

Romans Chapter 16

Before we begin studying Romans chapter 16, please review what we learned in Romans chapter 15 by circling the correct answers.

1. Romans 15:1 - *We then that are strong...* Paul contrasts: **a.** the financial strength of Romans vs. Jews. **b.** the physical strength of men vs. women. **c.** the spiritual understanding of weak Christians vs. strong Christians.

2. Romans 15:1 - Who has the greater responsibility, **a.** Weak Christians, **b.** Strong Christians, **c.** North American Christians?

3. Romans 15:1 - What three things were issues when Paul wrote about the infirmities of the weak? **a.** Sun, moon and stars in their courses above. **b.** Earth, wind and fire below. **c.** Eating meat, drinking wine, observing Jewish holy days, Romans 14:2, 5, 21.

4. Romans 15:8 - Jesus intended to confirm the promises made to: **a.** The Gentile fathers. **b.** The Arab fathers. **c.** The American Founding Fathers. **d.** The Jewish fathers descended from Abraham.

5. Romans 15:16 - Who was the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles? **a.** The great apostle Peter. **b.** John, the closest friend of Jesus. **c.** Strangely enough, Lazarus whom Jesus raised from the dead. **d.** Pope Pius I. **e.** Billy Graham. **f.** Paul the apostle.

Introduction To Romans 16

Romans 16 is Paul's closing remarks to the Christians at Rome, listing many people in Rome who are Paul's personal friends and a few people in Corinth who are also friends of Paul. Paul greets or salutes 26 people by name plus many others who are not named.

For example, the church which is in Priscilla and Aquila's house, whose names are not given here. Remember that, in the NT, the church is not a building; the church is a called out assembly of believers, meaning, saved people in the body of Christ. The local church, meaning, the local members of the body of Christ, met in houses, such as: Aristobulus' household, the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord, Rufus' mother, the brethren in Romans 16:14 and the saints in Romans 16:15 including Nereus' sister.

Of the people Paul mentions in Romans 16, at least eight are women - Priscilla, Mary, Trypehna, Tryphosa, Persis, the mother of Rufus, Julia and the sister of Nereus plus the women in the five house churches in Rome who are not named. Insight into the character of the women Paul names in Romans 16 is found in 1 Timothy 2:9-15. According to 1 Timothy 2:10, which is more important? **a.** Being a snazzy dresser with a great hairdo, or, **b.** Being a godly woman whose good works get more notice than her clothing.

The fact that Paul lists so many people, including godly women, in such a loving way indicates the warmth of Paul's friendship and the long-lasting relationships he cultivated with other Christians throughout the course of his life. That Paul greets many women by name, indicates that, contrary to modern liberal views, Paul loved and valued Christian women and their service to God.

16:1 - I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:

I commend - To *commend* means to praise or lift up the one who is commended, to give the one commended into another's care, to entrust the person you're commending into the care of the people to whom you are commending her. To commend is to say: she is worthy of your kindness, she is worthy of your help, she is worthy of your trust.

It was common practice in NT times to write an epistle or letter of commendation or a note of commendation or a note of approval and send it with a traveler, to introduce the traveler to people along their journey and at their destination.

Paul includes this note of commendation for Phebe at the end of his letter to the Romans, in Romans 16:1-2, probably because Phebe carried the original manuscript of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, from Cenchrea to Rome. That indicates that Paul trusted Phebe and had great confidence in Phebe.

Paul was not a misogynist, a man who dislikes, despises or is prejudiced against women. We get our English word, misogynist from the Greek word, miso-gynés, *miso* meaning, hatred, and *gyné*, meaning, a female or, a woman, literally a woman hater. Regardless what false accusations are hurled at Paul by feminist liberals and progressives, Paul was not a woman hater or a woman hating man, as evidenced by his own writings in the NT. The first Christian Paul greets by name in Romans 16 is a godly Christian woman, Phebe, who is a sister in Christ and a servant of the church at Cenchrea, who has helped many and who has also helped me, Paul.

*“Do we begin again to commend ourselves?
or need we, as some others,
epistles of commendation to you,
or letters of commendation from you?”
2 Corinthians 3:1*

*“And when he (Apollos)
was disposed to pass into Achaia,
the brethren wrote,
exhorting the disciples to receive him:
who, when he was come,
helped them much
which had believed through grace.”
Acts 18:27*

Letters of commendation were common in the first century AD. Romans were great travelers and would often write a commendation letter for a friend or carry a letter of commendation to introduce themselves to other Roman citizens in the area where they traveled. A letter of commendation introduced them to society and opened the possibility that a host would offer accommodation in the family villa. Letters of commendation are mentioned in the NT in Acts 15:22-23, 18:27, 23:25, 2 Corinthians 3:1, 3 John 5-9. Paul shows us how a letter of commendation might be worded in 2 Corinthians 8:18-24.

I commend unto you Phebe - Paul used this word, *commend*, in Romans 3:5 and 5:8 as well as here in 16:1. It means *commend* in the sense of, approve of or give my approval for, and is the same Greek word translated, *approving*, in 2 Corinthians 6:4, 7:11, 10:18. Paul is saying: I approve of Phebe - she's good people - so please take good care of her.

Phebe our sister, - Phebe is our sister in the sense of being born again and saved and part of the body of Christ. Because Phebe is saved, Phebe is in Christ, 1 Corinthians 12:13, through Holy Spirit baptism, no water involved. Although inspired scripture doesn't say it, it is believed that Phebe was chosen to carry Paul's letter to Rome or to lead the delegation that carried Paul's letter to Rome. That is why Paul introduces Phebe in Romans 16:1ff., so Roman Christians would know and accept the godly Christian woman who carried Paul's letter to them. At the end of Romans in some editions of the KJV, there is an endnote which says:

Written to the Romans from Corinthus,
and sent by Phebe,
servant of the church at Cenchrea.

That helps us understand why Phebe is mentioned first in these closing remarks about people Paul knew in Rome, even though he had not yet been to Rome. Since Phebe was carrying the original manuscript of, The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, Paul introduces her by saying: *I commend unto you Phebe our sister.*

Phebe means bright or radiant, probably an aspirational name given by her parents, which Phebe the servant of God apparently lived up to in her cheerful and joyful Christian personality. This is Phebe's introduction to the Roman Christians.

Phebe was in Rome as a visitor from Cenchrea, either herself carrying Paul's letter to Rome or leading the group from Corinth which carried Paul's letter. Because she was introduced personally, by name, it makes sense to understand Phebe as carrying Paul's letter or leading the delegation that carried Paul's letter. Phebe being from Cenchrea, was not part of the church at Rome, thus the introduction by Paul. Phebe's home church was the church at Cenchrea, Romans 16:1, a Greek city near Corinth.

The church at Corinth was probably the first church Paul started in Corinth and the church at Cenchrea was probably planted by the church at Corinth as a result of Paul teaching the Corinthian Christians to be evangelistic. That seems a reasonable view since Paul probably wrote three epistles to Corinth, 1 Corinthians 5:9, and church history is silent about epistles from Paul addressed to the church at Cenchrea. Because of their geographical closeness, it is likely that a letter written by Paul to the church at Corinth was also intended for the church at Cenchrea and any other churches in Achaia and the area around Corinth.

Paul wants us to know that Phebe is a sister in Christ, someone the Roman Christians can trust and work with. Based on Romans 16:2, some believe Phebe may have been a wealthy Gentile businesswoman who got saved under Paul's ministry. Paul knew, appreciated and trusted Phebe to carry his letter - the original manuscript of Romans - to the church at Rome.

Phebe had worked with him in ministry so that Paul found her to be a blessing to his work and encouraged the Roman Christians to receive, accept and assist her in whatever business she had need of. Phebe may have had commercial business in Rome and she may also have had spiritual business to accomplish

on her trip to Rome. It is also possible that Phebe had family in Rome, to whom she wanted to witness the glorious gospel of Christ.

which is a servant - This is Paul's assessment of Phebe's spiritual usefulness. It is a compliment to Phebe, from Paul, and also a commendation. Being a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea indicates that: Phebe was saved, was a serious committed Christian and was also a servant of her risen Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Phebe knew the spiritual reality that comes with being saved. She knew God's will for her life and was living in obedience to God's will. Does anyone view you as a servant of God or of Christ or of the church? _____

Wouldn't it be a blessing if the apostle Paul, after working in ministry with you and carefully observing your life, wrote that you are a servant of the church and then God, in His wisdom, included that commendation in the Bible? _____

The Greek word here translated, *servant*, is δίακονος diakonos, pronounced dee-ak'-oh-nos. It occurs 31 times in 29 verses in the Greek NT. 28 out of the 31 times it occurs in the NT, diakonos is translated as something other than deacon. Only two times is diakonos translated, deacon in the KJV.

For example, diakonos is translated: *minister*, in Matthew 20:26, Mark 10:43, Romans 13:4, 15:8, 1 Timothy 4:6, *servants*, in Matthew 22:13, John 2:5, 9, *servant*, in Matthew 23:11, *ministers*, 1 Corinthians 3:5, 2 Corinthians 3:6, 6:4, 11:15, 23, *deacons*, Philippians 1:1, 1 Timothy 3:8, 12.

Diakonos is the word from which we get our English word, deacon, but it doesn't always mean deacon. Sometimes it simply means *servant*. NIV, NLT, Amplified Bible and NRSV translate it deacon in Romans 16:1, instead of *servant*. Is that the right translation here or is calling Phebe a deacon a mistranslation? A deacon is one of the offices in the NT church. There are many people who serve or are servants in the church but most of them are not deacons.

Remember where we are chronologically in time.

In AD 58, the NT church is in its early years, just getting started. In AD 58, when Paul writes Romans, we are only about 25 years past the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. The NT church didn't drop down from heaven fully formed, immediately after the resurrection of Christ, with all of its doctrines, beliefs and practices. In the first century, Christians were still figuring things out, were still learning Bible doctrine and NT church doctrine, as the NT was being written and as they were led by Christ's apostles.

In AD 58 the NT church is still in the process of being formed, including discerning God's will about things like the biblical offices of the NT church, bishops and deacons, 1 Timothy 3:1-14 (written around AD 65) and Titus 1:5-9 (written between AD 62-67 between Paul's first and second Roman imprisonments). 1 Timothy and Titus had not been written when Paul wrote Romans.

Only about half of the NT has been written by AD 58, when Paul wrote Romans. Factor in the biblical truth that 1 Timothy and Titus had not been written when Paul wrote Romans. It is therefore, doubtful that anyone at that time was talking about and calling people deacons and deaconesses in AD 58. I believe that is one biblically and historically sound reason why the KJV translators didn't use the word deacon and instead, translated diakonos as *servant* in Romans 16:1.

No one in the first century AD has a complete NT he can hold in his hand and read and study. The most likely scenario is that the biblical office of female deacons, if it would ever exist, did not exist at the time Paul wrote Romans. Therefore, Phebe was a diakonos in the sense of being a *servant*, as the KJV has correctly translated it. Phebe was not a deacon or a deaconess.

Did Phebe hold the biblical office of deacon or was she a servant of the church, in distinction from holding the biblical office of deacon? _____ What is your reasoning? _____

of the church which is at Cenchrea: - Cenchrea is pronounced: Cin-kree-ah. Phebe was a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea, which was probably started by Paul or one of Paul's converts. Paul first went into Macedonia around AD 50 so he had been evangelizing in Greece on and off for about eight years when he writes the epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans. Have you ever considered what it was like, being led to Christ by the apostle Paul and then, growing up in Christ with Paul teaching you how to live as a joyful, grace filled, evangelistic, Bible believing Christian? What a privilege that would have been.

The Port of Corinth was not in Corinth.

The Port of Corinth was not in Corinth. The Port of Corinth was in Cenchrea, the eastern port city located about 6 miles east of Corinth. Paul is careful to give details about Phebe and her status as a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea so that Roman Christians will know who they are dealing with and accord her the proper respect. Phebe was one of Paul's trusted coworkers, so trusted by Paul that he chose her to lead the delegation which carried the original manuscript of Romans to Rome.

Cenchrea was a city separate from and six miles away from Corinth yet Cenchrea contained the eastern port of Corinth. In the same way, the Port of Los Angeles is not in Los Angeles. The Port of Los Angeles is located in San Pedro, California, about 24 miles south of downtown Los Angeles. Ancient Corinth had two port cities, Lechaion on the west side of Corinth and Cenchrea on the east side of Corinth. Neither ancient city which contained the Port of Corinth was in Corinth.

16:2 - That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

Paul presents his information about Phebe in brief, logical phrases, first introducing her and then assuring Roman Christians that she is their sister in Christ, she is Paul's trusted co-worker and she is a woman who faithfully ministers for God.

1. **Phebe our sister** - Paul calls her our sister therefore, Phoebe is genuinely saved and born again. She is not a religious unsaved woman. She is not a religious pagan who wears a cross but is not saved. She is a sister in Christ.

2. **Ye receive her** - Accept her, make her welcome, allow her to minister and accept her ministry. This is the third time in Romans that Paul has instructed Roman Christians to *receive* their fellow Christians, Romans 14:1, 15:7, 16:1.

3. **In the Lord** - Recognize her spiritual works for Christ because she is a genuine woman of God. Receive her in the Lord goes beyond merely receiving her. There is a spiritual element here, the kindness of Christian grace, the sweetness of genuine Christian love. Receive Phebe *in the Lord* as you would like to be received by your fellow Christians.

4. **as becometh saints** - Is your Roman Christianity genuine? Then treat Phebe with genuine, generous, sincere, enthusiastic Christian hospitality.

5. **Ye assist her** - Beyond receiving her, help her in her ministry for God. Receive her as Paul uses it in Romans 16:1 means, to assist her. Make yourself useful. Rome is a big city. Assist Phebe by being her tour guide and helping her if she needs a translator. She may need someone to show her around Rome, to save time and keep her from getting lost in the hustle and bustle of the capital city.

6. **in whatever business she hath need of you** - This means in whatever she needs your help to accomplish. She may need someone to keep her from

getting mugged in the rougher neighborhoods of Rome. She may need someone with knowledge of official Rome, to help her complete paperwork and make connections with suppliers. She may need someone to act as a translator. She may need spirit filled brothers and sisters to accompany her when she goes to witness to any friends and family members she might have in Rome.

7. she hath been a succourer of many - Phebe has a consistent track record of working faithfully for God. Paul has observed the genuineness of Phebe's ministry, month in and month out and is impressed with her consistent and stable Christian life. Phebe is what all of us aspire to be, a lifeboat Christian, not a showboat Christian.

Succourer in this usage, is a feminine noun and refers to a female leader who helps people or to a woman set over others, with authority over others, someone who assures the well-being of others. It means: a female guardian, protectress, patroness. The Greek word translated, succourer, is an hapax legomenon, meaning it is only used here, one time, in the NT. No other human author of the NT uses this word.

8. and she has also helped my (Paul's) ministry - When we read 2 Timothy, we find a list of at least five people who refused to work with Paul and instead, opposed him and deserted his ministry for Christ, 2 Timothy 1:15, 2:17, 4:10. Phebe was not that kind of "Christian." Instead of opposing Paul and his evangelistic, soul winning, church planting, life changing, disciple making ministry, Phebe worked with Paul. Are people opposing your ministry and telling lies on you? Cheer up. They did the same thing to the apostle Paul so you're in great company. If you're getting flak, it means you're right over the target. Ignore the flak and keep on preaching. Keep on living for Christ.

