

How We Treat, and Relate to People
How Then Shall We Live-part 5
Romans 16

October 4, 2015

Day One: How We're to Think to, and Relate to People.

1. Many view Romans 16 as a step down in theology. That is a big mistake. Paul models how we are to think about (1) **people** and (2) **how we relate**, and (3) **why we're here**.

Romans 16:1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea.

² *I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been a great help to many people, including me.*

2. How does Paul think about Phoebe?

How is she to be treated?

3. In the rest of today's verses, **underline** Paul's descriptions of these people.

Romans 16:3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. ⁴ They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them.

⁵ *Greet also the church that meets at their house. Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.*

⁶ *Greet Mary, who worked very hard for you.*

⁷ *Greet Andronicus and Junias, my relatives who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.*

⁸ *Greet Ampliatus, whom I love in the Lord.*

4. **Circle** all the prepositional phrases that include Christ or Lord. (For example, "in Christ" or "in the Lord"). What is the significance of these phrases as to how he thinks about these people?

5. What accomplishments of others does Paul mention?

6. How would you describe how Paul feels for his fellow ministering Christians?

7. Who, in your circle of influence, could you greet in this way?

8. Who might be able to write such descriptors or accomplishments about you? What might they say?

Day Two: How We're to Think to, and Relate to People.

1. Paul continues helping us in how we are to think about (1) **people** and (2) **how we relate**, and (3) **why we're here**.

2. In the rest of today's verses, **underline** Paul's descriptions of these people.

Romans 16:9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my dear friend Stachys.

¹⁰ *Greet Apelles, tested and approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus.*

¹¹ *Greet Herodion, my relative. Greet those in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.*

¹² *Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord. Greet my dear friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord.*

¹³ *Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too.*

¹⁴ *Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the brothers with them.*

¹⁵ *Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the saints with them.*

¹⁶ *Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ send greetings.*

3. **Circle** all the prepositional phrases that include Christ or Lord. (For example, "in Christ" or "in the Lord"). What is the significance of these phrases as to how he thinks about these people?
4. What accomplishments of others does Paul mention?
5. How would you describe how Paul feels for his fellow ministering Christians?
6. Who, in your circle of influence, could you greet in this way?
7. How do these Christians inspire you to live for Christ?

Day Three: 4 Dangers to Avoid

1. In the next two verses look for four dangers of which Paul warns the Romans.

Romans 16:17 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.

¹⁸ *For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people.*

a. Danger #1: divisions (v. 17). What is someone doing who "causes divisions?"

b. Danger #2: doctrine (v. 17). Watch out for some who will tempt you away from the fundamentals of the faith.

c. Danger #3: desire-driven appetites (v. 18). It is tempting to change our doctrine to justify following out of bounds desires.

d. Danger #4: deceitfulness (v. 18). People can affect our values and beliefs, about what God's word says and doesn't say. What two means do they use?

Romans 16:19 Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I am full of joy over you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.

2. What three alternatives does Paul encourage to avoid the snares previously listed?

3. What does it mean to you to "be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil?"

Romans 16:20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

4. What encouragements should you draw from this verse?

Day Four: Faithful Servants

Romans 16:21 Timothy, my fellow worker, sends his greetings to you, as do Lucius, Jason and Sosipater, my relatives.

²² *I, Tertius, who wrote down this letter, greet you in the Lord.*

²³ *Gaius, whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy, sends you his greetings. Erastus, who is the city's director of public works, and our brother Quartus send you their greetings.*

1. How many different people are named as sending greetings?
2. What do you pick up about how Paul thinks about:
 - a. People?
 - b. How he relates to them?
 - c. The value of their ministry?
3. What do these names tell us about the nature, scope and size of Paul's ministry?
4. The biblical record does not tell us much about many of the people named.
5. We know about Timothy. He is referred to as Paul's "son in the faith." Paul later writes two letters to Timothy that are also part of our New Testament.
6. As we near the end of Romans, this chapter "caps" what theologians would term the long road from "doctrine" to "practical theology." Few things are as "practical" as how we think about people (their value to God or their "usefulness" to us?), how we

relate (edifying or critical?), and what's important (the grand story of God or our little story?) What are some of your takeaways from Romans 16?

Day Five: Benediction

1. Paul's benediction in verses 25-27 is one long sentence. Read it as an entire sentence.

Romans 16:25 Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past,

²⁶ but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him--

²⁷ to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

2. Paul uses this benediction to be sure that everything is focused on God, not himself or any of his fellow workers.

3. Read 25b and 26. What is the mystery Paul talks about?

4. How has that mystery been "manifested?"

5. The mystery, given away in the phrase "to all the nations," is the uniting of Jews and Gentiles in the Gospel. This would be a shocking as ISIS men becoming Christians and being united in the same church!

6. What is the importance of the phrase “leading to obedience of faith?”

7. Meditate on that phrase again.

8. In light of everything we have discovered in Paul’s letter to the Romans over the last 16 weeks. What does it mean for you?