

ROMANS 12:1-16:27 | LIFE TODAY

Supplemental Resource: Romans Graphically Presented, pg. 46

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

Supplemental Resource: Romans Graphically Presented, pg. 51

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

*Supplemental Resource: Romans Graphically Presented, pg. 52***Verses 1-15 - see session 44****VERSE 16 - BLACK**

The well-known verse refers to the "holy kiss". It is the translation of the word φίλημα [philema], derived from the verb φιλέω with the suffix "ημα" [ema]. This suffix transforms a verb (in this instance, *phileo*) into an abstract noun. Consequently, *philema* represents the expression of *phileo*. Given that *phileo* signifies "brotherly love" (as opposed to romantic love), Paul advises his followers to greet each other with manifestations of brotherly love. In the eastern world, this was typically a kiss. In contrast, in the western world, it could be a handshake or a hug. In some regions, it might be a bow, while in others, it could be a food offering. The main point is that the term does not necessitate a kiss in the way we typically understand it.

VERSE 17 - GREEN

This well-known "mark and avoid" instruction, which I think is indirectly applicable to the body of Christ, has unfortunately been exaggerated by some groups. They seem to "mark and avoid" anyone who disagrees with them, even on minor matters.

Paul also instructs us to accept those who are weaker (Rom. 14:1), and to promote peace through humility and meekness (Eph. 4:2-3). He encourages virtues such as compassion, kindness, humility, and patience. These virtues involve forgiving each other and tolerating each other's faults, all tied together by love (Col. 3:12-14). In Philippians, Paul uses Christ's humility and unity as a model for believers. He urges them to consider others' interests and not just their own, thereby fostering unity and harmony (Phil. 2:1-4). Paul also appeals to the Corinthians to avoid divisions and to unite in thought and intention (1 Cor. 1:10).

Paul's calls for division must be measured against his calls for unity, and thus requires the wisdom of the situation at hand. We should not be too slow to recognize those who cause division that is contrary to sound doctrine, nor too quick to assume such to be the case.

It's intriguing that Paul doesn't specify what he means by "**the doctrine which ye have learned.**" Since Paul had never been there, could he be referring to the apostolic doctrine? Alternatively, given this statement appears at the end of his epistle, could he be referring to the doctrine presented within the Romans' epistle? As it stands, this ambiguity leaves room for interpretation.

VERSE 18 - GREEN

Paul metaphorically uses the term "belly" to describe individuals who are self-serving instead of being servants of Jesus Christ. We should introspectively examine our own service and question our motivations. Are we driven by self-satisfaction, or do we genuinely aspire to serve the Lord?

Those who cause divisions serve not only themselves but also use "**good words and fair speeches**" to deceive the simple-minded. All of us, as true servants of the Lord, should ensure our speech isn't just good rhetoric, but also fair and truthful.

Another important aspect is to avoid being deceived by "**good words and fair speeches**". A critical mindset, a fair spirit, and knowledge of the truth will significantly contribute to achieving this goal. Fortunately, these are qualities that anyone can develop.

VERSE 19 - GREEN

Paul expresses joy over the Romans' "obedience". This could imply that "the doctrine which ye have learned" (v. 17) refers to the apostolic doctrine, but it's not a definitive conclusion. Regardless of the particular obedience Paul mentions, he's pleased to know about it. Yet, he seems somewhat worried about their naiveté. He wants them to be more than obedient, advising them to be "**wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.**" The term "simple" translates to ἀκέραλος [akeraios] in Greek, which etymologically means "without mixture" and thus implies purity.

VERSE 20 - GREEN

This section concludes with a somewhat paradoxical phrase, referring to the impending defeat of Satan by the "God of peace." The KJV uses the adverb "shortly," which indicates the speed of the event rather than its timing. The adverb τάχιστα [tachista] answers the question of "when" (see Acts 17:15), while Paul uses the adverbial phrase "ἐν τάχει" [en tachai], which translates literally to "with speed."