Receive her - Romans 16:2

Assist her - Romans 16:2

That ye receive her in the Lord, - The Greek word for receive is προσδέχομαι *prosdechomai*, pronounced *pros-dekh'-om-my*. It means to *receive* to one's self, to give access to one's self. It is a personal request, not an impersonal general request. When Paul says to, *receive her in the Lord*, that is like saying, Treat Phebe like she is family because she is.

Put some heart and kindness into it. Be as helpful to Phebe as you can be. If you were in Phebe's place, isn't that how you would want to be treated? Paul's request carries a sense of expectation, of waiting for and looking for, in the sense of being available for what God has for the Roman Christians to do in

helping Phebe. The idea is, you Roman Christians have a great opportunity to do something for Christ, by helping Phebe. God has given you a genuine opportunity to help a genuine Christian. What will you do with the opportunity God has given you? _____ How will you respond? _____ Will you pass this test from God or will you fail this test? _____ Is your Christianity real or is your Christianity all hat and no cattle? _____

Luke uses the same Greek word for *receive*, in Luke 15:2 and Paul uses it again in Philippians 2:29. Basically, *receive her in the Lord* means: cooperate with her, engage with her, help her out with heartfelt enthusiasm, work with her and not against her, help Phebe accomplish God's will on her visit to Rome. This encouragement to *receive her* follows Paul's line of thought already expressed in Romans 14:1, 3 and 15:7.

Christians should work together with joy instead of fighting each other. Imagine what we could accomplish for Christ if we worked together. Remember, Phebe carried the original manuscript of Romans from Cenchrea to Rome. Roman Christians owed Phebe and Paul some deference and grace and cooperation and kindness, if only because of the rich Christian truths written in the book of Romans. Do we owe Phebe a debt of gratitude for carrying Paul's letter to the Romans to Rome? _____ Some day, in heaven, you will meet Phebe and you can thank her in person. Won't that be wonderful? _____

as becometh saints, - Do you see Paul's point here? God and Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, expect saints - everyone who is saved - to act like what they profess to be, to live what they profess to believe. Are you a Christian? Then behave like a Christian and live like a Christian who has a heart of love. Do you claim to be saved and born again? Then stop arguing and fighting with your fellow Christians over non-essential issues. Be hospitable to people; love and help people who are serving God biblically. Can God trust you to do that? _____

There is no encouragement in Romans 16:2 to help and support false teachers and heretics. Paul isn't saying: If someone says she is saved, ignore any evidence to the contrary and treat her like she is saved. Paul never encourages us to foolishly accept fake Christians as if they are real Christians.

Paul has given his approval to Phebe because he has observed her ministry and knows she is genuine. Based on that personal experiential knowledge, Paul tells Roman Christians: *receive her in the lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her*. Paul is saying: I expect that of you Roman Christians and God expects that of you. Are you Romans real Christians? Then start living like it and acting like it, starting with helping Phebe.

and that ye assist her - The Greek word translated, *assist*, is used by Paul in Romans 6:13, 16, 19, where it is translated, *yield* and *yielded*, and in Romans 12:1, where it is translated, *present*, as in, *present your bodies a living sacrifice*. *Assist* describes willing assistance, not grudging assistance, willing effort to help, presenting yourself to help because it's a privilege, yielding your time and effort and resources to help, making yourself available to help.

in whatsoever business she hath need of you: - Some commentaries speculate that Phebe was a wealthy businesswoman and Paul is encouraging the Roman Christians to help her in any business matters she has before her in Rome. While that is the probable understanding, Paul is also referring to Phebe's spiritual business of ministry for the Lord.

for she hath been a succourer of many, - The Greek word, προστάτις *pro-sta-tis*, pronounced *pros-tat-tees*, translated, *succourer*, is an hapax legomenon, meaning, a word that occurs only one time in the NT. No other human author of the NT uses this word in the Bible. *Succourer* means: a woman who is set over others, a female guardian, protectress, patroness, caring for the affairs of others and aiding them with her resources. The way Paul describes Phebe, it does sound like she may be a wealthy businesswoman engaged in ministry for Christ and ministering to the needs of others.

and of myself also. - Paul says that Phebe has helped meet the needs of many people including himself. But for Paul sending his epistle to the Romans with Phebe, we would never know her name, her character or her life of service for Christ. Because Phebe was a faithful servant of God, we know her name and we can appreciate the importance of faithfully serving God ourselves and leaving the results of our service up to God.

16:3 - Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus:

Greet Priscilla and Aquila - In Romans 16, the verb form of the Greek word, ἀσπάζομαι *aspazomai*, pronounced *as-pad'-zom-my*, in the KJV NT, is sometimes translated, *Greet*, and sometimes translated, *Salute*. It is translated *Greet* five times in Romans 16 while it is translated *Salute* 15 times in Romans 16. Both translations are accurate and neither translation is a mistake. The translator's fluency in language which exhibits nuanced differences in the meaning of the words used is part of producing an excellent translation like the KJV instead of a mediocre translation like the NIV.

The ability to express oneself accurately and articulately in the receptor language or the target language while maintaining formal equivalence (word for

word translation), produces a better translation which also reads more pleasantly to the ear, making it easier to hide in your heart and memorize. Translating the same Greek word, sometimes as *Greet*, and sometimes as *Salute*, makes the KJV read more literately and conveys a wider range of semantic meaning to the English language reader who is the end user.

Since Greet is used five times in Romans 16 while Salute is used 15 times, what is the difference between Greet and Salute? They convey similar meanings since both translate the same Greek word but there are at least four differences.

1. A greeting can be a written, verbal greeting without an holy kiss, Matthew 23:7 and Mark 12:38, where the noun form of aspazomai, ἀσπασμός aspasmus, is used. **2.** A greeting can be an holy kiss, Romans 16:16. **3.** A greeting can be both a verbal greeting and an holy kiss. **4.** A salutation can be a written salutation, as here in Romans 16 and in 1 Corinthians 16:21, Colossians 4:18, 2 Thessalonians 3:17 without an in person greeting and without an holy kiss.

Priscilla and Aquila - This famous NT couple is known almost two thousand years after they lived because they were faithful co-workers with the apostle Paul. Paul also had a number of infamous co-workers who forsook him and refused to stand with him through trials and testings. God immortalized their unfaithfulness by making sure that the dastardly five infamous co-workers are mentioned by name in 2 Timothy. Can you list all five by name? God immortalized Priscilla and Aquila's faithfulness by causing them to be mentioned six times in the NT, always in glowing terms.

Priscilla - *and Aquila* are a faithful Christian wife and husband team, Priscilla or Prisca is the wife and Aquila is the husband. Her given name was Prisca, the feminine form of the Roman family name Priscus, which, in Latin means, ancient or venerable. Priscilla is the diminutive of Prisca, what we would call her nickname. Prisca is her real name and Priscilla is her nickname.

Luke refers to her by her nickname, Priscilla, Acts 18:2, 18, 26, and Paul twice refers to her as Priscilla, except at the end of his life, when he calls her Prisca in 2 Timothy 4:19. Aquila and Priscilla and Paul were close friends and co-workers so it makes sense that Paul would usually call her by her nickname, Priscilla. Does Acts 18:2 indicate that Priscilla was also Jewish? _____

Aquila - Aquila is a Jewish man from Pontus, Acts 2:9, 18:2, 1 Peter 1:1-2, who was a Jewish tentmaker like Paul. Pontus was located in biblical Asia, what we know as eastern Turkey, the area from the inland mountains to the coastal plains

along the Black Sea. Have you considered the possibility that Aquila was present at Pentecost in Jerusalem in Acts 2:9? _____

Paul, Priscilla and Aquila had at least three things in common. 1. They were converted Jews, saved, committed followers of the risen Lord Jesus Christ. 2. They were church planting missionaries who evangelized everywhere they went. 3. They spread the gospel by winning souls and starting house churches in their home. Some of the earliest house churches in the NT were started by Paul, Priscilla and Aquila, in their own home, Acts 18:3, 11.

Priscilla and Aquila are mentioned six times in the NT, Romans 16:3, Acts 18:1-3, 18:26, 1 Corinthians 16:19, 2 Timothy 4:19. Some commentators make an issue of Priscilla being mentioned first, as if that diminishes Aquila or indicates he was not the leader in their family, because his wife is mentioned first. Because we are Bible believers, we note that of the six times this couple is mentioned by name in the NT, three times Priscilla is mentioned first and three times Aquila is mentioned first.

*“Greet Priscilla and Aquila
my helpers in Christ Jesus:”
Romans 16:3*

*“And found a certain Jew named Aquila,
born in Pontus,
lately come from Italy,
with his wife Priscilla;
(because that Claudius had commanded
all Jews to depart from Rome:)
and came unto them.”
Acts 18:2*

*“And Paul after this
tarried there yet a good while,
and then took his leave of the brethren,
and sailed thence into Syria,
and with him Priscilla and Aquila;
having shorn his head in Cenchrea:
for he had a vow.”
Acts 18:18*

*“And he (Apollos) began to speak boldly
in the synagogue:*

whom when *Aquila and Priscilla* had heard,
they took him unto them,
and expounded unto him
the way of God more perfectly.”
Acts 18:26

“The churches of Asia salute you.
Aquila and Priscilla
salute you much in the Lord,
with the church that is in their house.”
1 Corinthians 16:19

“Salute *Prisca and Aquila*,
and the household of Onesiphorus.”
2 Timothy 4:19

3 Times Aquila is mentioned first.
3 Times Priscilla is mentioned first.

my helpers in Christ Jesus: - The Greek word translated, *helpers*, is found 13 times in the Textus Receptus Greek NT. Paul uses it 12 of those times and the apostle John uses it once. It is translated *helpers*, Romans 16:3, 2 Cor 1:24, *helper*, Romans 16:9, *workfellow*, Romans 16:21, *labourers together*, 1 Cor 3:9, *fellowhelper*, 2 Cor 8:23, *companion in labour*, Phil 2:25, *fellowlabourers*, Phil 4:3, Philemon 24, *fellowworkers*, Col 4:11, *fellowlabourer*, Philemon 1, *fellowhelpers*, 3 John 8. Those translations give a sense of the closeness and companionship of the relationship when this word is used to describe co-workers for Christ.

16:4 - Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

Who have for my life laid down their own necks: - Paul means this in the sense of Philippians 2:30 - *for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death*, and Judges 5:18 - *jeoparded their own lives*, 2 Samuel 23:17 - *went in jeopardy of their lives*, 1 Chronicles 11:19 - *for with the jeopardy of their lives they brought it*, 1 Chronicles 12:19 - *to the jeopardy of our heads*, and 2 Corinthians 11:23 - *in deaths oft*.

Paul is describing himself in 2 Corinthians 11:23. He is saying he was exposed to death or he was in dire circumstances in which he could have died and was willing to die while he ministered for Christ but he didn't die. If he was literally

referring to his own death, it would happen one time. *In deaths off* refers to exposure to death, not to literal death. Romans 16:4 does not literally refer to Priscilla and Aquila being beheaded or having their heads chopped off.

The best way to understand this statement is that Priscilla and Aquila insulated and protected Paul from some of the persecution directed at him by the Jews, sometimes at the jeopardy or risk of their own lives and their own safety - *laid down their own necks*. They put their lives on the line by inviting Paul to live in their home in Corinth, Acts 18:3, 11. They exposed themselves to persecution because of their close friendship with Paul and perhaps deflected some persecution away from Paul and toward themselves.

Laid down their own necks refers to Priscilla and Aquila being exposed to danger and persecution as they worked with Paul and served God as Paul's helpers. We know Paul isn't telling us they *laid down their own necks* in the sense of dying because they are still alive and living in Rome when Paul writes Romans 16:3-5, around AD 58, and they are still alive near the end of Paul's life, when Paul writes 2 Timothy, around AD 68.

*“Salute Prisca and Aquila,
and the household of Onesiphorus.”
2 Timothy 4:19*

According to Act 18:1-6, Paul lived with Priscilla and Aquila in their home at Corinth, Acts 18:3, 11. Paul witnessed to the Jews in Corinth and they rejected his testimony about Christ, Acts 18:5-6. While the Jews rejected Paul's teaching about Christ, the Gentiles in Corinth believed, got saved and were baptized, Acts 18:8. How we respond to the gospel makes all the difference in the world. People can hear the gospel and make diametrically different decisions to what they heard.

How serious are you about believing truth and living NT resurrection truth in your life? _____ Paul spends the next year and a half teaching the word of God among them, the Corinthians, Acts 18:11. We know that Priscilla and Aquila were Paul's helpers, Acts 18:18, Romans 16:3, and that they had a church in their house at Corinth, 1 Corinthians 16:19, Acts 18:1.

The situation then, is that Paul lived with Aquila and Priscilla in their house in Corinth, while a church also met in their house, during a time of fierce persecution by unbelieving Jews. In the midst of persecution, Paul and Priscilla and Aquila faithfully taught the Bible, led Gentiles to Christ and taught them how to be evangelistic disciples of the risen Lord Jesus Christ.

Some of their converts were so fired up for God, 1 Corinthians 16:15, that Paul describes them as, addicted to ministry. Around this time, in the midst of Jewish persecution, Paul and his converts started the church at Cenchrea. Don't quit on God when you're getting persecuted. Instead of quitting, work with the brethren to start another church. That's the way Paul did it, 1 Corinthians 11:1.

In the wave of Jewish opposition which arose during that time, the persecution was so fierce that the Lord Himself spoke to Paul by night in a vision to encourage him that He would keep Paul safe, Acts 18:9-10. In the midst of ferocious persecution, Paul continued teaching the word of God, Acts 18:11, in Corinth.

It may be that this is the situation Paul refers to when he writes of Priscilla and Aquila: *Who have for my life laid down their own necks*. By the time that Paul writes Romans, Priscilla and Aquila have left Corinth and moved, first to Ephesus, Acts 18:18-19, and eventually back to Rome. And as usual, Priscilla and Aquila are ministering for Christ in a church which meets in their home in Rome, Romans 16:4.

When he finally got to Rome, do you think Paul stayed with Priscilla and Aquila in their house in Rome as he did at their house in Corinth? _____ If Priscilla and Aquila were traveling and starting churches away from Rome, do you think it possible that Paul rented Priscilla and Aquila's house in Rome for two whole years, probably at a greatly reduced rate, Acts 28:30-31? _____

laid down their own necks - Nehemiah 3:5 is a good counterpoint to this phrase. This may also refer to Priscilla and Aquila helping in dangerous situations, perhaps like getting Paul safely out of Damascus, Acts 9:24-25, and getting Paul safely out of Athens, Acts 20:1-5, when some people wanted to kill him. Or, it could refer to 1 Corinthians 15:22 and unknown circumstances in which Aquila and Priscilla put their lives/necks on the line to protect Paul.

