

## ROMANS 16:1-16

### June 11, 1980

This section in Romans 16 shows the great love of the Apostle Paul for people, and there is some very, very exciting things in the opening section through verse 16, which I expect to cover tonight, men and women who contributed and blessed the Apostle Paul's life who helped to move the Word. To have their names appear in the record of God's Word is very significant because God does not spin His wheels having holy men of God to record people who were way out in left field, who didn't help to move the Word, unless it is for an illustration that they got bombed out and the Adversary took real good care of them.

#### Romans 16:1

"commend" – to recommend, like you would write a letter of recommendation for someone

"Phebe" – the radiant one; a real interesting name

I'd like for all the Corps at all the locations to go to work to see how many of you can really work out these names and find the meaning of the names that we're going to cover tonight in Romans 16. You'll have to figure out how you are going to do it, whether as individuals or as groups. I would like to see the results of your findings made available to me.

"Phebe" – feminine of *phoebus*, which is also the same name as "Apollo," the Greek sun god. That is why the word means radiant, brilliant like the sun.

"servant" – *diakonos*. from this word, we get the English word deaconess. In the Protestant Church, you have people called deaconesses from this word *diakonos*. The Romans Catholics call them nuns.

This woman Phebe is the only woman in the New Testament who is called a *diakonos*. There may have been others, of course, but this is the only one that is named. The masculine side is the word *doulos*, servant, meaning one serving God, a slave for God, one marked out. The best I understand *diakonos* is one who quickly, with detailed attention, serves as a *doulos*, one of sterling quality. That's quite a record for this woman Phebe, one who is a slave for God, one who is marked out for God. She is one of sterling quality.

"Cenchrea" – east of Corinth; Perhaps that whole work in that area was an outreach area because of the time Paul spent in Corinth. It was like the WOW program opening other areas, other cities. And she was just a fantastic woman.

#### Romans 16:2

"receive her in the Lord" – This is something I thought I ought to share with you because it is still true today. It simply means to take her in your heart. Maybe put your arms around her, hug her, make her one of you and just feel the beauty of her presence and be blessed with her.

#### I Timothy 5:10

That's why the Word of God says you receive her in the Lord as becometh saints, one who has done this, as becometh saints, worthy brothers and sisters.

#### Romans 16:2

“business” – things she needs in her affairs, in her things that matters, that need to be taken care of for her in her life; Greek – *pragma*, from which we get pragmatic, from which we also get the word “practical.” In whatsoever business, practical matters. In her day by day living, in her life.

“succourer” – *prostatas*, meaning one in an honorable position. The way I understand it as like a right hand person to you, your assistant. Literally and intimate helper. No one can really be a helper to a *doulos* unless they know that *doulos* intimately and know their heart and their desire and what blesses them and then they bless them. She’s been an intimate helper of many. She sure must have been a fantastic woman to the body of believers, as well as to the Apostle Paul. She must have really blessed his life.

### **Romans 16:3**

“helpers” – fellow laborers, working together with me

“greet” – say “hi” – Just say hi to Aquila and Priscilla, who worked together with me in the outreach of the ministry that sets forth Christ Jesus.

“Priscilla” – means a family tree of age, old honor, highly respected ancestry; Greek text is *Prisca*. and that means a family tree of age old honor, highly respected ancestry.

“Aquila” – means the eagle; That word is also the name of a northern constellation.

This Aquila and Priscilla were a tremendous couple.

### **Acts 18:1, 2, 18, 26**

### **I Corinthians 16:19**

They had a church in their house.

### **Romans 16:4**

“laid down their own necks” – a figure of speech; In other words, they put their necks on the line for Paul, fought for him, believed with him.

“all the churches of the Gentiles” – must have been tremendous what Aquila and Priscilla did for the Apostle Paul.

### **Romans 16:5**

No matter how you look at it, the church in the home, the Twig, is the lifeline of the Word and it’s the truth of Christianity. The church as such was never meant to be what we today have become so acclimatized to and say, well that is the church, meaning a building, usually with a cross on the top or something. That’s not it. It’s in the home.

“Epaenetus: – a general, one of that quality. He loved him very much because he is the firstfruits of Achaia; first one out of that area called Asia that was won unto Christ. Somehow or other, the people who are the fruits, the first ones that you win, you just somehow or other never forget. The first one who you witnessed to, who got born again, who signed up for the class maybe or something, whose life was changed. I doubt if you’ll ever forget that person. I’ll never forget Mai and Jan because they’re the first ones I ministered to after I received the manifestation of the spirit into evidence. I’ll never forget it.

Here the Word of God talks about the firstfruits of Asia.

### **Romans 16:6**

“Mary” – another wonderful woman; There are two Greek words translated “Mary.” One is Maria; the other is Marian. Maria, its literal meaning is myrrh, which means living fragrance. Myrrh was incense that was used in the worship of God. Marian, in the Hebrew, means bitterness. I believe this Mary was myrrh, a living fragrance.

### **Romans 16:7**

“Salute” – greet, bless, like we say to people, “God bless you.”

“Junia” – Julia

They were relatives of Paul. They were in the Word before Paul was. When Paul was still persecuting the church, hurting the church, killing the believers, handcuffing them, bringing them back to Jerusalem, his relatives were already in the Word. These relatives loved the Word and loved him so much that when Paul was in prison they were in prison with him.