Some argue that "ἐν τάχει" can mean "soon." Let's entertain that interpretation for a moment. Jesus used the phrase in Luke 18:8, where He stated that God will "avenge them speedily." If both Jesus and Paul, who reference the same event in Luke 18:8 and Romans 16:20, meant "soon," were they incorrect? One could argue that the Lord, being outside our understanding of time, might interpret "speedily" as "thousands of years from now." However, this interpretation would be challenged since Jesus uses language as understood by His audience, not according to some cosmic dictionary. This suggests that both Jesus and Paul could have been incorrect, and that the victory did not come soon as they expected. Notably, however, Jesus made these statements before revealing the mystery which entailed the delay of the coming judgment for the age of Grace. As for Paul, even though he knew there would be a delay, he had no idea how long the Kingdom would be postponed, hence his default assumption was "soon."

While I believe that "quickly" is grammatically more accurate, using "soon" does not fundamentally contradict the principle of Biblical inerrancy.

Paul states that God would "bruise Satan under your feet." One might expect this to have been written as "under God's feet" or "the Lord's feet." The actual phrasing further suggests that the recipients of the

Roman letter are Jewish, as only the Jews are promised that they, as a nation, shall crush their enemies. This is echoed in passages such as Joshua 10:24-25, Malachi 4:3, and Zechariah 10:5. Even Genesis 3:15, with its promise that "**it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel,**" can be interpreted in both a nationalistic and Messianic sense. This dual interpretation is typical of many Messianic prophecies. However, no such guarantee of physical victory is given to the body of Christ. Promising that God would soon crush Satan under its feet would be an entirely new revelation. This would bring the body of Christ into the physical realm, rather than just the spiritual realm.

VERSES 21-24 - BLACK

In these verses, Paul gives some closing salutations, mentioning eight men:

- **Timotheus (Timothy):**
 - Mentioned throughout the New Testament as a close companion and mentee of the Apostle Paul.
 - Co-author of several Pauline epistles.
 - The recipient of the two pastoral epistles, 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy.
 - According to tradition, Timothy was a bishop and eventually became a martyr for his faith.
- **Lucius:**
 - He may be the same Lucius mentioned in Acts 13:1 as one of the prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch.
 - Little else is known about him, and tradition doesn't provide much additional information.
- **Jason:**
 - Hosted Paul and Silas in Thessalonica during Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 17:5-9).
 - He was dragged before the city officials by an angry mob accusing Paul and Silas of disturbing the peace.
 - Beyond this incident, there is not much additional information available in Scripture or tradition.
- **Sosipater:**
 - Possibly the same as Sopater mentioned in Acts 20:4, a Berean who accompanied Paul from Greece.
 - Like many early Christians, details of his life beyond this are sparse.
- **Tertius:**
 - Identified himself as the amanuensis (scribe) who wrote down the Epistle to the Romans, as Paul dictated.
 - Apart from this single mention, there is no further Scriptural or traditional information about Tertius.
- **Gaius:**
 - A common name in the New Testament. The Gaius mentioned here is noted as Paul's host and one for the whole church, suggesting he may have provided a meeting place for the church.
 - Another Gaius is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1:14 as someone Paul baptized, and a Gaius is also mentioned in 3 John; whether these references are to the same person is debated.
 - The Gaius in 3 John is commended for his hospitality towards traveling teachers.

- **Erastus:**
 - Called the "chamberlain" (often translated as "treasurer" or "director of public works") of the city, suggesting a significant municipal role, potentially in Corinth.
 - Mentioned in Acts 19:22 and 2 Timothy 4:20, with the latter indicating he stayed in Corinth while Paul moved on.
- **Quartus:**
 - Only mentioned here in Romans 16:23, and nothing else is known about him from Scripture.
 - "A brother" suggests he was a fellow believer, but no additional details are provided, and tradition does not add much more.

Once again, Paul concludes with "amen." This is the fourth of five times he uses the affirmation. In modern times this has come to be used in the sense of "the end," but in Biblical times was simply a note of praise or affirmation.