Laid down their own necks could refer to brave and daring rescues which involved Priscilla and Aquila, the particulars of which are not recorded in scripture. It could also refer to the hardships endured and the hard work done by Aquila and Priscilla over the years, as they worked and ran their tent making business to support their ministry of helping Paul and providing a home in which churches started by Paul could meet.

unto whom not only I give thanks, - Paul takes care to publicly give thanks for Priscilla and Aquila because their love for him and their ministry to him allowed him to preach the gospel so completely that Paul could say:

*“Through mighty signs and wonders,
by the power of the Spirit of God;
so that from Jerusalem,
and round about unto Illyricum,
I have fully preached
the gospel of Christ.”*
Romans 15:19

Are you a fully kind of Christian?

- Numbers 14:24 - Do you follow God fully?
- 1 Kings 11:6 - Do you not go fully after the LORD?
- Romans 4:21, 14:5 - Are you fully persuaded?
- 2 Timothy 3:10 - Do you fully know Paul’s doctrine?
- 2 Timothy 4:17 - Is your preaching fully known?

but also all the churches of the Gentiles. - This is not hyperbole. Paul is not exaggerating. *All the churches of the Gentiles*, which Paul and Priscilla and Aquila started and nurtured, have reason to give thanks for this husband and wife church planting team. Aquila and Priscilla were Paul’s faithful helpers, Romans 16:3. They hosted Paul in their home, Acts 18:3. They traveled with Paul, Acts 18:18. And the NT records that they hosted house churches in their homes in Corinth, 1 Corinthians 16:19, and in Rome, Romans 16:5 and probably in other cities, including Ephesus.

16:5 - Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.

Likewise greet the church - House churches became common in NT times, Acts 8:3, and Priscilla and Aquila helped pioneer the house church model in several cities across the Roman empire. The NT only mentions two cities, Corinth and Rome, where Priscilla and Aquila hosted house churches but they probably worked with Paul in other cities, Ephesus for example, Acts 18:24-26, and hosted house churches in other cities. That helps explain Paul’s effusive praise for them at the end of Romans 16:4 - *unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.*

the church that is in their house. - House churches were a NT reality because they were logical, practical and reasonable places for small local congregations to meet. Consider the reasons why a house church makes sense. Because a house was already available, there was no need to build a building or rent a

building or struggle to pay for a building. In the first century AD, they didn't need a parking lot for bicycles, scooters and cars because everyone walked. This is one of five times Paul mentions individual house churches in Rome in Romans 16. A house church is a group of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who meet regularly in someone's home.

Romans 16 Lists Five House Churches In First Century Rome

1. *the church that is in their house* - Romans 16:5
2. *them which are of Aristobulus' household* - Romans 16:10
3. *the household of Narcissus* - Romans 16:11
4. *and the brethren which are with them* - Romans 16:14
5. *all the saints which are with them* - Romans 16:15

Salute my wellbeloved Epaphroditus, - Salute and Greet carry the basic meaning of saying Hello to someone as well as calling to mind, in some instances, the customary Middle Eastern holy kiss on both cheeks, Romans 16:16, 1 Corinthians 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12, 1 Peter 5:14. As Paul Greets and Salutes by name, Christians in Rome that he already knows and has worked with, the truth that Paul is a good, kind, loving and friendly man and God's chosen leader extends Paul's personal influence.

That Paul is already friends with Christians in the church at Rome and the excellent personal testimony for Christ of those Christians, makes other Christians in Rome who don't yet know Paul, more open to receiving his teaching in Romans.

my wellbeloved - The Greek word, ἀγαπητός *agapētos*, pronounced, *aga-pay-tas*, is used four times in Romans 16. Here it is translated, *my wellbeloved*. In 16:8 it is translated, *my beloved*, in 16:9, *my beloved* and in 16:12, *the beloved*. *My beloved* is how God the Father described the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 3:17 and 17:5, Mark 1:11, 9:7.

In Acts 15:25, the apostolic leaders of the Jerusalem Council described Barnabas and Paul as *beloved*. In Romans 1:7, and 12:19, Paul describes every saved person in Rome as *beloved*. Paul even describes unsaved Jews as *beloved* in Romans 11:28. *Wellbeloved* emphasizes the closeness and kinship of these early Christians.

Do you understand that you yourself are beloved of God? _____ In Ephesians 1:6, who is the beloved? _____ In Ephesians 1:6, since God's beloved is the Lord Jesus Christ, Paul tells us we are accepted in the beloved, meaning, we are accepted in Christ. As a Christian, you are beloved of God even in the midst of trouble, even in the midst of failure, even when some of your prayers still have not received an answer of peace, even when God may seem distant from you.

Epaenetus - *Epaenetus* means: worthy of praise or praiseworthy. Epaenetus is an addict, 1 Corinthians 16:15. Are you an addict like Epaenetus? _____ Epaenetus got saved in Achaia, southern Greece but when Paul writes Romans, Epaenetus is living in Rome, Italy. The name Epaenetus is only mentioned in the Bible in this verse. There are several famous Greeks who carried this name prior to the NT time period, including Epaenetus of Argos, winner of the boys' stadion race in the 80 BC Olympics, and, Epaenetus, of Athens, from 633–632 BC, an Archon (one of nine chief magistrates) of ancient Athens.

Is this a contradiction in the Bible?

Some people allege that Romans 16:5 + 1 Corinthians 16:15 is a contradiction, an error, a mistake in the Bible. Since Paul is the human author of both verses, it is alleged that Paul doesn't know what he is talking about and his epistles are not trustworthy. Some allege that God himself made a mistake in inspiration when He let this contradiction slip past Him. Please read both verses for yourself to see if you can spot a contradiction. Is this a contradiction? _____

the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia,
1 Cor 16:15 - Written around AD 56-57

Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ.
Romans 16:5 - Written around AD 57-58

When we study the Bible, we should never approach scripture with a skeptical unbelieving heart. Instead, because we are Christians, we approach scripture with a believing heart. We do not automatically assume the Bible is wrong if we see an apparent contradiction. We read and study it, we pray about it and we use our Holy Spirit guided spiritual intellect to figure it out. We are Bible believing Christians therefore our presupposition is always that, The Bible is true and the Bible is right. We seek truth and in the spirit of seeking truth, we answer this alleged contradiction by recognizing seven excellent explanations.

7 Excellent Explanations

1. Paul wants his readers to know that the house of Stephanas is the firstfruits of Achaia (meaning, more than one person in the house of Stephanas got saved), 1 Corinthians 16:15. In the house of Stephanas, Epaenetus is the first individual from the house of Stephanas to get saved, Romans 16:5, therefore both of Paul's statements are true and do not contradict each other.

2. Firstfruits doesn't mean only, the first individual grape (vs. a cluster of grapes) or the first olive (vs. a basket of olives) or the first individual grain of wheat (vs. multiple heads of wheat which are full of grains) or the first grain of barley. Firstfruits means the first fruits (plural) which are ripe enough to harvest, the first fruits gathered in the first harvest of the season. Firstfruits refers to more than one individual olive or one individual grain of wheat.

3. There were other people in the house of Stephanas who also got saved in the first harvest of souls in Achaia. Epaenetus was part of the house of Stephanas and after Epaenetus got saved, he helped witness to and lead Stephanas and other members of the house of Stephanas to Christ.

4. The house of Stephanas was one of the original house churches Paul started in Corinth. It became a house church because: **a.** multiple people living in the house got saved, **b.** they needed to be disciplined and taught how to live as Christians, **c.** they were willing to have a church meet in their house, **d.** the people in the house of Stephanas *have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints*, 1 Corinthians 16:15. In other words, they were serious Christians.

5. Epaenetus Stephanas or Stephanas Epaenetus are two names for the same individual. Do you have more than one name? _____

Simon was also called Peter, Matthew 10:2, Acts 10:5, 11:13. Saul of Tarsus was also called Paul, Acts 13:9. Mark was also known as John Mark, Acts 12:12, 25, 15:37. Why assume that Epaenetus could not also be called Stephanas? Why assume that Stephanas could not also be called Epaenetus? Why assume there is a contradiction in the Bible when you can believe the Bible and use your logical mind and spiritual intellect to figure out the alleged contradiction?

6. Epaenetus is the son of Stephanas and is also the first individual in the house of Stephanas who got saved under Paul's ministry.

7. The house of Stephanas is the firstfruits in a general corporate sense, 1 Corinthians 16:15, and, in the house of Stephanas, in a particular sense,

Epaenetus is the first individual who got saved, Romans 16:5 and is therefore the firstfruits of Achaia. Others who got saved in the house of Stephanas got saved after Epaenetus got saved and together they formed a house church and they, as a house church group, are also firstfruits, being the first group of people to get saved in Achaia.

As Christians, our default view should always be, that the Bible is true and the Bible is right. If we refuse to believe the Bible then we don't have a biblical worldview. How can we claim to be Christians - followers of Christ - if we reject the Bible Christ gave us and the worldview contained in the Bible? Christ never rejected the Bible and never tells us to stop believing the Bible. What did Jesus call people who do not believe all that the prophets have spoken? _____

*“Then he said unto them,
O fools, and slow of heart
to believe all
that the prophets have spoken:”
Luke 24:25*

Our default view should never be to assume that the Bible is wrong until it is proven right. That view is the “I refuse to have faith” view or the “I don't believe God” view and reflects an unbelieving heart. God never blesses unbelief. Is unbelief a good thing? _____ Does unbelief come from an evil heart? _____ Is unbelief following God or is unbelief departing from God? **a.** Following God. **b.** *Departing from the living God.*

*“Take heed, brethren,
lest there be in any of you
an evil heart of unbelief,
in departing from the living God.”
Hebrews 3:12*

who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ. - The Greek word, *Achaia*, means grief or trouble. Achaia is the southern part of what we know as present day Greece. Achaia became a senatorial province of the Roman Empire in 27 BC, about 85 years before Paul wrote Romans. The city of Corinth was located in the senatorial province of Achaia.

firstfruits of Achaia - *Firstfruits* implies more harvests to come. Firstfruits is just the beginning of a great harvest. Enough people are getting saved that Paul, Priscilla and Aquila can start house churches in Corinth and Cenchrea and other locations around Corinth, Romans 16:23, some of which are not mentioned in

scripture. Imagine Paul's joy in pioneering a new country and new cities that had not yet received the preaching of the gospel and the preaching of an apostle.

Imagine Paul's delight in leading Epaenetus to Christ, the first Greek who got saved in Paul's ministry in Achaia (southern Greece). Paul kept track of who got saved and who was the first one saved when he pioneered a new mission field. It is not difficult to imagine that Epaenetus lived up to his name, worthy of praise, as he grew up spiritually under Paul's teaching.

Imagine the careful prayerful spiritual labor as Paul disciplined Epaenetus, taught him Bible doctrine and how to witness and win souls and watched him grow in the Lord. As Epaenetus grew in grace and knowledge of God, imagine the developing close spiritual relationship that allowed Paul to describe Epaenetus as his wellbeloved who is worthy of praise.

16:6 - Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us.

Greet Mary, - In the OT, Mary is Miriam. The woman's name, Miriam, occurs 15 times in the OT. Miriam/Mary means rebellious or obstinate or beloved. We trace the [etymology of Miriam and Mary](#) from an Egyptian verb that means to love. Miriam and Mary come from the Hebrew verb מרה (mara), to be rebellious, or the Hebrew verb מרר (marar), to be bitter or strong.

The name Miriam means: beloved or obstinate or rebellious, Numbers 12:1-16, which tells of Miriam's rebellion. 14 times it refers to Miriam, the prophetess, Exodus 15:20, who was also the older sister of Moses and one time Miriam occurs in the masculine form, possibly as the name of a man, 1 Chronicles 4:17. The Hebrew name Miriam is the source of the Jewish name Mary in the NT.

The woman's name, Mary, occurs 54 times in 46 verses in the KJV NT. The **first** Mary in the NT is Mary the mother of Jesus. The **second** and **third** women named Mary in the NT are Mary Magdalene, Luke 8:2, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, Matthew 27:56. The **fourth** Mary is Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus, Luke 10:39, John 11:1. Mary the wife of Cleophas is the **fifth** Mary in our NT, John 19:25.

*“Now there stood by the cross of Jesus
(1) his mother, and (2) his mother's sister,
Mary the wife of Cleophas,
and (3) Mary Magdalene.”
John 19:25*

How are we to understand John 19:25? The most practical and reasonable understanding is that there are three women named Mary mentioned by John in John 19:25. The first Mary is the mother of our Lord Jesus. The second Mary is the wife of Cleophas and the third Mary John mentions is Mary Magdalene. Some people make this to be four women, instead of three, the nameless second of whom is described only as the sister of Mary.

Mary the wife of Cleophas may be the sister of Joseph, Mary's husband and therefore, the sister (in law) of Mary by marriage or, Cleophas may have been the brother of Joseph and Cleophas' wife Mary was considered to be the sister of Mary by affinity.

It is also possible that the first two Marys in John 19:25 are sisters by blood, from the same father and mother or from the same father and different mothers, who just happen to have been given the same name, Mary. Abraham and Sarah in the OT had the same father but different mothers, Genesis 20:2, 5, 12, 16.

The **sixth** Mary in the NT is Mary the mother of John Mark, Acts 12:12, 25, 13:5, 13, 15:39-41, Colossians 4:10, 2 Timothy 4:11, 1 Peter 5:13.

It is possible that the Mary in Romans 16:6 is Mary the mother of John Mark, the human author of the Gospel of Mark. Mary's home was the meeting place for a church linked to Peter, Acts 12:12 but in Acts 12:11-12, Mary lived in Jerusalem, Acts 12:19, not Rome. It is possible that, like Aquila and Priscilla, Mary moved to Rome to help with the Lord's work in the capital city of the Roman Empire. That is only speculation. We have no proof that the Mary of Acts 12:12 or any other Mary we have mentioned is the Mary of Romans 16:6. Mary was a relatively common name in the first century.

who bestowed much labour on us. - Paul never says anything about what a great cook or decorator or hostess or housekeeper or snazzy dresser someone is. What Paul noticed was someone who was a serious Christian, 1 Timothy 2:9-15, who worked hard for the Lord. Mary didn't just labor. She bestowed *much labour*. She was a hard worker. 1 Timothy 5:9-10 provides insight into what Paul means when he says, *bestowed much labor on us*. Whatever faults she may have had, Mary was not a lazy Christian. Many of us can learn a valuable lesson from Mary. God never commends us for being lazy.

16:7 - Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

Salute Andronicus - Andronicus is a classical Greek name (a Latinized variant of the Greek name Andronikos) which means: man of victory, male victor, warrior. Andronicus may have been a Greek, possibly a proselyte to Judaism, who got saved without being a physical descendant of Abraham. However it is more likely that Andronicus was a Jewish believer who had a Hebrew name as well as a Latinized Greek name. It was not unusual for Jews to take Gentile names, as did Saul, who became known as Paul after his conversion to Christ, Acts 13:9.

If Andronicus was not a saved physical descendant of Abraham, then he would have been a spiritual kinsman of Paul. The most likely situation is that Andronicus was a Jewish man who got saved early on, even before the apostle Paul got saved. He could have personally witnessed the earthly ministry of Christ and he could have known Christ and the apostles personally.

