

ROMANS 16:17-27

1. Apostle Paul cannot close out this letter without a warning to the Christian believers. He tells them to avoid those false teachers who try to invade the church and try to teach contrary to the sound doctrine Paul had taught them- The Gospel of Grace.
2. In verse 17, Paul now gives these words of warning concerning these dangers threatening the church.

Romans 16:17 - Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

1. Paul begs his followers to mark them and avoid them - those whose objective is to undermine the faith we have in Christ. Paul remembers the church in Galatia that was plagued with legalism and the church at Colossae that was dealing with gnosticism.

Galatians 1:6-9 - I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Gal. 1:7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. Gal. 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. Gal. 1:9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

2. Paul has two parting words for the believers in Rome: Mark them and avoid them. These false teachers were always on the prowl and Paul was sure they would find their way to Rome to cause division within the church.
3. The believers were to separate from those who teach false doctrine contrary to Pauline truths. They were to be on their guard against these false teachers who came to cause division in the local church.
 - a. The word "divisions" comes from a word meaning discord or dissension. It keeps close company to the act of heresy. Paul was warning the Roman church against these heretics.
 - b. The word "offences" comes from a word meaning "to be trapped" and it suggests using a tool to achieve a purpose for one to stumble or fall. Paul in Galatians 5 again warns them of this trap.

Galatians 5:7-9 - Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? Gal. 5:8 This persuasion *cometh* not of him that calleth you. Gal. 5:9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

Galatians 5:12 - I would they were even cut off which trouble you.

Romans 16:18 - For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

1. Paul describes these false teachers who were infecting the doctrinal unity of the church. They were teaching contrary doctrine, by going beyond what Paul taught.
2. Paul is telling their motives in not honoring the truth of Jesus Christ. Instead, they were obeying their own appetites and were serving themselves - for personal gain and even fame.
3. The reference to "their own belly" is a scornful way of drawing attention to their low motives of showing someone deemed unworthy. They prey on the trusting souls who expect nothing bad from Christians. They have a suave and polished style - being smooth talkers.

Philippians 3:18-19 - (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: Php. 3:19 Whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

4. They thoroughly deceive the simple, the naive individual. They look beyond their ability with an entertaining way of delivering their message.

Romans 16:19 - For your obedience is come abroad unto all *men*. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.

1. Paul was glad that his saints' obedience to the Lord and the Bible truth were becoming well-known. Paul had talked several times of obedience in this letter about their faith.

Romans 1:5 - By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name:

Romans 5:19 - For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

2. Paul wanted them to be able to discern and obey good teaching and not to be unresponsive to evil that comes along. Good teaching comes from Paul's doctrine and we have been given God's truth and grace to have good works in us.

Titus 2:11-12 - For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Titus 2:12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

3. On the other hand, we are not to be involved in false doctrine that Satan uses to tempt us to do evil works. Being naive about evil is not that we are stupid, but we are not to mix evil with good.

2 Corinthians 11:3 - But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Romans 16:20 - And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.

1. Paul is saying the God Who is the source of peace would give them a victory over Satan, in the midst of all their problems.
2. Christ reconciled all things by the shedding of His blood on His cross and defeated Satan so man's sin would not become a barrier from our heavenly Father.

Colossians 1:16-20 - For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: Col. 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. Col. 1:18 And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence. Col. 1:19 For it pleased *the Father* that in him should all fulness dwell; Col. 1:20 And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven.

3. We know that Satan is God's and man's arch enemy. As Christ used Scripture to keep Satan under control, we likewise have Scripture to bruise and defeat Satan today as the Body Church.

*The devil is called "the father of lies" and lurks behind the art of deception that plagues mankind. God permits Satan a measure of freedom to pursue his evil designs against mankind. But, we know one day soon the Lord will return shortly as we wait for this glorious day to come.

4. Paul ends this verse by saying you can enjoy the blessings we have now - the thought of grace pouring out to the saints of God.

Romans 16:21-23 - Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you. Rom. 16:22 I Tertius, who wrote *this* epistle, salute you in the Lord. Rom. 16:23 Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

1. Paul was at Corinth when he wrote this letter to Rome. At the close of Paul's third missionary journey, he spent the winter months in the home of his friend, Gaius, there in Corinth.
2. While Paul was making final preparations for his trip to Jerusalem, he sends greetings to some of his devout companions and co-workers.

*Paul lists eight of these co-workers by name because of their faithfulness in the grace gospel.

