

**CLOSING REMARKS TO THE ROMANS (PT 1)**  
**(Romans 16:1-16, 21-24)**

**I. A commendation (vs. 1-2).**

- A. Paul starts off this section by commending to the brethren in Rome a woman named Phoebe.
  - 1. We learn that she is a servant of the church.
  - 2. This indicates that she served the church where she lived to the best of her abilities.
  - 3. Cenchræa was a port city 9 miles from Corinth.
  - 4. Paul was in Corinth when he wrote this letter, around 58 AD.
  - 5. It seems to be the case that she carried this letter to the brethren in Rome as she went there to do some personal business.
- B. Paul asks that the brethren in Rome receive her, which carries the idea of aiding and helping.
  - 1. They should do so in a manner befitting brethren.
  - 2. The reason for so doing is the life she had lead.
    - a. She had aided many other Christians.
    - b. She had aided Paul.
  - 3. It would be proper for her to be aided by other Christians as she had aided fellow Christians.
- C. This Christian lady was well worthy of commendation and a proper reception.
  - 1. We need to seek to aid others, especially those who are faithful Christians.
  - 2. Her lifestyle showed she was worthy of any aid they could have given her.
- D. One thing we do need to notice is that the word “servant” has been translated “deaconess” in some newer translations.
  - 1. There is no authority for this translation.
  - 2. The word for servant is translated “deacon” in some passages.
  - 3. However, it is more often translated servant and means minister.
  - 4. There is no passage in scripture that gives authority to a woman to have a role called deaconess.

**II. Recognition (vs. 3-16).**

- A. After Paul commended Phoebe to the brethren, he started naming those Christians he knew who were in Rome.
  - 1. Paul would have done this to remind them of their relationship.
  - 2. Also, there may have been those he knew by reputation, as good things are said about each of the brethren mentioned.
- B. Paul mentions 24 people by name as well as one unnamed sister in Christ.
- C. Paul mentions some congregations in Rome.

1. He first mentions the congregation that met in the home of Aquilla and Priscilla.
    - a. Verse 5 says, the church that is their house.
    - b. Paul mentions them first, more than likely, because of their past history together.
    - c. Paul was very close to these fine Christian couple.
      - (1) We know they were tent makers as was Paul.
      - (2) They had met in Corinth according to Acts 18:1-2.
    - d. They had grown so close that these two, at some point in time, had risked their lives for Paul.
      - (1) According to Acts 18:18, this couple went with him to Ephesus.
      - (2) It may be there, were such an uproar was made, that this event occurred.
      - (3) We don't know for sure, other than that at some point, these two risked their lives for Paul.
    - e. Their having risked their lives made them worthy of thanks from Paul and all the Gentiles who heard the gospel after their having done this for Paul.
    - f. They were well off enough to have a home large enough for a congregation to meet there.
  2. The brethren mentioned in vs. 14 seem to be a separate congregation as well.
  3. Also, the brethren in vs. 15 seem to be as separate congregation.
  4. These two congregations were of such a reputation as to have been known by Paul and were worthy of recognition from him.
- D. Paul also mentions several friends.
1. He mentions six men.
    - a. Epaphroditus is the first man mentioned.
      - (1) Notice that Paul says he was the firstfruits of Achaia.
      - (2) It seems this man was the first convert to Christ in Corinth.
      - (3) At some point he had moved to Rome and continued to be faithful.
      - (4) It seems that preachers are always concerned when brethren move away.
        - (a) We want them to remain faithful.
        - (b) Sometimes, it is the case that brethren fall away.
        - (c) We always rejoice when we hear that they remain faithful and are at work in the kingdom in a new area.
    - b. The second is Amplias (vs. 8).
      - (1) There is little said about this man, but it was kind of

- Paul to point him out.
      - (2) If nothing else, this man was faithful, which caused him to be beloved by Paul and God.
      - (3) If that is all that can be said about us at the end of our lives, it will be enough.
    - c. The third is Urbane (vs. 9).
      - (1) It is believed by some that he was or had been a slave.
      - (2) This man was known to be a worker in the church and Paul acknowledged him for that.
    - d. The fourth is Stachys.
      - (1) Again, not much is said of him.
      - (2) Paul knew him personally and called him beloved.
    - e. The fifth is Apelles (vs. 10).
      - (1) This man was approved of by Paul.
      - (2) The word “approved” means tried by fire and indicates he had gone through adversity.
    - f. The sixth man is Rufus (vs. 13).
      - (1) There are many who believe this Rufus is the same one mentioned in Mark 15:21, whose father was forced to carry the Lord’s cross.
      - (2) This is not known for certain, but we know he was faithful and his mother had been very good to Paul.
  - 2. Paul also mentioned four women.
    - a. Mary is the first and she must have worked hard, for that is the meaning of the word “labor” used to describe her.
    - b. Tryphena and Tryphosa seem to be twin sisters who were workers in the kingdom.
    - c. Persis was one who had labored diligently in the kingdom, it seems that she know longer was able, by the tense of the words.
- E. Paul also had three family members who were Christians in Rome.
  - 1. Andronicus and Junia are mentioned first as fellow workers and prisoners.
    - a. We don’t know them now, but these men were known by the apostles..
    - b. They had become Christians before Paul.
  - 2. Also, Herodion was a kinsman of Paul.
- F. Paul also mentioned two households, those of Aristobulus and Narcissus.
  - 1. The men were not mentioned, only their households.
  - 2. It is believed these two men were dead and their houses, in particular their servants, were serving the Caesar.
  - 3. Aristobulus was a grandson of Herod the Great and lived in Rome and was a court favorite of Emperor Claudius.

4. There were two famous men named Narcissus, one of whom was a favorite person of Claudius and later put to death by Nero.
- G. All of these people are recognized by Paul to give them encouragement and to let them know he remembered them.
1. This is a very powerful and important fact.
  2. When he did arrive in Italy in chains, though never having been there, he was greeted warmly and those brethren even went out of Rome to meet him.
  3. How much of that was because of his recognizing them in this letter, we don't know, but some credit is due him for this.
- H. Paul then let them know that all the congregations with whom he had contact sent their greetings to them.
1. It is interesting to hear others comment on verse 16.
  2. One denominational writer penned these words: "Churches of Christ was the name for all Christian assemblies in those days. Today it is the name of a particular denomination."
  3. It was a scriptural name then as it is now.

### III. Salutations (vs. 21-24).

- A. Another group of people is mentioned in this section.
1. This group is not commended but they sent their salutations to the brethren in Rome.
  2. These were men that worked and traveled with Paul.
- B. Timothy, Paul's son in the faith, is mentioned.
1. He was with Paul in Corinth at the time of this writing.
  2. Notice that Paul called him his fellow worker.
- C. Then three of Paul's kinsmen are mentioned.
1. Lucius may be the one mentioned in Acts 13:1.
  2. Jason was possibly the same man who was once Paul's host (Acts 17:5-9).
  3. Sosipater may be the longer form of Sopater mentioned in Acts 20:4.
- D. Tertius seems to have been Paul's amanuensis.
1. Paul would dictate the letter and this man wrote it down for him.
  2. Nothing else is known of him but he must have been a trusted Christian to have been privileged enough to be allowed to write this letter for Paul.
- E. Gaius was a Christian in Corinth, probably the one mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1:14.
1. He had Paul as a houseguest.
  2. It was probably in his home this letter was written.
- F. The whole congregation in Corinth sent their words of greeting as well.
- G. Erastus was the treasurer of the city of Corinth who had been converted by Paul.

H. Quartus, which seems to be the name of a slave, was also eager to send his greetings.