What we know about Andronicus

1. He has a Greek name
2. He is a believer in Christ
3. He is one of Paul's kinsmen
4. He got saved before Paul got saved
5. He was imprisoned for his faith
6. He was of note among the apostles
7. He was of note to the apostle Paul

and Junia, - Junia is a Greek name which means: youthful. Junia is one of those names which can be a man's or a woman's name. [Blue Letter Bible](#) explains that "the only difference between the male and female form of the word is not in the spelling but rather how it is accented. Yet there were no accent marks in the original Greek."

The accent on the word would then be provided by the speaker who pronounced the name Junia. Paul dictated Romans to Tertius, Romans 16:22. There is therefore still some debate over whether or not Junia is a lady or a man.

"In an article in, **Journal of Biblical Literature** 127 (2008): 397–408, Al Wolters asserts that 'louviâv (Junia) is the Greek form of the Hebrew male name Yehunni." To help point us in the right direction about the issue of, Could there be female apostles, we remind ourselves of two things. 1. Romans 16:7 does

not state or imply that Andronicus and Junia were apostles. 2. In the Bible, only men held the scriptural office of an apostle, Matthew 10:1-4.

Scriptural Examples That Apostles Are Men, Not Women

1. Apostles are distinct from disciples - Matthew 10:1-2
2. Some of the disciples were women but none of the original apostles were women.
3. The original 12 apostles were men - Matthew 10:1-5
4. The 12 apostles will judge the 12 tribes of Israel - Matthew 19:27-28
5. The 12 apostles are in 12 foundations of New Jerusalem - Rev 21:14
6. Matthias, a man, replaced Judas among the 12 - Acts 1:20-26
7. Judas' replacement had to be a man - Acts 1:21-23
8. Paul the 13th apostle was a man - Romans 1:1, 11:13
9. James the Lord's brother was a man - Galatians 1:19, 1 Cor 15:7
10. The man Barnabas is called an apostle - Acts 14:4, 14
11. The man Apollos may be an apostle - 1 Corinthians 4:6-10
12. Silvanus and Timothy may be apostles - 1 Thessalonians 1:1, 2:6-9

I do not see Jesus and Paul, in the first century AD, overthrowing Jewish and Greek beliefs and culture and introducing twenty first century woke feminist cultural views into the church and the Bible, by making Junia out to be a woman apostle. Some say the counter argument to that is found in Galatians 3:26-28. If so, that is a weak and spindly counter argument.

Which scriptural argument is most powerful to your mind? _____

Which scriptural argument is most powerful to your heart? _____

My father was a Junior - Lanford Hobart Brentlinger, Jr. Dad never liked being called Jr. or Junior or Junie so he never referred to himself as Jr. I think when Dad was a kid, being called Junie made him feel like he was being denigrated as feminine. The point is, some names, whether in Hebrew or Greek or English, may sound feminine when they are not. When we interpret scripture, we must not read modern cultural views and woke, diversity, equity, inclusion political beliefs into scripture or inject popular political and religious trends from our time into the first century environment of the NT.

Some speculate, because they cannot prove it scripturally, that Junia was a woman and that Junia is the Greek name chosen by Joanna, the Jewish female disciple of Jesus who was also personally acquainted with the apostles in the Gospel of Luke 8:3, 24:10. Junia is a woman, they say. Two contemporary

scholars who advance that view are Richard Bauckham and Ben Witherington. It is interesting to point out that the name Joanna, can also be a man's name, as in Luke 3:27, where it is a proper masculine noun vs. Luke 8:3, where it is a proper feminine noun.

The line of thought is that Joanna, during the earthly ministry of Christ, was married to Chuza, the steward or household manager of Herod Antipas. Chuza eventually died. After Chuza's death, Junia then got remarried, to the Jewish man named Andronicus and together they served God, including knowing and working with the apostle Paul. If that is true, it might explain the connection between Andronicus and Junia and the apostles of Christ - *of note among the apostles* - and also, the early salvation of Andronicus and Junia, before Paul got saved. That line of thought does not however, make Andronicus or Junia apostles of Christ.

What we know about Junia

1. He has a Greek name
2. He is a believer in Christ
3. He is one of Paul's kinsmen
4. He got saved before Paul got saved
5. He was imprisoned for his faith
6. He was of note among the apostles
7. He was of note to the apostle Paul

my kinsmen, - Paul may mean *kinsmen* in the sense of fellow Jews, in the sense of being physically descended from Abraham. Paul used this word in Romans 9:3 - *my kinsmen according to the flesh*, meaning Jews in general who, like him, are descended from Abraham. Here in Romans 16:7, Paul doesn't include, *according to the flesh*, which for some, indicates, along with their Greek names, that Paul is describing two Gentile believers. If we hold that view, Andronicus and Junia are not *kinsmen* in the sense of being physical descendants of Abraham.

Under that view, they are *kinsmen* by way of spiritual descent from Abraham, Galatians 3:7-9, instead of by physical descent. *Kinsman* as Paul uses it here would then mean, fellow saved Gentiles. *Kinsmen*, if used in the sense of saved Gentiles, would refer to them having the same heavenly Father and being Paul's spiritual brothers and sisters in the family of God, Galatians 3:16, 26-29.

Kinsmen is from the Greek word, συγγενής *syngenēs*, pronounced 'soong-ghe-nace'. It is used 12 times in 12 verses in the NT, where it is translated: *kin* - Mark 6:4, *cousin* - Luke 1:36, *cousins* - Luke 1:58, *kinsfolk* - Luke 2:44, - *kinsmen* -

Luke 14:12, Acts 10:24, Romans 9:3, 16:7, 16:21, *kinsfolks* - Luke 21:16, *kinsman* - John 18:26, Romans 16:11.

Consanguineous relationships are relationships by blood with close blood relatives like brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, first and second cousins. Andronicus and Junia could be Paul's Jewish cousins.

In Luke 14:12 - *kinsmen*. In Luke 21:16, *kinsfolks*. In John 18:26 - *kinsman*. In Acts 10:24 - *kinsmen*. In Acts 23:16-22, we discover that Paul had at least a sister and a nephew who are mentioned in the NT. It is possible that when Paul says, *my kinsmen*, he is referring to two of his cousins, Andronicus and Junia, who got saved before he got saved and who worked with him in ministry. That is a possibility but not an absolute certainty. The Bible doesn't definitively tell us that.

There are at least three kinds of relationships which can be described by the word, *kinsmen*. Those three relationships are: Physical Affinity, Spiritual Affinity and Consanguinity (related by blood).

Affinity and affinal relationships are based on empathy, liking, rapport, sympathy. Affinity can refer to a marriage relationship, which is liking, loving, supportive but in which the married partners are not related to each other by blood (Consanguinity). The married partners are instead, related by Affinity.

Consanguinity and consanguineous relationships are blood relationships in which individuals are descended from a common ancestor.

1. Physical Affinity - Related by personal choice of the individuals involved or by circumstances but not by blood. Affinity means: fellow descendants of Abraham who are not close blood relatives

2. Spiritual Affinity - Fellow Christians who are Gentiles instead of being Jewish, can be called kinsmen. Used in this sense, kinsmen has the sense of spiritual kinsmen, spiritually consanguine in the sense of being related by the blood of Christ (but not literally consanguine).

3. Consanguinity - Related by DNA, meaning: by blood and biological descent. Consanguinity means: contemporary blood relatives who are one, two or three times removed. Consanguineous relationships could include nephew and aunt marriages, Exodus 6:20, Numbers 26:59, cousins who marry each other or brother and sister marriage relationships, like Abraham and Sarah, who shared the same father but had different mothers, Genesis 20:2, 5, 12, 16.

and my fellowprisoners, - This could mean, Andronicus and Junia were imprisoned with Paul or it could mean that they were fellow prisoners like Paul, having been imprisoned for the gospel like Paul, but not with Paul. It seems more likely that they were imprisoned with Paul although they could also have been imprisoned by Saul himself, Acts 8:3, before he got saved.

Do you remember that Paul was a soul-winning witness for Christ, Romans 10:1? _____ While in prison Paul continued to witness and win souls, Acts 16:30-31, Philippians 1:13, 4:22, 2 Corinthians 6:5, 11:23. Andronicus and Junia were probably imprisoned with Paul at one of the times mentioned.

*“In stripes, in imprisonments,
in tumults, in labours,
in watchings, in fastings;
” 2 Corinthians 6:5*

*“So that my bonds in Christ
are manifest in all the palace,
and in all other places;
“Are they ministers of Christ?
(I speak as a fool) I am more;
in labours more abundant,
in stripes above measure,
in prisons more frequent,
in deaths oft.”
2 Corinthians 11:23*

*And many of the brethren in the Lord,
waxing confident by my bonds,
are much more bold
to speak the word without fear.”
Philippians 1:13*

*“All the saints salute you,
chiefly they that are
of Caesar's household.”
Philippians 4:22*

Andronicus and Junia were imprisoned like Paul was imprisoned or were imprisoned with Paul at some point or were imprisoned by unsaved Saul, Acts 8:3. The Bible doesn't list every time Paul was in prison. Andronicus and Junia may have been imprisoned separately from Paul or at a different time than Paul's

imprisonments. In any case, they share the experience of imprisonment for Christ and had imprisonment in common with Paul.

who are of note - *Who are of note* does not mean that Andronicus and Junia were apostles and does not state or imply that they were apostles. It is dishonest to read this as if it says that Andronicus and Junia were apostles. This word, *of note*, can be used in a good positive sense about the notable person, as here, or in a negative sense about the notable person, as in Matthew 27:16 - *And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas*. This word is only used these two times in the Bible.

Who are of note means: who were recognized by the apostles because of their Christian life, their Christian testimony for Christ and their Christian work and perhaps, by their positive association and friendship with Paul. The way they lived and served Christ and witnessed for Christ made them stand out from run of the mill Christians and even drew the notice of the apostles. That being said, this does not state or imply that Andronicus and Junia were apostles.

Isn't it a blessing that some Christians live for Jesus, not as showboats but as lifeboats? Andronicus and Junia were not noted because they were showboat Christians. Andronicus and Junia were lifeboat Christians and that drew the notice of Paul and the notice of the other apostles of Christ.

That is why they were of note among the apostles. Paul says: *of note* in the sense of being noticed. Are you *of note* to anyone based on the way you live your Christian life? _____ Does anyone notice you as a lifeboat Christian because of the way you live your Christian life? _____ Do Christian leaders take note of you because of the way you live for Christ? _____

**What qualities might make your Christian life
of note among the apostles
and of note among other Christians?**

1. My joyful attitude.
2. My positive attitude.
3. My contagious enthusiasm.
4. My consistent witness for Christ.
5. My obedience to Christ.
6. My grace-filled testimony of salvation.
7. My helpful heart.
8. My loving heart.

9. My being filled with the Spirit.
10. My practical Christianity.
11. My fervent Spirit.
12. My words of encouragement.
13. My willingness to pray.
14. My stable character.
15. My spontaneous joy.
16. My listening ear.
17. My kind reaction to reproach.
18. My willingness to help.
19. My reaching out to others.
20. My thankful spirit.
21. My zeal for the Lord.
22. My way of spreading the gospel.
23. My avoidance of gossip.
24. My not being a tale bearer.
25. My tendency to encourage others.
26. My strong belief in the Bible.
27. My rejection of liberal views about the Bible.
28. The fact that I live by faith as God says to do.
29. My joyful willingness to serve God.
30. My trustworthiness in ministry.
31. My dependability in working for Jesus.
32. My being fully committed to serving God.

among the apostles, - Romans 16:7 does not say that Andronicus and Junia are apostles. No other verse in the Bible mentions them. Does this verse say that Andronicus and Junia were apostles? _____ Since this verse does not say that Andronicus and Junia were apostles and they are not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible, is it honest to assert that Andronicus and Junia were apostles? _____ Is it false teaching to assert that Andronicus and Junia were apostles when the Bible never says they were apostles? _____

ἀπόστολος apostolos, ap-os'-tol-os. *Apostle(s)* occurs 81 times in 80 verses in the NT. 71 of those times, the word apostle or apostles refers to the twelve apostles chosen by Jesus to work with Him in His earthly ministry, Matthew 10:2, Acts 1:2, 26. 10 other times, apostle(s) refers to someone other than the twelve, John 13:16, Acts 14:14, 15:33, Romans 1:1, 11:13, 1 Corinthians 1:1, 9:1-2, 2 Corinthians 8:23, Philippians 2:25. Apostle most of the time, means a male man who holds the apostolic office by direct appointment of the Lord Jesus Christ, Matthew 10:1-15, Acts 9:15-16, Romans 11:13, 2 Timothy 1:11.

Apostle means: an ambassador, a messenger, someone sent with orders, one who is sent, he that is sent. *Apostle* does not always mean someone who holds the biblical office of an apostle, does not always mean someone personally called by Christ to work with Jesus in His earthly ministry, does not always mean someone who has been given apostolic sign gifts and miraculous powers.

At the time Paul writes Romans, AD 57-58, most of the men who hold the office of an apostle, Romans 11:13, are still alive, still actively serving God, still faithful to Christ. Which of the original apostles are not living in AD 57-58, when Paul writes Romans? **a.** Judas, Acts 1:15-26, **b.** James, Acts 12:1-3, **c.** Matthew, **d.** Peter.

***Among the apostles can be interpreted
in at least four different ways.***

1. Andronicus and Junia were not themselves apostles who were called by Christ and held the biblical office of apostle, Romans 11:13. Instead, their Christian life drew the notice of genuine apostles who did hold the biblical office of apostle, Matthew 10:1-5, like Peter, James, John and Paul, who knew Andronicus and Junia and their testimony for Christ, so that we can say of them, they *are of note among* the apostles (not, they are of note as apostles), meaning: the apostles take note of them or, the apostles noticed them.

2. Andronicus and Junia are genuine apostles, holding the biblical office of an apostle, called by Christ, just like Peter, James, John and Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:7-9. This is nothing more than a fantasy interpretation since Romans 16:7, the only verse where they are mentioned, doesn't say they were apostles. Here are six biblical reasons why this view is not true, Acts 1:20-23.

a. The twelve apostles who held the apostolic office, Romans 11:13, are listed by name, Matthew 10:1-5, and Andronicus and Junia are not among them.

b. The apostles had to be biological male men personally called by Jesus, Matthew 10:1-5, Acts 1:21, to the biblical office of an apostle, with signs and wonders, Matthew 10:8, which authenticate their apostleship. Nothing in the NT indicates Andronicus and Junia could perform sign gifts and wonders.

c. The 12 apostles had to have the baptism of John the Baptist, Acts 1:22.

d. The 12 apostles Jesus personally called and commissioned and empowered had to be with Jesus from the beginning of His earthly ministry, Acts 1:21.

e. The 12 apostles had to also have eaten and drunk with Jesus after He rose from the dead, Acts 10:41.

f. There is no biblical or historical evidence that Andronicus and Junia meet any of those biblical requirements, 1 Corinthians 12:28-29. The obvious answer to Paul's question in 1 Cor 12:28-29 is: No, all are not apostles in the sense of being personally called and chosen by Christ to hold the biblical office of apostle, working signs and wonders with Christ in His earthly ministry.

