

ROMANS 12:1-16:27 | LIFE TODAY

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ROMANS 15:15-16:27 | PAUL'S MINISTRY TO ALL

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ROMANS 15:20-33 | PAUL'S CONTINUED MINISTRY AND FUTURE PLANS

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Verses 20-29, see session 43

VERSE 30 -

Paul begins his conclusion, prior to his customary salutations (which begin in chapter 16). He asks his recipients, upon the love of the Lord and the Spirit, to strive together in prayer for Paul. He asks for prayers **"to God, for me."** This is one of many times through his epistles that Paul begs that his audience pray for him. The request is specific to that time and place, so not one we would make a doctrine directly from. However, we would certainly see a pattern that would encourage prayer.

VERSE 31 -

Paul continues to request prayers, specifying his needs. His first prayer is for deliverance from non-believers in Judaea. It's debatable whether this prayer was answered. Although Paul was arrested in Jerusalem, his only deliverance was through the Roman government, who escorted him out by night. He was then transferred to Caesarea Maritima, where he was held for two years before being sent to Rome.

Paul's arrest in Jerusalem is outlined in Acts chapter 21. The events leading to his arrest begin upon his arrival in Jerusalem and continue through the end of the chapter. His arrest occurs starting in verse 27. The following chapters of Acts detail subsequent events, including his imprisonment and trials.

Secondly, he asked them to join him in prayer, hoping that **"my service for Jerusalem may be accepted by the saints."** The **"service"** he refers to is the offering he has collected and intends to deliver. He seemed somewhat apprehensive that it might not be **"accepted by the saints."** At this point, thousands of Jews believed in Jesus as the Messiah and were **"all zealous of the law"** (Acts 21:20). Among these Jews, James mentioned that they **"are informed of you, that you teach all the Jews among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they should not circumcise their children, nor walk after the customs. What is it therefore?"** (Acts 20:21-22). The fact that this occurred late in Paul's ministry suggests that the mystery was still quite new, and there was a concurrent existence of both the Kingdom and Grace gospels.

VERSE 32 -

The third prayer request is simply that Paul's desire to come to Rome to be with them and refreshed with them would be fulfilled. As far as we know, Paul's first visit to Rome was after his arrest in Jerusalem, imprisonment in Caesarea, and shipwreck on Malta. This prayer was answered in Acts 28:15, which records that **"when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii forum, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage."**

VERSE 33 -

Paul gives what seems to be a somewhat abrupt conclusion. This is actually not a conclusion, but a transition into a time of salutations. He has similar **"conclusions"** in Romans 16:20 and 27.

ROMANS 16:1-24 | COMMENDATIONS, GREETINGS, AND SALUTATIONS

VERSES 1-16 -

In verses 1-16, Paul gives greetings to individuals in Rome.

The individuals mentioned in Romans 16 are a testament to the diverse and widespread community of early Christians, many of whom we know little about apart from their connection to Paul and his letter to the Romans.

- **Phebe** (our sister, servant of the church at Cenchrea) - Verse 1. No additional information is provided in other biblical texts.
- **Priscilla and Aquila** (Paul's helpers in Christ Jesus) - Verse 3. They are also mentioned in Acts 18:2-26 as missionaries and teachers of the faith, who instructed Apollos and had a church in their home. They are also mentioned in 1 Corinthians 16:19 and 2 Timothy 4:19.
- **Epaenetus** (the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ) - Verse 5. No additional information is provided in other biblical texts.
- **Mary** (who bestowed much labour on Paul and others) - Verse 6. No additional information is provided about this particular Mary in other biblical texts.
- **Andronicus and Junia** (Paul's kinsmen and fellow prisoners, noted among the apostles) - Verse 7. They are not mentioned elsewhere in Scripture, but are noted for being early converts to Christianity and for their distinction among the apostles. Incidentally, we are unsure if Junia is male or female. The form of the name can be translated as masculine (Junias) or feminine (Junia). Early church tradition favors the female, as in the KJV. See additional note below.
- **Amplias** (beloved in the Lord) - Verse 8. This individual is not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament.
- **Urbane (or Urbanus)** (our helper in Christ) - Verse 9. No additional information is provided in other biblical texts.
- **Stachys** (beloved) - Verse 9. Stachys is not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament.
- **Apelles** (approved in Christ) - Verse 10. There is no further information about Apelles in the New Testament.
- **Household of Aristobulus** (those associated with Aristobulus) - Verse 10. No additional information is provided in Scripture about Aristobulus or his household.
- **Herodion** (Paul's kinsman) - Verse 11. No additional information is provided in other biblical texts.
- **Household of Narcissus** (those in the Lord associated with Narcissus) - Verse 11. No additional information is provided in Scripture about Narcissus or his household.
- **Tryphena and Tryphosa** (who labour in the Lord) - Verse 12. These women are not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament.
- **Persis** (beloved, who labored much in the Lord) - Verse 12. Persis is not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament.
- **Rufus** (chosen in the Lord) and his mother (who was also a mother to Paul) - Verse 13. A man named Rufus is mentioned in Mark 15:21. It is uncertain if this is the same Rufus Paul mentions.
- **Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes** (and the brethren with them) - Verse 14. These individuals are not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament.
- **Philologus, Julia, Nereus** (and his sister), and **Olympas** (and all the saints with them) - Verse 15. These individuals are not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament.

The "right division" community, from which this commentary originates, asserts that Paul was the first person saved "by grace through faith" in the Age of Grace (1 Tim. 1:15-16). However, this doesn't mean he was the first person "in Christ." In fact, Paul was late to the party in accepting Jesus as Christ. People like Andronicus and Junia were "in Christ" before him. The key point in the "right division" viewpoint is the method by which someone became "in Christ," not the timing. Paul references this in Romans 6:3, talking about those who were "baptized into Jesus Christ" - a clear nod to water baptism, which was happening as early as Pentecost, way before Paul's time. Those criticizing the "right division" based on this verse clearly don't understand the "right division" perspective.