obey through faith ([Rom 16:26](#)):

So the obedience of faith, God's grace is bestowed upon all nations. It is no longer just an exclusive Jewish privilege salvation, but through the obedience of faith, the door is open unto all men,

To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen ([Rom 16:27](#)).

He finally got there.

So the end of Paul's epistle to the Romans, fabulous book. You are going to find it extremely beneficial to your walk and to your growth and in your knowledge and understanding in the ways of God.

May the Lord be with you and bless and keep you in His love, causing you to abound in the grace of God, being filled with the knowledge of Him. May you walk in a way that will please the Lord this week. Walking in love, walking in the Spirit, being lead by the Spirit. In Jesus' name.