3. Andronicus and Junia are not genuine apostles like Peter, James, John and Paul, meaning, they did not hold the biblical office of an apostle but instead, are *apostles* in the sense of being *messengers of the churches*, meaning: they were sent by the churches to do God's work (not called personally by the Lord Jesus Christ to work with Jesus in His earthly ministry).

In that sense, they were recognized by the genuine apostles of Christ as being messengers / *apostles of the churches*, ἀπόστολος apostolos, ap-os'-tol-os, 2 Corinthians 8:23 - *messengers*, Philippians 2:25 - *messenger*, John 13:16 - *he that is sent*.

Remember that the word *apostle* means: a messenger, someone who is sent or, he that is sent. *Apostle* does not always mean someone who holds the biblical office of an apostle, does not always mean someone personally called by Christ to work with Jesus in His earthly ministry, does not always mean someone who has been given apostolic sign gifts and miraculous powers as part of the biblical office of apostle, Romans 11:13.

4. Andronicus and Junia were messengers / *apostles of the churches* and were of note among the other messengers / *apostles of the churches*. Options 1, 3 and 4. are the most probable scenarios.

who also were in Christ before me. - This is interesting because Paul says there were people who *were in Christ before me*, meaning, before Paul got saved in Acts 9, and before he got baptized by the Spirit into the body of Christ, no water involved, 1 Corinthians 12:13. There were already other people who were saved, Spirit baptized and in the body of Christ, before anyone knew there was a body of Christ to be a part of and before Paul got saved.

Paul got saved within a few years of the resurrection and ascension of Christ, Acts 9:1-6, his salvation happening around AD 34. That being true then, Andronicus and Junia got saved before Paul got saved. They were in Christ before Paul and are two of the earliest post-resurrection Christians and two of

the earliest Christians to also get arrested and imprisoned for their witness for Christ.

No wonder Paul loved them, since they were willing to face prison in their church planting evangelistic work for Christ. *In Christ before me* can be understood in a number of ways. Which of the following makes the most biblical sense to you?

1. Since there were people in Christ before Paul got saved, we know the body of Christ started before Paul got saved and could not have started when Paul got saved in Acts 9.
2. If there were people in Christ before Paul got saved, then the body of Christ existed before Paul got saved, therefore the body of Christ could not have started in Acts 9, when Paul got saved. Is that clear to you? _____
3. Everyone who is in Christ got in Christ by being spiritually baptized into the body of Christ by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the body of Christ started before Paul got saved.

*“For by one Spirit
are we all baptized
into one body,
whether we be Jews or Gentiles,
whether we be bond or free;
and have been all made to drink
into one Spirit.”
1 Corinthians 12:13.*

*“So we, being many,
are one body in Christ,
and every one members
one of another.”
Romans 12:5*

4. Notice that, in the OT, there is no body of Christ because Christ hadn't come in the OT. No one was in Christ in the OT and no one was in Christ in eternity past. In the OT, no one was spiritually baptized, no water involved, into the body of Christ because the body of Christ didn't exist until the NT, after the resurrection of Christ.

In the NT, we are never told that there are multiple bodies of Christ. Hyper-dispensationalists invent multiple bodies of Christ in their effort to make their hyper views fit their interpretation of the book of Acts and Paul's epistles. The Bible only ever speaks of one body of Christ. The Bible never says there are two or three or four bodies of Christ.

5. That is because there are not two bodies of Christ or three bodies of Christ or four bodies of Christ. There is not a Jewish body of Christ and a Gentile body of Christ. There is not a body of Christ before Paul gets saved and another body of Christ after Paul gets saved. There is not a Corinthian body of Christ and a Jerusalem body of Christ and an Ephesian body of Christ.

6. According to 1 Corinthians 12:13, which gives us a number, how many bodies of Christ are there? _____ Do you believe that clear statement of scripture about how many bodies of Christ there are? _____ Since the Bible only mentions one body of Christ, wise Christians believe what the Bible says, that there is only one body of Christ, Galatians 1:11-12, Ephesians 2:11-22.

7. According to Romans 12:5, how many bodies of Christ are there? _____ According to Ephesians 2:14-16, how many bodies of Christ are there? **a.** One body of Christ. **b.** Two bodies of Christ. **c.** Three bodies of Christ. **d.** Four bodies of Christ.

When did the body of Christ start?

People sometimes ask: When did the body of Christ start? At what point in the NT did the body of Christ begin? To help us answer those questions, we need to know: **a.** When the OT went out of force and when the NT went into force, and, **b.** What does the NT tell us about the beginning of the body of Christ? Here are seven answers people give to these questions about the body of Christ.

1. The OT ended and the NT started and the body of Christ started at the Calvary event, when Christ died on the cross, Matthew 27:51, Ephesians 2:16, and resurrected three days later, Matthew 28:1-6, John 10:16, Hebrews 9:16-17, Galatians 1:11-12, Ephesians 2:13-16, 3:1-12.

Please note Ephesians 2:16 - *reconcile both (Jews and Gentiles) unto God in one body by the cross. "the church, which is his body"* Ephesians 1:22-23. "*For his body's sake which is the church.*" Colossians 1:24.

View #1 is the correct view - The body of Christ came into being, by the cross - because that's what the Bible clearly says and, because it gives us the why,

when and where about the beginning of the body of Christ, Ephesians 2:16 - *in one body by the cross*. The one body came into being *by the cross*.

**Answers 2 Through 7 are wrong
about when the body of Christ started.**

2. The body of Christ started at Pentecost in Acts 2:1-11 when the Holy Ghost came down. This is the most widely held view among Christians but it is not the correct view. Paul tells us when and where the body of Christ started, Ephesians 2:13-16, 3:1-12, and it wasn't at Pentecost. Wrong.

3. The body of Christ started when Paul got saved in Acts 9:1-20, 1 Timothy 1:15-16. This view makes sense only if we ignore Ephesians 2:16. Wrong.

4. The body of Christ started in Acts 13 when Paul began his missionary journeys to the Gentiles, being sent on his missionary adventures by the church at Syrian Antioch in Acts 13:46. Wrong.

5. The body of Christ started in Acts 18:8, in Corinth, when Paul goes to the Gentiles in ancient Achaia and Macedonia, meaning Greece. Wrong.

6. The body of Christ started in Acts 28:28, in Rome, when Paul goes to the Gentiles throughout the Roman Empire in the sense of witnessing to all who visited his hired house. Wrong.

7. The body of Christ started, not in any of the places mentioned in 2-6 above but sometime after Acts 28. Wrong. Answers 2 through 7 are wrong. How do we know that beyond doubt? We know that beyond any doubt because Ephesians 2:16 tells us when and where the one body began - *by the cross*.

16:8 - Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord.

Greet Amplias - The Greek name *Amplias* is a contraction of the Latin name, *Ampliatius*. You may recall from our earlier studies in Romans, that Latin (along with Greek) was the language of Rome, used in government, legislation and conquest, from the 8th century BC to the 5th century AD. In the NT, the Greek words for Latin are: *rōmaikos*, Luke 23:38, and *rōmaisti*, John 19:20. When you pronounce those words, it is similar to saying, Roman. When you spoke Latin in the first century AD, you were speaking *rōmaikos* or *rōmaisti* or Roman.

When Rome conquered Dalmatia, Britain, Gaul or Spain, the language Rome taught and used in those conquered provinces was Latin. Events in the NT took

place in the first century AD, therefore Latin was the language of Roman government during NT times. In the NT, it is twice written that one of the languages used in the superscription on the cross of Christ was Latin.

*“And a superscription also
was written over him (defines superscription)
in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew,
THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”
Luke 23:38*

*“And Pilate wrote a title,
and put it on the cross.
And the writing was,
JESUS OF NAZARETH
THE KING OF THE JEWS.
This title then read many of the Jews:
for the place where Jesus was crucified
was nigh to the city:
and it was written in
Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.”
John 19:19-20*

my beloved in the Lord. - *My beloved* is how God the Father described the Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 3:17 and 17:5, Mark 1:11, 9:7. In Acts 15:25, the apostolic leaders of the Jerusalem Council described Barnabas and Paul as *beloved*. In Romans 1:7, and 12:19, Paul describes every saved person in Rome as *beloved*. Paul even describes unsaved Jews as *beloved* in Romans 11:28.

Paul was closer to some of his converts and co-workers than he was to others. Some are Paul's *beloved* and some are Paul's wellbeloved. Isn't that a true representation of our own Christian experience with the brethren? Isn't that your personal life experience, that you're closer to some of your fellow Christians than to others? _____ In the sense of being saved, every believer is *beloved* of God, Romans 1:7. Paul viewed all of his converts as his *beloved* sons, 1 Corinthians 4:14-16.

16:9 - Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.

Salute Urbane, - Urbane means: of the city or urban (in the sense of: he is not a country bumpkin, he is not a good ole country boy; he is urban; Urbane is urban), he is urban or refined in his manner. Synonyms for Urbane include: affable, cosmopolitan, cultured, elegant, polished, sophisticated, suave.

our helper in Christ, - 2 Timothy lists five men by name, 2 Timothy 1:15, 2:16-17, 4:10, 16, who could have been Paul's helpers in Christ but all five refused that privilege and chose not to help Paul. With the perspective of history, we now know what fools those five were. Urbane was not a fool. He took advantage of his opportunity to work with Paul, to be a helper in Paul's ministry and God Himself saw to it that Urbane was memorialized in the Bible, Romans 16:9, for his faithful work.

and Stachys - Stachys means: a head of grain or ear of corn, fruitful, abundant, fecund - capable of producing an abundance of offspring. What characteristics and qualities made Stachys capable of producing an abundance of offspring? It may have been his can do attitude. It may have been his joyful heart. It may have been his enthusiastic approach to evangelism.

It may have been the fact that he kept a spiritual eye on the day he would stand before God at the judgment seat of Christ and give account of himself. Do you ever think about the truth that someday you will stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give account of yourself to God? _____

my beloved. - If you could travel back in time to the first century AD, would you be a co-worker with Paul, with all the strife and persecution being Paul's co-worker involved? _____ We cannot time travel but we can live for Christ here in the twenty first century. We can serve faithfully now, in our own sphere of influence. Can God trust you to serve Him where He placed you, in your particular circumstances? _____

Tradition says that Stachys was one of the seventy disciples sent by Jesus in Luke 10:1 although there isn't historical proof for that view. If that is true, then Stachys is an old man, probably as old as Paul when Paul salutes him in Romans 16:9, and has lived a long and faithful life for Christ.

16:10 - Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household.

Salute Apelles - Apelles means: exclusion or separation or to call or called. Apelles is also said to be one of the seventy disciples called by Jesus in Luke 10:1. Do you view yourself as called by God? _____ Do you think of yourself as someone who has a job to do for God? _____ It is easy to let our Christian life slide into mediocrity instead of actively serving God. Can we take a lesson from Apelles and start viewing ourselves as separated out and called by God to serve God in our generation? _____ If you do that, what will change in your life? _____

approved in Christ. - *Approved* implies that Apelles endured a great accusation or a great affliction or a difficult trial, which he successfully weathered and was therefore, *approved in Christ*. Do you view yourself as approved in Christ, because you are saved and justified by faith? _____

That every Christian is *approved in Christ* is an absolutely true doctrinal fact based on justification by faith, Romans 5:1, and sanctification by faith, Acts 26:18. No one on earth is *approved* by God unless they are in Christ. You can only get in Christ if you have received *the gift of God which is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*, Romans 6:23.

Paul packs a lot of meaning into his brief, tightly worded greetings in Romans 16. Are you saved? _____ Based on the truth that you are saved, do you live daily in the knowledge that you are *approved in Christ*? _____ I am justified by faith, Romans 5:1, I am sanctified by faith, Acts 26:18 and I am approved in Christ, Romans 16:10.

Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household. - For some reason, Paul doesn't salute or say Hello to Aristobulus himself. Instead, Paul salutes them which are of Aristobulus' household. Here are some possible explanations as to how we can understand this.

1. Aristobulus was an unsaved man, the grandson of King Herod the Great. Aristobulus died unsaved. However, some of Aristobulus' slaves got saved - *them which are of Aristobulus' household* - and the saved slaves are those whom Paul salutes. These saved slaves of Aristobulus' household had a house church which met in the house of Aristobulus.

2. This Aristobulus was a different man than Herod's grandson, and himself was not a saved man but he shared his house with people who were saved.

3. This Aristobulus was saved but had passed away and his household still existed. Even though he was gone, a house church still met in his house.

4. Aristobulus was a saved man and may have made legal arrangements, before he died, for his house to continue to be used and lived in by his fellow Christians and as a meeting place for the local church.

5. Aristobulus may have been one of Paul's converts and also one of his co-workers in Corinth. If that is true, Aristobulus may have been away from his household and doing missionary work with Paul when Paul wrote his letter to the Romans, which is why Paul didn't salute him in the letter.

Aristobulus household - This is one of seven mentions of a house church in Romans 16. Paul persecuted house churches before he got saved, Acts 8:3, and after he got saved, Paul taught the word of God from house to house, Acts 20:20. Where did Paul get that mindset? Christians were meeting in house churches before Saul got saved and Christians in house churches were persecuted by unsaved Saul, Acts 8:3, 9:1. Once he got saved, Acts 9:3-9, Saul/Paul, Acts 13:9, became a fervent planter of house churches.

*“And how I kept back nothing
that was profitable unto you,
but have shewed you, (John 16:14-15, 25, 1 Tim 4:12)
and have taught you publickly,
and from house to house,” (Acts 2:46)
Acts 20:20*

The first five mentions are house churches in Rome. **1.** 16:5 - *the church that is in their house*, **2.** 16:10 - *them which are of Aristobulus’ household*, **3.** 16:11 - *them that be of the household of Narcissus*, **4.** 16:14 - *and the brethren which are with them*, **5.** 16:15 - *and all the saints which are with them*.

The last two mentions are house churches in Corinth and Cenchrea. **6.** 16:23 - *Gaius mine host, and of the whole church* - Gaius was not just Paul’s host but was also the host of the whole church, indicating a house church was meeting in the home of Gaius. And the end note at the end of Romans chapter 16 - **7.** *Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of the church at Cenchrea*. This indicates a house church was meeting in Cenchrea.

16:11 - Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord.

Salute Herodion my kinsman. - Herodion means: heroic. Herodion is also said to be one of the seventy disciples called by Jesus in Luke 10:1. Kinsman can mean that Herodion was a cousin of Paul or it can mean simply that Herodion was a fellow saved Jew, an Israelite descended from Abraham, or a saved Gentile and therefore, a spiritual kinsman of Paul.

Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, - Narcissus means: bewildered, confounded, confused, overcome, in a state of stupefaction, as in the state of mind produced when under the influence of a narcotic plant. Narcissus hosted one of the house churches in first century Rome. His name may reflect his condition as an unsaved man before he got saved.

We do not know why Narcissus had this name with such an odd range of meaning but perhaps he was saved out of a difficult family and a difficult family situation. We remind ourselves that it doesn't matter where you came from or what difficult circumstances you've endured. God can save you and radically change you and fit you for His service no matter what you've been through, no matter where you come from, no matter if you are free born or a slave.

which are in the Lord. - Paul may have made this statement to let Roman Christians know that he was up to speed on happenings in the house churches of Rome, including: who was saved and who wasn't saved yet. Some of the folks in the household of Narcissus may have been unsaved and Paul and other Christians may have been praying for them, Romans 10:1, to get saved, and their salvation happened as a result of the prayers of believers, Romans 10:1.