“apostles” – of note among the apostles. Number one, a man and a woman, which tells me, if I understand this accurately, that here was a woman who was an apostle, as well as her husband.

Most of the commentaries, if they say anything about it say that the woman was covered by the man, therefore, the man was the apostle and the woman just came along. That could be true from an oriental point of view. But I believe a woman with Christ in her could have the same type of ministry that a man can have. So if you pin me down and say what proof do you have, I really can’t say that I have any, except just reading it literally and believing it literally that here was this wonderful Andronicus and Junia who were his relatives and they were of fellow prisoners who are of note among the apostles.

Who also were in Christ before me – Not that these were just note among the apostles, but they were apostles besides the twelve.

See, one of the criticisms that religion piles on Paul and accuses him of, and that’s why many of them take a crack at the epistles because they say Paul was a woman hater, and especially woman’s lib don’t like Paul. That’s a bunch of baloney. Paul was not a woman hater.

### **Galatians 3:28**

### **Philippians 4:3**

Women just stood side by side with the Apostle Paul, labored with Paul in the gospel. They were called fellowlaborers, yoked fellowlaborers. Yoke is like two animals tied together and they would plow. That is a yokefellow. The women were yoked together with Paul in the gospel. Paul was not a woman hater.

Talking about the apostles, there certainly were others besides the twelve.

### **Acts 14:4, 14**

### **I Thessalonians 1:1**

### **I Thessalonians 2:6**

### **I Corinthians 4:6, 9**

### **Philippians 2:25**

### **II Corinthians 8:23**

One of the reasons I called this to the Corps' attention is because usually the people believe that there were only twelve apostles and that with the death of those apostles there were no more. But that's not true. There were others besides the twelve and there are apostles today according to Ephesians.

He gave gifts unto the church, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.

### **Romans 16:8**

"Amplias" – a Roman slave name

### **Romans 16:9**

"Urbane" – Greek, Urbanes; means freed by imperial decree

### **Romans 16:10**

"Apelles" – approved in Christ; tremendous record for this man here. A man stands approved in Christ by rightly dividing the Word.

"of Aristobulus' household" – not only the man but his household; the slaves of his household. Reminds me of Acts, Cornelius and all his household.

### **Romans 16:11**

"kinsman" – a relative who was serving in political circles

"household of Narcissus" – always the church in the home, the household

### **Romans 16:12**

"Tryphena and Tryphosa" – were sisters; Tryphena means delicate and Tryphosa means dainty. Women. Persis was a woman. She just didn't sit at home and wash dishes or raise kids.

### **Romans 16:13**

That's real interesting.

### **Mark 15:21**

I wonder if that's not the same Rufus that's in Romans.

His mother and mine – What a real tenderness. Paul must have had a tremendous love for that woman.

### **Romans 16:14**

### **Romans 16:15**

In *The Just and the Justifier*, C.H. Welch says on page 341,

"It is of great interest to learn that recently an Italian market gardener laid bare a little cemetery, with a number of headstones bearing the names, Urbanus, Stachys, Tryphena, Amplias, Philologus, Julius and Hernias. Every one of these appear in Romans 16, and there can be no doubt that these were the people mentioned by the Apostle. Lightfoot in his note on the reference to the "saints in Caesar's household" in Philippians, has shown that many of these names were well known at the Roman court. Amplias and Urbanus are mentioned several times. Stachys is rare, but there is a record of a man of this name who held office at about the time when Paul wrote. Apelles (verse 10) was a name belonging to the Imperial household. Aristobulus, mentioned in the same verse, was the grandson of Herod the Great, and slaves belonging to him would be designated as part of his

household. Herodian, a fellow-countryman of the Apostle, is mentioned immediately after this household of Herod's grandson.

The name Narcissus was a fairly common one, but the close proximity of the household of Narcissus to that of Aristobulus (verse 10 and 11), makes it probable that the Apostle is referring to a powerful freedman, Narcissus whose wealth was proverbial, and who had an immense influence with Claudius. Narcissus was put to death by Agrippina shortly after the accession of Nero, about three or four years before the epistle to the Romans was written.

Tryphena and Tryphosa were sisters, and both names occur in the inscriptions. Both names are derived from *truphē*, meaning "luxury," and there may be an intended contrast here in the Apostle's use of the word "labour" to describe their service."

I thought that was very interesting from that archaeological finding.

### **Romans 16:16**

"holy kiss" – not a passionate one; Again, I know what the commentaries say and I just bypass it. They say that no man ever greeted a woman in oriental culture like that. I don't believe that. I believe Christianity was a revolutionary thing. I believe Jesus Christ was the greatest revolutionary the world has ever seen. That's why I believe neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, all of that, I believe that the thing that happened in the early church was about the same thing I see happening among Way believers. We say, God bless, we love you. We hug our people and kiss them. I think that is exactly this scripture. Salute one another with an holy kiss, which means bless you. I believe this is how the early church worked. I'm real blessed that the Apostle Paul by divine revelation wrote this in the Word of God because whenever the greatness of the Word lives in the soul of a man or woman, there's always that tenderness, that quiet acquiescence, that beauty of heart that goes out not only to men but also to women.