- ① Timotheus - Timothy was Paul's son in the faith and his faithful student and fellow laborer. Timothy is the best known of the eight and served with Paul to the end.
 - a. His mother and grandmother were devout Jews and probably trained Timothy in the truths of Scripture. Timothy's father was a Gentile.
 - b. Timothy was from Lystra in Cilicia and first met Paul on his first missionary journey. When Paul came back to Lystra on his second missionary journey, he saw Timothy as a very promising young man and chose him over John Mark.
 - c. Paul put Timothy as an evangelist because of his great love for the brethren and how he understood the grace gospel.
 - d. From that point on, Timothy became one of Paul's closest and most constant companions, following him to every city.
- ② Lucius - He was a prophet and a teacher who now was with Paul. He was the one that commended Paul and Barnabas to the mission field in Acts 13:1 - *Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.*
- ③ Jason - He had entertained Paul and Silas in Thessalonica. He had shared in Paul's persecutions in that city. Jason provided his house for Paul, but was mobbed and dragged off before the courts. He was later released from jail.
- ④ Sosipater - He was one of Paul's converts at Berea and one of the delegates that Paul took with him to Jerusalem. He also was a fellow Jew with Paul.
- ⑤ Tertius - He was Paul's secretary and took dictation from Paul to write this letter to the Romans. Remember Paul had terrible trouble using his eyes to read and write.
- ⑥ Gaius - There are at least 4 men by the name of Gaius in the New Testament. This is probably the one spoken of in I Corinthians 1:14 - known for his hospitality, not only to Paul but to any Christian that need it.

I Corinthians 1:14 - I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

⑦ Erastus - He was the city treasurer of Corinth and became a believer under Paul.

⑧ Quartus - Little is known about him. But Paul holds him in high regard as a brother in Christ.

*Paul conveys greetings to these saints by linking them into the family of faith in Christ and in Christian love.

Romans 16:24 - The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you all. Amen.

1. Paul repeats the benediction he gave in verse 20. But, many manuscripts omit this verse and go right into Paul's doxology in the last verses of this chapter (25-27). Paul wishes for the church in Rome to experience the spiritual blessings made possible by the grace of Christ.
2. It seems as if Paul was having difficulty in closing out his letter to the Roman believers. Here, Paul calls out why his gospel was so vital to the church then and now in verses 25-27.

Romans 16:25 - Now to him that is of power to stablish 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,

1. Paul closes this Epistle with this doxology that salvation is the work of God and the work was finished by Christ at Calvary. Nobody mortal can add anything to its divine work.
2. Paul acknowledges that only God has the ability to empower, accomplish, and establish us to bring sinners to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:6 - Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform *it* until the day of Jesus Christ:

3. The gospel which Paul preached (according to my gospel) is the truth we are to be established in. It was given to Paul by Christ.

Galatians 1:11-12 - But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. Gal. 1:12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

4. "According to the revelation of the mystery" belonged to Paul.
 - a. Peter and the other kingdom apostles preached Christ according to the revelation of prophecy and Israel's future in the kingdom on earth.
 - b. Paul preached Christ according to the revelation of the mystery regarding the Body of Christ and its future position in Heaven.

5. This "which was kept secret since the world began" - God kept the Dispensation of Grace secret (hidden) and concealed through the O.T. Scriptures, the Four Gospels, and early Acts. Only when God saved and called Paul did He begin to unveil His secret to the world.

Ephesians 3:2-3 - If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: Eph. 3:3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,

Ephesians 3:5 - Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

Romans 16:26-27 - But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

Rom. 16:27 To God only wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

1. "But now" indicates a dispensational change happening. Here it is not talking about O.T. prophets and prophecy because the Mystery Grace Program had been hidden until given to Paul.
2. The Mystery spoken of here is the truth that the believing Jews and Gentiles are made fellow heirs in the Body of Christ, made manifest by the writing of the prophets. Not the prophets of the O.T., but those of the N.T. period.
3. Under the gospel of the kingdom, man was required to perform things by faith, like the rich young ruler in Matthew 19. But under the gospel of grace, obeying faith means coming to Christ by His D.B.R. for salvation - without any human works or keeping of the Law.

Acts 13:38-39 - Be it known unto you therefore, men *and* brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: Acts 13:39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

4. Verse 27 shows God alone is the source of all wisdom and to Him belongs the glory through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 3:9-11 - And to make all *men* see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: Eph. 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly *places* might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, Eph. 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

*Paul gives us the last of the three "amen"s as he tries to close out this letter to the Romans.