16:12 - Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord.

Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, - Tryphena means: delicious, dainty, delicate and luxurious. Tryphosa means: dainty, delicate and luxurious. These are Greek names for girls, derived from a common Greek root word, τρυφή tryphē, pronounced: troo-fay' and translated, *delicately*, in Luke 7:25 and, *to riot*, in 2 Peter 2:1, because tryphē comes from another Greek root which means: to break up.

Because of the similarity of their names, some have speculated that Tryphena and Tryphosa are sisters or twin sisters. History does not provide enough information to draw that conclusion. It is also possible they were biologically unrelated women with similar names.

who labour in the Lord. - Romans 16 shows us what Paul found important in Christians with whom he was friends. Like Jesus, Paul was not in awe of buildings, Matthew 24:1-2. What impressed Paul was godly character and whole hearted service for Christ. I wonder what Jesus and Paul would think of modern Christians and their social media narcissism?

Salute the beloved Persis, - Paul says: the beloved Persis because Persis is a Christian woman, a sister in Christ. Persis means, a Persian woman. We are not told that Persis labours in the Lord. Instead, we are told that she laboured much in the Lord, in the past tense.

That seems to indicate she is an elderly Christian, still alive and still beloved but most of her labour in the Lord is in the past, which is why Paul uses the past

tense to describe her labour in the Lord. Paul is careful not to refer to Persis as my beloved, lest he give the wrong impression to his readers.

**Paul's use of beloved -
my beloved vs. the beloved**

my wellbeloved Epaenetus - a man - Romans 16:5
Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord - a man - Romans 16:8
Stachys my beloved - a man - Romans 16:9
the beloved Persis - a woman - Romans 16:12

Remember, Persis means, a Persian woman. Persian is found 2 times in the OT, in Nehemiah 12:22 and Daniel 6:28. Persia is mentioned 29 times in 25 verses in the OT. In the first century AD, there were born again, saved Persians. This is an important clue that Persians and others were being evangelized in the first century even before the NT was completed and in circulation among Christians.

which laboured much in the Lord. - Persis is still living and an honored lady among the Roman Christians when Paul salutes her but Paul describes her labour for the Lord in the past tense. That indicates she is probably up in years at the time he salutes her. At the judgment seat of Christ, when our service for Christ is rewarded, who would you rather be: Tryphena and Tryphosa who labour in the Lord or Persis who laboured much in the Lord? _____

It may be that Paul intends to contrast the young age of Tryphena and Tryphosa with the advanced age of Persis, to get the younger Christians at Rome thinking about serving God while they still have youth and health and strength and energy and desire to serve. The young ladies have their lives before them, to love and serve God. They are just getting started in their service for Christ. There is hope that they may yet measure up to the beloved Persis in their labours for Christ in the house churches of Rome.

Some people who are saved but are not Christians, and who are not obedient followers of Christ, may not labour in the Lord at all. They believed on the risen Lord Jesus Christ at some point and got saved but they never got excited about being saved. They never got excited about their sins being forgiven.

They never got excited about being justified by faith, Romans 5:1. They never got excited about being sanctified by faith, Acts 26:18. They never got enthusiastic about serving God. They never got excited about living a holy life.

The world, the flesh and the devil were always more attractive to them than the things of Christ. How does your life measure up? _____

They never got around to labouring for the Lord and certainly no one would say of them that they laboured much in the Lord. We will be honest and call their condition spiritual laziness but honesty also prevents us from calling them Christians. King Solomon didn't start out to be that kind of believer but that is where Israel's wisest king ended up, 1 Kings 11:6. By the power of the indwelling Christ, Galatians 2:20, and by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, you can live a much wiser life than King Solomon lived.

Where will you end up in your Christian life? Are you labouring for the Lord? _____ Please don't be like King Solomon. You in Christ and Christ in you should radically change the way you think and live and should positively affect the way you serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you understand this yet?

You are in Christ - Romans 8:10
Christ is in you - 2 Cor 5:17, Colossians 1:27

**Is this a daily truth
in your life?**

**I am in Christ
and Christ is in me!
All Day - Every Day - 24/7!**

16:13 - Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, - Rufus means: red or reddish or ruddy, probably describing his hair color and complexion. There are at least three redheads mentioned in the Bible, Rufus here, Esau, Genesis 25:25 and King David, 1 Samuel 16:11-13.

There is one other mention of the name Rufus in the Bible, in Mark 15:21. Simon the Cyrenian, father of Rufus, is mentioned in Matthew 27:32, Mark 15:21 and Luke 23:26.

*“And as they came out,
they found a man of Cyrene,
Simon by name:*

*him they compelled
to bear his cross.”
Matthew 27:32*

*“And they compel one
Simon a Cyrenian,
who passed by,
coming out of the country,
the father of Alexander and Rufus,
to bear his cross.”
Mark 15:21*

*“And as they led him away,
they laid hold upon
one Simon, a Cyrenian,
coming out of the country,
and on him they laid the cross,
that he might bear it after Jesus.”
Luke 23:26*

*“And he that taketh not his cross,
and followeth after me,
is not worthy of me.”
Matthew 10:38*

*“And he (Jesus) bearing his cross
went forth into a place
called the place of a skull,
which is called
in the Hebrew Golgotha:”
John 19:17*

The Rufus whom Paul salutes may be the Rufus Mark mentions in Mark 15:21 although we have no way of proving that. Because the chronology fits, I believe the Rufus Paul salutes is probably the same Rufus mentioned by Mark except that Paul's Rufus is all grown up and joyfully serving the Lord in Rome as an adult.

If it is the same Rufus, then Paul may have heard that part of the crucifixion story from Rufus or perhaps even from the elderly Simon the Cyrenian himself. Ancient Cyrene was a bustling Greek city and from 67 BC on, Cyrene was a Roman city on the North African coast, in what is present day Libya, a city which, in the first century, had a large Jewish population.

Why Did They Have To Compel Simon To Bear The Cross of Christ?

1. Simon was timid and didn't want to get involved.
2. Simon was preoccupied with the cares of this life.
3. Simon was on an errand and didn't want it interrupted.
4. Simon has no clue about the events swirling around him.
5. Simon was so inwardly focused he almost missed history's greatest event.

Are you as oblivious and obtuse as Simon?

Is Simon a great example of discipleship?

What is God's view of Simon the Cyrenian?

Are you a disciple whose service needs to be compelled?

Are you a disciple who serves Christ from a willing heart?

Rufus chosen in the Lord - Rufus is chosen in the Lord. Do you understand what Paul wrote? Rufus is chosen in the Lord. Rufus is not chosen out of the Lord or outside the Lord. Rufus was chosen when he believed on the Lord Jesus Christ and got spiritually baptized by the Spirit, no water involved, into the body of Christ, 1 Corinthians 12:13. When we read the Bible in context, no one is chosen until he is in Christ or, in the Lord. If you are not yet in Christ, if you are not yet, in the Lord, then you are not yet chosen.

Rufus was not chosen in eternity past. Rufus was not chosen before the foundation of the world. Rufus was not unconditionally elected to get saved. Rufus was not saved via irresistible grace. Please read Ephesians 1:4 and notice, no one is said to be elected to get saved before the foundation of the world. No one is said to be predestinated to get saved before the foundation of the world. No one is chosen to get saved before the foundation of the world. No one is in Christ before the foundation of the world.

The choosing of Rufus was in Christ or, in the Lord or, in Him, so the choosing of Rufus had to happen in time, not in eternity past. When Rufus believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, he got saved. When Rufus believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit baptized him spiritually, no water involved, into the body of Christ, which means that, doctrinally speaking, Rufus was in the body of Christ or in Christ or in the Lord. All of that happened in time, not in eternity past. How do we know that Rufus was not chosen in eternity past to get saved? _____

Paul isn't using the example of Rufus to teach TULIP. People sometimes get led astray by words like, *chosen*, because they read into the word, *chosen*, a meaning that *chosen* never has in actual biblical definition and in actual biblical usage. Never allow anyone to falsely define Bible words and then use their false definitions of Bible words to prove their false teaching.

The Bible is not validating the false TULIP definitions of words and TULIP false teaching simply because the Bible mentions saved and elect and chosen in the same verse. For example, Mark 13:20.

*“And except that the Lord
had shortened those days,
no flesh should be saved:
but for the elect's sake,
whom he hath chosen,
he hath shortened the days.”*
Mark 13:20

In Mark 13:20, no one's soul is getting saved from sin, hell and the wrath of God. Their flesh is getting saved from affliction. Instead of their soul getting saved, believing Jews in their fleshly bodies are getting saved from *affliction such as was not from the beginning of the creation*, Mark 13:19. In the context of Mark 13, the elect are Jews, blood descendants of Abraham, who are chosen in the sense of being biologically descended from Abraham. Bible believers understand that it is possible to be chosen by God, to be God's elect and still not be saved, Isaiah 45:4, John 6:70, Jeremiah 16:10-21, 17:1-13.

What is the difference between being chosen in eternity past and being chosen in time? Reflect upon the truth that, in eternity past, meaning, before creation, nothing existed for anything to happen to. Time begins at creation when the Lord Jesus Christ, our Creator, John 1:1-4, has already created the universe, the earth and the human race.

1. Did any human beings exist in eternity past, before the Lord Jesus Christ created everything? **a.** Yes. **b.** No. If your answer is Yes, please explain how that is possible. _____

2. In eternity past, before time began and before humans were created, did any humans exist? **a.** Yes. **b.** No. 3. Since no human beings existed in eternity past, were any human beings in Christ in eternity past? **a.** Yes. **b.** No. 4. If you were in Christ in eternity past, were you saved in eternity past? _____ 5. If you were saved in eternity past, before you existed, how did you get saved? _____ 6. How is it possible to get saved before the earth and the universe and humans

- were created? _____
7. If Adam hadn't yet been created and hadn't yet sinned, what are you being saved from in eternity past? _____
8. How is it possible to get saved before you exist and before Adam was created and before Adam fell into sin? _____
9. Since, in eternity past, Adam has not fallen and you have not been created and no one has sinned, what are you being saved from? _____
10. In eternity past, since no human beings exist and Christ has not yet come to earth and has not yet died for our sins, how can people who do not exist, get saved from sins they haven't yet committed? _____
11. According to Romans 16:13, when was Rufus chosen? **a.** Before the foundation of the world. **b.** At the time he got saved or was in him or in the Lord, meaning: in Christ. **12.** When did the choosing of Rufus happen? **a.** In eternity past. **b.** Before time began. **c.** Before the Lord Jesus Christ created everything. **d.** After time began meaning, after creation. **e.** In time, when Rufus got saved and was doctrinally, in him or in the Lord or in Christ.

In case you missed it, this truth is important to review. The choosing of Rufus was, in Him or, in Christ or, in the Lord so the choosing of Rufus had to happen in time, not in eternity past before the world began. Why? Because Rufus existed in time but Rufus didn't exist in eternity past before the world began.

When Rufus believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, he got saved. When Rufus believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit baptized him, spiritually, no water involved, into the body of Christ, which means that, doctrinally speaking, Rufus was then in him or in the body of Christ or in Christ or in the Lord. All of that happened in time. None of that happened in eternity past. Paul isn't using the example of Rufus to teach TULIP.

and his mother and mine. - It is unlikely that Rufus and Paul were brothers with the same birth mother. Nothing in the rest of the NT leads us to believe that Paul had a biological brother named Rufus. The most likely explanation for *his mother and mine* is that Rufus' mother treated Paul with kindness, as if he was her own son. This good woman is nameless for us yet eternally memorialized by Paul because of her Christian kindness. Do people remember you for your Christian kindness?

Do you remember that mom you knew in the neighborhood when you were growing up, who treated all the neighborhood kids as if they were her own? She always made room for another seat at the supper table, always had enough cookies and snacks and strawberry shortcake to go around. That seems to be

the character of Rufus' mother, a wonderful Christian lady who treated the apostle Paul and many others, with kindness, as if they were her own children.

The family of Simon the Cyrenian and his wife and their sons had a positive impact, a blessed impact, an eternal impact on the great apostle. When you're treating people with Christian kindness, you never know how far that kindness will be felt, even twenty five years down the road.

16:14 - Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them.

Salute Asyncritus, - The names in this verse and in v. 15 are found in ancient Roman inscriptions related to Caesar's household. These may be the names of people, possibly slaves, possibly freed slaves, whom Paul personally led to Christ during one or more of his imprisonments, Philippians 1:13, 4:22, *in prisons more frequent*, 2 Corinthians 6:5, 11:23.

Remember that Philippians is one of Paul's four prison epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon), written while he was in prison. Along with Andronicus and Junia, Romans 16:7, Paul was one of the pioneers of Christian prison ministry.

*“So that my bonds in Christ
are manifest in all the palace,
and in all other places;”
Philippians 1:13*

*“All the saints salute you,
chiefly they that are
of Caesar's household.”
Philippians 4:22*

Roman Catholicism teaches that the five men listed by name in Romans 16:14 were part of the seventy disciples Jesus called and sent in Luke 10:2. Based on the inscriptions relating these names to Caesar's household, it is more likely these men were not part of the seventy in Luke 10:1, and were not bishops of the areas we will list below. Instead, they are personal converts of the apostle Paul, led to Christ while Paul was imprisoned.

Asyncritus is a man's name, which means: without compare or incomparable. He is said to have been one of the seventy disciples whom Jesus called, Luke 10:1. We have no way of knowing if that is true but chronologically, it is possible.

If true, Asyncritus would have been in his late 40s or older, when Paul salutes him here in Romans. This name occurs only here in the NT.

Phlegon, - This is a man's name and means: burning. It occurs only here in the NT. Phlegon is also said to have been one of the seventy disciples called and sent by Jesus in Luke 10:1.

Hermas, - Hermas, pronounced hair-mas' is the Greek name of a man and is sometimes spelled, Hermes. He was the fleet footed messenger of the gods. Hermas occurs only here in the NT. The Romans called Hermas Mercury, their god of financial gain, commerce, eloquence, messages, communication (including divination), travelers, boundaries, luck, trickery, and thieves and the guide of souls to the underworld. Hermas is a variation of Hermes, below.

Patrobas, - This is a Roman name for a man, made by joining the Latin word, pater (meaning, father) and the Syriac word, abba, (meaning, daddy) Patrobas means: daddy or papa or fatherly or paternal. Patrobas is said by some to be one of the seventy in Luke 10:1. This name occurs only here in the NT.

Hermes, - This is a Greek name for a man, pronounced, hair-mace' - of which Hermas above, is a variation. They are similar names with a slightly different pronunciation, hair-mas' and hair-mace'. Hermes is also said to be one of the seventy whom Jesus chose and sent in Luke 10:1. This name occurs twice in the NT. Remember that the people of Lystra thought Paul was Mercury/Mercurius/Hermes in Acts 14:12.

and the brethren which are with them. - *the brethren* - These may be people of another house church in first century Rome, led by the five men Paul lists. Catholic tradition says all five of the men listed by name in Romans 16:14 were part of the seventy chosen in Luke 10:1 and were also bishops.

