

ROMANS 16:17-27

Paul brings his epistle to a conclusion by giving final warnings, greetings from those with Paul, and a concluding doxology that mirrors the beginning words of this letter.

I) **Avoiding Brethren who cause Division and Offenses** (16:17-20)

- A) Paul urges them to “take note of” [Gk. *skopeo* – fix one’s eye on, observe carefully] and avoid [shun] those who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine [inspired teaching] they had learned (cp. 2 Jn. 9-11; Titus 3:10-11; 1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Thess. 3:14)
 - 1) These ones do not serve the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly (Phil. 3:18-19)
 - 2) By smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple [naïve]
- B) Their obedience had become known to all, and Paul was glad on their behalf
 - 1) They should be wise [discerning] in what is good and simple [innocent] concerning evil
 - 2) God of peace will crush Satan under their feet shortly (defeat efforts of evil)
 - a) God is not discord and division, but peace among His people
 - 3) Second benediction – the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with them (15:33)

Though some think this section of warning is out of place, it is logical that as Paul commends and greets many faithful brethren and encourages them to love and greet one another in a most holy manner, that he would also warn them to take careful note of brethren who would cause divisions and offenses contrary to sound doctrine. Smooth words and flattering speech are no substitutes for the words of truth. Human opinions and judgments are not to be the cause of destruction to brotherly unity. The brethren needed to be wise in what is good and simple concerning evil. What we fill our mind with is critical to the state of our soul. These warnings and admonitions illustrate Paul’s deep concern for all the churches of Christ (2 Cor. 11:28).

II) **Greetings from Paul’s Friends** (16:21-24)

- A) **Timothy** – Paul’s fellow worker (Acts 16:1ff)
 - 1) Fellow traveler and son in the faith (1 Cor. 4:17; Phil. 2:19-23; 1 Tim. 1:2)
- B) **Lucius** (Acts 13:1?), **Jason** (Acts 17:5-9?), **Sosipater** (Acts 20:4?) – Paul’s kinsmen (fellow Jews)
- C) **Tertius** – writer of epistle (secretarial scribe); sends greetings “in the Lord”
- D) **Gaius** – Paul’s host and of the whole church (at Corinth; see 1 Cor. 1:14)
- E) **Erastus** – treasurer of the city (of Corinth) (Acts 19:22? 2 Tim. 4:20?)
- F) **Quartus** – a brother (in Christ)
- G) Third benediction – grace of Lord Jesus Christ be with them all (15:33; 16:20)
 - 1) Not included in some ancient manuscripts

Paul is in the company (in Corinth) with friends and fellow workers, like Timothy, Gaius, and his personal secretary, Tertius. Erastus is the city treasurer, and an inscription in a pavement bearing this name found in ancient Corinth may be the same man. All these send greetings with Paul to the brethren at Rome.

III) **Concluding Doxology** (16:25-27)

- A) God is able (is powerful to) to establish them (1:11, 16)
 - 1) According to the gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ (1:1)

- 2) According to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began but has now been made manifest (Eph. 3:1-6) and by the prophetic Scriptures (1:2) has been made known to all nations (1:5) according to the commandment of the everlasting God
- a) For obedience to the faith (1:5)
- B) To God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever (Rom. 11:36; Eph. 3:21)
- 1) Amen [so let this truth be so]
- 2) A most wonderful and succinct doxological tribute to God and His divine purpose in Christ to conclude this grand epistle to the Romans!

Paul concludes his epistle with a doxology (an expression of praise and honor to God for who he is and what he does) that has parallel thoughts to his introductory remarks (1:1-5). It deftly sums up the message of this book of Romans – the revelation of the mystery (the gospel of Christ), made known to all nations (Jew and Gentile), for obedience to faith (living a transformed life).

Romans 1:1-6

1 Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God ² which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, ³ concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, ⁴ and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. ⁵ Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, ⁶ among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ

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²⁵ Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began ²⁶ but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith— ²⁷ to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.