

The Footsteps of Faith Series

Lesson #25 “Glorifying God through Jesus Christ with an obedient faith!”

Romans 16:1-27

Scripture: Romans 1:16-17 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

Introduction:

I bought a beautiful wooded building lot between Inola and Claremore Oklahoma to build a house on. It was a grand idea until I had to remove some of the trees to build the house. It's not as simple as cutting them down because you have to remove the stumps and roots also.

I'll not soon forget what a huge effort it took to remove those 3-4 tree stumps. I worked and worked digging all around them and cutting all the roots. After all that work I got my dad's 60 horse powered tractor and hooked it up to those stumps with a chain, with the idea of showing them who the boss was..... and still could not pull the stump out.

To add insult to injury, I could take my hands and wiggle the stump, with relative ease, each direction. But the stump had deep roots and would not be moved.

If I could have bought Dynamite I would have used it. My Grandpa ended up helping me and after a week of the hardest labor on earth we finally prevailed.

In Psalms chapter 1:2-3 we find a godly person described as a tree with deep roots.

The blessed man:

*“But his delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night.
3 He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water,
Which yields its fruit in its season
And its leaf does not wither;
And in whatever he does, he prospers...”*

Transitional Statement:

As Christians our faith and our convictions should be deeply rooted in the truths of God so that when the storms of life blow and beat upon us....we will not be moved! Righteousness should be our deepest desire with the eternal will of God leading the way. I hope that the book of Romans has deepened our faith to the point that we respond with the words of the Apostle Paul ... “...I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.” 2 Timothy 1:12

I. Please accept our servant Phoebe

Romans 16:1-2

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; 2 that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

A. Phoebe was a servant of the Church in Cenchrea

1. Servant, means simply that she was a worker.
2. I think we here are blessed with a few Phoebe's as well !

B. Paul begins with this commending of "*our sister Phoebe*"

1. This was, kind of like, a reference letter for someone of today's time.
 - a. When credibility needs to be established....we have references.
2. Some of the Lord's Church still practice this very thing today. When members move to a new place, letters of reference are sent, by their former church, to establish who they are, what level of service they are at and their strengths and weaknesses in general.
 - a. I think this is a great idea and would only increase our service in the Lord.

C. Scholars generally believe that sister Phoebe was the carrier of this letter from Paul to the Roman Church.

1. So Paul establishes authenticity from his hand to theirs by sister Phoebe.

D. Paul also asks them to receive her in the Lord

1. In a manner worthy of saints.
2. And give aid to her as she has need.
 - a. It was a long ways from Corinth to Rome

E. Note:

1. At the time I wonder if sister Phoebe realized the greatness of her seemingly simply task.
2. One of the greatest things that I have ever saw was at the Chicago Museum, I saw a small first century fragment of John 8:31-33. I personally believe it was an original document.
3. From today I see a treasured responsibility and trust, given to sister Phoebe, to carry the very words of God penned by the loving Apostle Paul.

II. Paul wants greetings given to people there that he knows

Romans 16:3-16

3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who for my life risked their own necks, to whom not only do I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles; 5 also greet the church that is in their house. Greet Epaphroditus, my beloved, who is the first convert to Christ from Asia. 6 Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. 7 Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. 8 Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. 9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. 10 Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus. 11 Greet Herodion, my kinsman. Greet those of the household of Narcissus, who are in the Lord. 12 Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, workers in the Lord. Greet Persis the beloved, who has worked hard in the Lord. 13 Greet Rufus, a choice man in the Lord, also his mother and mine. 14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the brethren with them. 15 Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. 16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

A. Paul knows some people there in Rome and holds them dear in his heart.

B. Here he wants them “greeted”

1. Greet means to enfold into arms.
2. Like we do when we see someone that we love after a long absence.

C. Paul’s list includes 24 names and 2 without names

1. Of these 24.....9 are woman

a. Significant for a time when woman kept in the background most of the time.

2. In the whole list we only have knowledge of Priscilla and Aquilla

a. From Pontus but had been in Rome when Emperor Claudius kicked the Jew out and ended up in Corinth. Acts 18:1

b. Paul meet them in Corinth and as they were also tentmakers and Paul worked with them Acts 18:3

c. They instructed Apollos more accurately in God’s word. Acts 18:26

c. They traveled with Paul to Ephesus Acts 18:18

D. Overall his list includes:

1. Fellow workers in Christ...who risked their necks for him
2. House churches
3. The first convert to Christ from Asia
4. Hard working Mary
5. Kinsmen and fellow prisoners
6. Several listed as Beloved
7. Mother like people to Paul

E. Then Paul takes pause to remind the Roman Church of the fond affection they should hold for each other.

1. That they should Greet each other with a holy kiss

F. Then Paul mentions the greetings from the churches of Christ at large.

1. I can't help but think of the Tulsa workshop where Church members from all across our brotherhood gather together, and encourage one another in Christ.

III. Be on guard against division

Romans 16:17-18

17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. 18 For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

A. Here at the closing of this letter Paul reminds them of a very important truth.

1. Be watchful for those causing division and stumbling.
2. Who would lead you away from the truth

B. Turn away from them....!

1. They are slaves of their own appetites
2. Deceivers with smooth and flattering speeches
3. They target the unsuspecting.

C. God consistently warns us about divisive people.

1. Titus 3:10 "Reject a factious man after a first and second warning,"
2. Proverbs 6:16,19 says of the six things the Lord hates is, the one who spreads strife among brothers is an abomination.

IV. Be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil

Romans 16:19-20

19 For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil. 20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

A. The Roman church is known for their obedience to God.

1. Today some churches are known for great singing, big buildings etc.
2. But, what a great thing to be known asan obedient church !

B. Paul encourages them to be wise in what is good.

1. That is to be skilled and even be experts in what is good.
2. In short practice what is good.

C. Then also be innocent in what is evil.

1. i.e. so far removed from evil that you don't have any dealings with it.

D. To this end Paul reminds them that grace will be their guide.

1. Sometimes we view grace simply as a catch all to take care of what we fail at.
2. But grace is really a bench mark to lead us to newer heights in Christ.

V. Greetings from others of Paul's company

Romans 16:21

21 Timothy my fellow worker greets you, and so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

A. Timothy, Paul's faithful companion, also sends some greetings.

VI. Greetings from Tertius, Paul's scribe

Romans 16:22-24

22 I, Tertius, who write this letter, greet you in the Lord.

23 Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer greets you, and Quartus, the brother. 24 [The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.]

- A. Tertius who wrote the letter down for Paul sends greetings also
- B. Erastus, the city manager also sends greetings.
- C. Quartus also
- D. Can you see the long line of folks anxiously wanting their greetings and love sent?

Conclusion:

Romans 16:25-27

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 which has been kept secret for long ages past, 26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; 27 to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.

A. Here Paul points to the glorification of God:

1. Through an obedient faith to Jesus the Christ

B. Obedient faith serves as book ends for Romanssee Romans 1:5 also.

C. How would you describe your faith today?

1. Are your roots deep enough?