Asyncritus - Bishop of Hrycania,
Phlegon - Bishop of Marathon
Hermas - Bishop of Phillipi,
Patrobas - Bishop of Puteoli
Hermes - Bishop of Dalmatia.

It seems unlikely that these men were bishops of the far-flung, distant and remote places listed since all of them were in Rome, working with a house church in Rome - *and the brethren which are with them* - when Paul wrote his letter to the Romans.

16:15 - Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them.

Salute Philologus, - This is a Greek name for a man. It means: lover of the Word, lover of words, lover of learning, argumentative, learned. Tradition says Philologus was one of the seventy chosen by Jesus in Luke 10:1. This name occurs only here in the NT.

This list of names reminds us that God knows us today just like He knew these people two thousand years ago. He knows our names, he knows our triumphs and our tragedies, our sorrows and our struggles, our faith and our fears, our friends, families and co-workers. He even knows where we live and where we work and where we vacation. We can always trust the God who knows us, whose *workmanship* we are, Ephesians 2:10, and in whose image He is sanctifying us day by glorious day, Acts 26:18.

As we read these names, it also helps to remind ourselves that, while Paul had not yet visited Rome, he personally knew many people in the house churches at Rome, because he had led them to Christ or had personally disciplined them in his prison ministry and in his missionary ministry throughout the Roman Empire.

If the apostle Peter himself had ever been in Rome, Paul knew him, Acts 15:1-10, Galatians 1:18, 2:11, and surely Paul would have Greeted or Saluted Peter in this list of greetings to prominent Christians in Rome, if Peter had been the founding pastor and presiding elder of the Roman church.

and Julia, - The name, Julia, is a Roman name. It means, soft-haired, and is the name of a woman. The masculine form of this name is, Julius, found in Acts 27:1, 3. Some assert that Philologus and Julia were husband and wife, although we know of nothing in the historical accounts of first century Rome which proves the assertion. That Paul greets Julia by name indicates she was a serious Christian who made a godly impression on the apostle Paul. This name is used only here in the NT.

Nereus, and his sister, - Nereus is a Greek name and means, a lump. You may recall a character on the Leave It To Beaver TV show who was named Lumpy and a character in Disney's Winnie The Pooh movies who was named Lumpy. In Greek mythology, Nereus was also a sea god, the son of Gaia (the earth mother), so that may also be the origin of this man's name. Nereus is mentioned only here in the NT. His sister is unknown to history except for her mention here. Because Paul greets her, she was probably a Christian and probably, along with her brother Nereus, one of the leaders of a Roman house church.

and Olympas, - Olympas is a Greek proper masculine noun and therefore, a name for a man. It means: heavenly or sent from heaven or descended from heaven or, of Mount Olympus. Olympas is a shortened form of Olympiodorus, which means, gift of Olympas. Mount Olympus was the highest mountain in Greece and was believed to be the home of the twelve Greek gods. Olympas is viewed by the Greek Orthodox Church as being one of the seventy disciples called by Jesus in Luke 10:1-2. The name Olympas occurs only here in the NT.

and all the saints which are with them. - The mention of these names and *all that saints which are with them* implies separate groups of believers who comprised individual house churches in ancient Rome. These may be members of another house church in Rome. Some of the leaders are listed by name and the rest of the house church is, *all the saints which are with them*.

16:16 - Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

Salute one another with an holy kiss. - An holy kiss means just that, an holy kiss. This isn't a sensual sexual kiss or an, I love you and want to marry you, kiss. It is a public greeting between brethren in Christ without being embarrassing or licentious or romantic or sexual. This kiss was men with men and women with women. In the NT, the holy kiss is also mentioned in 1 Corinthians 16:20, 2 Corinthians 13:12, 1 Thessalonians 5:26, 1 Peter 5:14.

The churches of Christ salute you. - Sometimes the salute or salutation is not an holy kiss. When Paul writes, *the churches of Christ salute you*, there are not two kissing lines with everyone kissing each other. This is not people blowing air kisses. Saluting and greeting one another is not always the same greeting.

Sometimes the salute is a greeting in writing, as here in Romans 16:16, and sometimes when Greeting or Saluting someone in person, the greeting is an holy kiss, which is a brief kiss on one or both cheeks. And sometimes, the salute or greeting is a written greeting in a letter without *an holy kiss*.

The churches of Christ - The Bible never mentions the denomination known as the Church of Christ. In Romans 16:16, Paul is not giving us the name of a denomination, the Church Of Christ. The Church of Christ is a relatively recent group which started in the early 1800s (1801-1803), in Cane Ridge, Kentucky.

They are infamous because they add water baptism by immersion into the biblical gospel, making their water baptism gospel an unbiblical, ungodly, accursed by God, false gospel, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, 16:22, Galatians 1:7-9. The

Bible never says, the Church Of Christ, singular, in Romans 16:16, as if it is talking about the modern denomination known as the Church Of Christ.

Paul says, the churches of Christ, using the plural, not referring to the modern denomination but instead, referring to the churches Paul and his missions team started all over Asia and Macedonia and Achaia and Attica. None of the churches Paul started ever taught that water baptism was necessary for salvation. We know that Paul wasn't the founder of the Church of Christ denomination because of what Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 1:14-18.

Does 1 Corinthians 1:14-18 indicate that water baptism is essential for salvation? _____ Paul doesn't use just one name for the churches he started. He uses many names for the churches he started because that is what the Holy Ghost told him to do, 2 Peter 1:21, 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Paul did not start the denomination of false teachers known as the Church of Christ.

Paul isn't telling us that churches back then used the name, Church Of Christ and Paul isn't telling us modern churches must use the name, Church of Christ. The issue isn't the particular name of individual local churches even though the relatively recent denomination known as the Church of Christ tries to make that the issue.

They claim their church is the true church restored (so they call it the Restoration Movement or the Stone Movement or the Campbell Movement or the Stone-Campbell Movement). They claim the Bible mentions them by name. Does Paul, in Romans 16:16, mention the Church of Christ by name? _____ If you answered Yes, please read it again and try to get the right answer this time.

Bible Believers will go to Romans 16:16 and carefully read the verse. How many times does Romans 16:16 mention the Church of Christ? **a.** One time. **b.** Two times. **c.** Three times. **d.** Four times. **e.** Romans 16:16 never mentions the Church of Christ.

Does Romans 16:16 ever mention the Church of Christ. **a.** Yes. **b.** No. If you answered Yes, please read Romans 16:16 again, slowly and carefully this time and as many times as it takes until you get it right. Please read it out loud slowly and carefully. Romans 16:16 never mentions, the Church of Christ.

The real issue isn't the name of the church. The real issue is the doctrines the church teaches. If a church teaches false doctrine about salvation, by adding water baptism to the gospel, making their gospel a false and accursed gospel, and then calls itself the Church of Christ, using the name, Church of Christ,

doesn't sanctify the false teaching about baptismal regeneration - getting saved by getting immersed in water. Water baptism is not essential for salvation.

The Church of Christ teaches that you contact the blood of Christ in the waters of the baptismal pool, whether the water is in a bathtub or a stock tank or a baptistry or a creek or a stream or a pond or a river or one of the Great Lakes or the Gulf of Mexico. Church of Christ people teach that once you get saved, you can still lose your salvation but if you do lose your salvation, oddly enough, they believe you don't have to get re-baptized by immersion in water in order to get re-saved or to get saved again or born again again.

Christians who follow the risen Lord Jesus Christ are referred to as followers of the way. Later, after Paul gets saved and begins writing his epistles, churches are given different names, as shown in the list below. Church is mentioned 77 times in 76 verses in the NT while Churches are mentioned 37 times in 36 verses in the NT including the following. In the NT, the church is not the building. The church is the people who are saved, the body of Christ, the called out assembly.

What churches are called in the New Testament

my church - Matthew 16:18

the church - Matthew 18:17

the church - Acts 2:47, 5:11, 8:1, 3, Eph 5:23

this way - Acts 9:2, 22:4

that way - Acts 19:9, 23, 24:22

the way - Acts 24:14

the church which was in Jerusalem - Acts 11:22

the church that was at Antioch - Acts 13:1

the church at Caesarea - Acts 18:22

the church at Ephesus - Acts 20:17

the church of God - Acts 20:28

the church which is at Cenchrea - Romans 16:1

the church of God which is at Corinth - 1 Cor 1:2, 2 Cor 1:1

the church of God - 1 Cor 10:32, 11:22, 15:9, Gal 1:13

the church, Which is his body - Ephesians 1:22-23

a glorious church - Ephesians 5:27

the churches of the Gentiles - Romans 16:4
the churches of Christ - Romans 16:16
the churches of God - 1 Cor 11:16, 2 Thess 1:4
all churches of the saints - 1 Corinthians 14:33
the churches of Galatia - 1 Cor 16:1, Galatians 1:2
the churches of Judaea - Galatians 1:22, 1 Thess 2:14
the churches of Asia - 1 Cor 16:19, Revelation 1:11
the churches of Macedonia - 2 Corinthians 8:1

1. Given that the NT has multiple names for churches, is it legitimate for churches who call themselves the Church of Christ to criticize churches which don't call themselves the Church of Christ? **a.** Yes. **b.** No.
2. Is the term, the churches of Christ, just another name for the church of God, Acts 20:28? **a.** Yes. **b.** No.
3. If a church doesn't call itself the Church of Christ, does that mean it is a false and illegitimate church, **a.** Yes. **b.** No.
4. What determines if a church is a false and illegitimate church. **a.** The name the church uses. **b.** The color of the carpet in the auditorium. **c.** The size of the church building. **d.** The doctrines the church teaches. **e.** The size of the congregation.

16:17 - Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

In Romans 16:17, the Bible has great wisdom about false teachers and their false teaching, for us, if we have enough spiritual common sense to pay attention to it. God wants His Christians and His church to be healthy. A church that puts up with and tolerates false teachers and their false doctrine is an unhealthy church. Let's approach this important verse and these important instructions with an accurate look at the context of Romans 16:17. Pay attention to Dr. Paul, 2 Thessalonians 2:15, 3:6. Here is the context.

1. Paul has 25 years experience as a soul winning church/planting missionary.
 2. Paul has 25 years of experience winning souls everywhere he goes.
 3. Paul has 25 years of experience planting strong evangelistic churches.
 4. Paul has 25 years of experience training pastors to be disciples of Jesus.
 5. Paul has 25 years of experience dealing with problems in new churches.
 6. Paul has 25 years of experience teaching baby Christians to follow Jesus.

7. Paul has 25 years of experience dealing with false teachers.
8. Paul is writing to the church at Rome as a 25 year experienced leader.
9. The wisdom in Romans 16:17 is based on 25 years of experience.
10. The wisdom in Romans 16:17 is given by inspiration of God.
11. The wisdom Paul gives in Romans 16:17 works if we will follow it.

*“Then understood they
how that he bade them not
beware of the leaven of bread,
but of the doctrine
of the Pharisees and
of the Sadducees.”
Jesus - Matthew 16:12*

*“For I know this,
that after my departing
shall grievous wolves
enter in among you,
not sparing the flock.
Also of your own selves
shall men arise,
speaking perverse things,
to draw away disciples after them.
Therefore watch,
and remember,
that by the space of three years
I ceased not to warn every one
night and day with tears.”
Paul - Acts 20:29-31*

*“Look to yourselves,
that we lose not
those things which we have wrought,
but that we receive a full reward.
Whosoever transgresseth,
and abideth not
in the doctrine of Christ,
hath not God.
He that abideth
in the doctrine of Christ,
he hath both the Father and the Son.
If there come any unto you,
and bring not this doctrine,*

*receive him not into your house,
neither bid him God speed:
For he that biddeth him God speed
is partaker of his evil deeds.”*
John - 2 John 8-11

False doctrine and false teachers are a big deal to God. God views them as committing evil deeds when they teach their false doctrine. God tells us to reject and not receive false teachers - *receive him not into your house neither bid him God speed*. Don't even wish him Good Luck or say, God bless you. God speed is expressing good wishes to someone starting a journey. God forbids us to express good wishes to false teachers. If you wish him well, God says, You are partaker of his evil deeds. Listen to God. Do not be *partaker of his evil deeds*.

Is Good Doctrine Important?

I give you good doctrine - Proverbs 4:2
Jesus taught doctrine - Mark 11:18, 12:38, John 7:16
Beware the doctrine of Pharisees and Sadducees - Matthew 16:12
Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine - Acts 5:28
Obeyed from the heart that doctrine delivered to you - Romans 6:17
Teach no other doctrine - 1 Timothy 1:3
Nourished up in the words of faith, and of good doctrine - 1 Tim 4:6
False teachers and false doctrine stunt your growth - Revelation 2:14-15
Our doctrine should not be *doctrines of devils* - 1 Timothy 4:1
Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine - 1 Timothy 4:16
Double honour to elders who labor in word and doctrine - 1 Timothy 5:17
Don't blaspheme the name of God and his doctrine - 1 Timothy 6:1
False doctrine is not according to godliness - 1 Timothy 6:3
The written scriptures are for doctrine - 2 Timothy 3:16
Some will not *endure sound doctrine* - 2 Timothy 4:3-4
The things *which become sound doctrine* - Titus 2:1
Doctrine should not be corrupt - Titus 2:7

Why is false doctrine wrong?

Because - *Thou shalt not bear false witness.* - OT - Exodus 20:16
Because - *Keep thee far from a false matter.* - Exodus 23:7
Because - *I hate every false way.* - Psalm 119:104, 128
Because - *God hates A false witness that speaketh lies* - Proverbs 6:19
Because - *A false witness shall not be unpunished* - Proverbs 19:5

Because - *A false witness shall perish* - Proverbs 21:28
Because - False visions come from deceitful hearts - Jeremiah 14:14
Because - God is against the lies of false prophets - Jeremiah 23:32
Because - Jesus said: *Beware of false prophets* - Matthew 7:15
Because - Jesus said: Teaching the comds of men - Matthew 15:8-9
Because - *Thou shalt not bear false witness* - NT - Matthew 19:18
Because - *Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many* - Mt 24:11
Because - *some shall depart from the faith* - 1 Timothy 4:1
Because - false doctrine comes from *devils* - 1 Timothy 4:1
Because - *There shall be false teachers among you* - 2 Peter 2:1

How To Deal With False Doctrine

Don't believe it.
Don't spread it.
Don't support it financially.
Don't think you can plead ignorance.
Don't think that you can be neutral about it.
Don't think that God expects nothing of you.
Don't fail this test of your Christian character.
You cannot love truth and tolerate false teaching.
If you don't hate false teaching, you don't love truth.

How To Deal With False Teachers

Reject them.
Reject their music.
Reject their books.
Reject their leading.
Reject their influence.
Reject their authority.
Reject their ministries.
Reject their teachings.
Reject their appeals for money.
Reject their "Bible" Conferences.

Romans 16:17, one of the most ignored verses in the Bible, is Paul's warning to Christians at Rome (and a warning to all of us) - *Now I beseech you, brethren*. In a similar way, Acts 20:29-31 is Paul's warning to Christians at Ephesus (and a warning to all of us), Acts 20:17. Paul warned the Ephesian Christians *night and day with tears* for three years, about grievous wolves and false teachers. We know how important this was to Paul by the length of time, three years, that he spent warning Christians at Ephesus, about false teachers.

The three years of warning the church at Ephesus is because Paul spent a lot of time in Ephesus. There were false teachers teaching false doctrine in the churches even during the lifetime of Paul. At the time Paul wrote Romans, he had not yet visited Rome yet he warned the Roman Christians against false teachers and false doctrine. Doctrine is important to God and for that reason, doctrine should be important to every Christian. The first purpose of the scriptures is *doctrine*, 2 Timothy 3:15-17.

As Christians, we have great responsibilities before God. God expects a lot of us and He expects us to do what He tells us to do in the Bible. 1. Does that truth resonate with your spiritual common sense? _____ 2. Does Paul specifically address Romans 16:17 only to pastors? _____ 3. Based on how Romans 16:17 is worded, to whom is Paul directing his instructions? _____ 4. Is Romans 16:17 directed toward Christians in general? _____ Why? _____

5. Does Paul encourage us to be neutral about false teachers? _____ 6. Does Paul encourage us to befriend false teachers in hopes of changing their minds? _____ 7. Does Paul encourage us to make false teachers welcome in our churches? _____ 8. Does Paul encourage us to let false teachers preach and teach in our churches so that we will know what they believe? _____

9. Is it okay to teach the false teachings of false teachers as long as we resist and reject false teachers? _____ Why? _____
Christ died for false prophets and false teachers, 2 Peter 2:1. Because false teachers preach and teach their false doctrines, their delusions, their false teachings and their heresies instead of teaching the Bible according to truth, here's what the Bible tells Christians to do.

Romans 16:17 - Bible Commands About False Teachers

1. Identify them as false teachers.
2. Mark them as false teachers.

3. Avoid them because they are false teachers.

**How we should deal
with false teachers
and their false teaching**

Identify them as false teachers
Resist them as false teachers
Reject them as false teachers
Resist their false teachings
Reject their false teachings
Resist their false prophecies
Reject their false prophecies
Resist their false Christianity
Reject their false Christianity
Resist their false apostleship
Reject their false apostleship
Resist their fake Christian music
Reject their fake Christian music
Resist their false teaching on websites
Reject their false teaching on websites.
Resist their false teaching on podcasts
Reject their false teaching on podcasts.
Resist their false teaching in printed books
Reject their false teaching in printed books.
Resist their false teaching in “Bible” Conferences
Reject their false teaching in “Bible” Conferences

Why? Because false teachers:

1. Cause divisions between Christians
2. Put obstacles in the way of truth
3. Destroy the faith of baby Christians
4. Cause dissensions, strife and hindrances
5. Make others fall away from Christian faith
6. Lead others into sin - 2 Timothy 3:1-8
7. Deny and Defy God's revealed truth
8. They are deceivers - Romans 16:18
9. They make the way of truth evil spoken of - 2 Peter 2:2

16:17 - Now I beseech you, brethren, - Paul writes, *I beseech you*, eleven times in the NT, Romans 12:1, 15:30, 16:17, 1 Corinthians 1:10, 4:16, 16:15, 2 Corinthians 2:8, 10:2, Galatians 4:12, Hebrews 13:19, 22. *Beseech*, as used here means: to beg, to implore, to exhort, to instruct. Paul is saying, This is how you must deal with false teachers and their false teaching. This is instruction for the local church led by a male pastor who loves and obeys God. This is not instruction about how to treat baby Christians. This is not contradicting Romans 14-15, about how to treat weak Christians.

Romans 6:17 and 16:17 are related. We can put this warning from Paul in context by remembering that Paul wrote to the Romans from Corinth, a city where Christians were beset by false doctrines and false teachers and false apostles and false prophets and false charismatic gifts, all of which wreaked havoc on the young Christians. Wreaked havoc means: to cause devastating damage.

Paul is talking to Roman Christians in the house churches of Rome - *brethren* - who are saved and born again. Paul is warning Roman Christians about false teachers because they are too open to false teaching and too tolerant of false teaching. Are you tolerant of false teaching? _____ Christians are often too mush-minded to publicly confront and reject false teachers and false teaching. Please don't be a mush-minded Christian.

**Don't Be Deceived By
*seducing spirits and
doctrines of devils*
1 Timothy 4:1**

false miracle workers - Exodus 7:8-10
false miracles - Exodus 7:11-12
false prophets - OT - 1 Kings 22:6, Matt 7:15, 24:11
a lying spirit - 1 Kings 22:19-23
false prophecies - OT - 1 Kings 22:11-12
false witnesses - OT - Ex 20:16, Ps 27:12, 35:11
false gifts - Prov 25:14
false visions - Jeremiah 14:14
false dreams - Jeremiah 23:32, Zechariah 10:2
false burdens - Lamentations 2:14
false divinations - Ezekiel 21:23
false prophets - NT - Matthew 7:15
false witnesses - NT - Mark 10:19, 14:56-57

false accusations - Luke 19:8
a false Jesus - 2 Cor 11:4, Rev 6:1-2
a false spirit - 2 Cor 11:4
a false gospel - 2 Cor 11:4
false apostles - 2 Cor 11:13
false ministers - 2 Cor 11:15
false brethren - 2 Cor 11:26, Gal 2:4
seducing spirits & devils - 1 Timothy 4:1
false prophets/false teachers - NT - 2 Peter 2:1-3
false Christians - 1 John 2:19

False Teachers Are Skillful Actors Who Sometimes Exhibit

False Piety - Luke 18:11-12
False Sorrow - 2 Corinthians 7:10
False Holiness - John 8:33
False Humility - John 8:41
False Generosity - Mark 12:42-43
False Repentance - Jer 3:10, Matt 3:7-9
False Vulnerability
False Transparency

mark them which cause divisions and offences - The long list of things that are false shows us that Satan is active in the Christian realm and the religious realm. Is the Bible clear about the false religious influences we all must recognize and resist? _____ Just because they call themselves Christians doesn't mean they are Christians. Just because they call themselves ministers or preachers or pastors or prophets or apostles doesn't mean they are ministers or preachers or pastors or prophets or apostles. There are lots of fakes.

*“(For many walk,
of whom I have told you often,
and now tell you even weeping,
that they are the enemies
of the cross of Christ:
Whose end is destruction,
whose God is their belly,
and whose glory is in their shame,
who mind earthly things.)”*
Philippians 3:18

Just because they call themselves a church doesn't mean they are a biblical church or a Christian church. Learn to exercise spiritual discernment based on what the Bible says in context. Don't automatically accept whatever religious people say as if it is truth. Use critical thinking and compare what they say and what they do to what the NT says in context. Search out the facts, Acts 17:11.

Before you can *mark them which cause divisions and offences*, you have to identify them. To identify them, you have to know what the Bible says in context so you will know if what they are teaching is false or not, Acts 17:11. In the context of Paul's ministry and the Christians Paul led to Christ and worked with in ministry, those Christians had to have learned doctrine about the Lord Jesus Christ and salvation doctrine and Bible doctrine and grace doctrine and NT church doctrine from Paul.

In plainer words, people whom Paul probably taught personally, people who should have known better, were teaching false doctrine and causing trouble for Paul's churches and Paul's converts and Paul warns Christians in Rome against them.

divisions - This Greek word is used only three times in the NT, always by Paul, Romans 16:17 - translated, *divisions*, 1 Corinthians 3:3 - translated, *divisions*, Galatians 5:20 - translated, *seditions*. *Divisions* are arguments, disagreements, infighting, seditions (inciting people to rebel against authority) and strife between Christians in the local church. These *divisions* are over the doctrines taught by Christians who evangelized in Rome, Romans 16:17, and by Paul and the people Paul trained, so the *divisions* are over the false doctrine and false teaching of grievous wolves and troublemakers.

*“For I know this,
that after my departing
shall grievous wolves
enter in among you,
not sparing the flock.
Also of your own selves
shall men arise,
speaking perverse things,
to draw away disciples after them.”
Acts 20:29-30*

The people causing *divisions* are not the Christians who believe and teach what Paul believed and taught. *Divisions* are caused by false teachers and divisions are also their modus operandi - their method of pursuing power. They intend to use doctrinal divisions to divide and conquer congregations and take over

churches - *to draw away disciples after them*. There were men in the first century churches who pursued power even if it meant going against what Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, had taught them.

and offences - The Greek word σκάνδαλον skandalon, pronounced skan'-dal-on, occurs 15 times in 13 verses in the NT. The offences referred to here are scandals over false doctrinal beliefs, scandals over false teaching. This word is used by Paul six of the 15 times it occurs in the NT and is translated: Romans 9:33 - *rock of offence*, Romans 11:9 - *stumblingblock*, Romans 14:13 - *occasion to fall*, Romans 16:17 - *offences*, 1 Corinthians 1:23 - *stumblingblock*, Galatians 5:11 - *the offence (of the cross)*.

*“Be sober, be vigilant;
because your adversary the devil,
as a roaring lion, walketh about,
seeking whom he may devour:
Whom resist stedfast in the faith,
knowing that the same afflictions
are accomplished in your brethren
that are in the world.”
1 Peter 5:8*

Offences over false doctrine and false teaching caused scandals in first century churches. False doctrine and false teachers are major issues for genuine Bible believing churches. Religious grifter churches are not as troubled by false teaching and false teachers. Instead, they get upset when Christians stand up for God's truth and preachers preach God's truth. Satan has managed to flip the issue so that Christians who believe and stand for God's truth are now perceived as being the ones causing *divisions and offences*.

This brings up the interesting fact that many professing Christians are not offended by false doctrine and false teachers. They ignore Romans 16:17-19 and 1 Peter 5:8-9. It reveals the sad state of the church and the apostasy (the falling away from the faith), of many professing Christians.

Sadly, false teachers and their false teaching are not offensive to many Christians but opposition to false teachers and their false teaching is offensive to many professing Christians, Matthew 16:23, 18:7, Luke 17:1. On the topic of offences, many professing Christians join the argument on the side of false teachers and against Jesus. How can that be corrected? _____

How to identify, mark and reject false teachers

A. By knowing what the Bible says. *"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."* Isaiah 8:20

B. By walking in the Spirit. *"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."* Galatians 5:16

C. By obeying the leading of the Holy Spirit. *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."* Romans 8:14

D. By rejecting false teachers and their false teaching, as God instructs us. *"A man that is an heretick, after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."* Titus 3:10-11

False teachers *cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned*. That includes the NT grace doctrine that Paul taught and Paul's followers learned, 1 Corinthians 11:1. False teachers are self-condemned. If you are a first century Christian who learned Bible doctrine from the apostle Paul, don't be foolish enough to kick Paul and the doctrine he taught you to the curb and then follow a false teacher.

Focus on believing, memorizing and obeying 2 Timothy 2:15 when you read your Bible. Learn to see the difference between truth and error. Learn to rightly divide the word of truth. If you refuse to learn doctrine, if you refuse to learn what the Bible says in context, if you refuse to rightly divide the word of truth, you will always be susceptible to being led astray by false teachers.

Some Christians are easily fooled by a pleasant smile and positive thinking platitudes. To avoid being fooled, focus on **1.** knowing *doctrine*, 1 Timothy 4:13-16, and **2.** *knowing truth*, John 8:31-32, and **3.** learning to *walk in the Spirit*, Galatians 5:16, and **4.** *walking in truth*, 3 John 4. Those are your best defenses against false teaching.

*"Whom shall he teach knowledge?
and whom shall he make
to understand doctrine?
them that are weaned from the milk,
and drawn from the breasts."*

Isaiah 28:9

*“All scripture is given
by inspiration of God,
and is profitable for doctrine,
for reproof, for correction,
for instruction in righteousness:”
2 Timothy 3:16*

contrary to the doctrine - If you are not interested in Bible doctrine, your Christianity is deficient and you need to get in the scriptures. Not everything that claims to be Christianity is real Christianity. Not everyone who claims to be a Christian is a real Christian. Someone taught Christian doctrine and Pauline doctrine to the Romans. They obeyed, from the heart, *that form of doctrine which was delivered* to them and they got saved. Paul reminds Roman Christians where they came from, spiritually speaking, in Romans 6:17.

In the mid-first century AD, there were people who claimed to be Christian, who claimed to be teaching Christian doctrine but they were frauds and liars. They were false teachers teaching false doctrine, contrary to Paul’s doctrine. Paul warns Roman Christians not to be fooled by false teachers and their false doctrine.

*“But God be thanked,
that ye were the servants of sin,
but ye have obeyed
from the heart
that form of doctrine
which was delivered you.”
Romans 6:17*

The mark of false teachers is that they teach things contrary to Christian doctrine and contrary to Paul’s doctrine, which is really Christ’s doctrine. Paul’s doctrine didn’t originate in the mind of the apostle Paul. Paul’s doctrine originated in the mind of God and was revealed to Paul by God, so that he could write it down so that they could know it and we can know it. Here’s how that process works in the Bible.

1. Deuteronomy 29:29 - God reveals it so we can obey it
2. 1 Samuel 3:7, 21 - the word of the LORD comes by revelation
3. 2 Samuel 7:27 - God reveals His plan and His will
4. Isaiah 53:1 - to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed
5. Daniel 2:19, 2:29-30, 10:1 - God reveals it

6. Matthew 16:17 - flesh and blood hath not revealed it
7. Luke 2:26 - revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost
8. 2 Corinthians 12:7 - the abundance of the revelations
9. Ephesians 3:5-7 - Now revealed... by the Spirit

What is doctrine? In the Bible, doctrine is teaching about the things of God, including doctrinal, ethical, moral and spiritual instruction. Doctrine is truths that God intends us to know, truths about God that accord with reality, truths that declare the will of God as revealed in scripture, truths that help us believe on Christ and get saved.

The word, doctrine, occurs 51 times in 50 verses in the King James Bible, 6 times in the OT and 45 times in the NT. Based on the way doctrine is presented in the Bible, God designed Bible doctrine to be: 1. available, 2. knowable, 3. understandable, 4. profitable, 5. propagable (meaning, communicable and teachable and spreadable), 2 Timothy 2:2.

Examples of false teachers in Paul's day.

A. Bar-jesus a false prophet aka, Elymas the sorcerer - Acts 13:4-12

People like this are not necessarily in the church. They are friends of leaders or in close proximity to the church. From that vantage point, they attempt to subvert Christian truth and keep people from Christ. They sometimes describe themselves as spiritual but not religious or spiritual but not Christian. Their alleged spirituality is nothing but Satanic darkness.

1. Tried to turn away Sergius Paulus from the faith - Acts 13:8
2. Full of all subtilty and all mischief - Acts 13:10
3. Thou child of the devil - Acts 13:10
4. Enemy of all righteousness - Acts 13:10
5. Perverting the right ways of the Lord - Acts 13:10
6. Struck blind by Paul for a season - Acts 13:11
7. This is the doctrine of the Lord - Acts 13:12

B. Certain men from Judea - Acts 15:1ff

People like this are in the church and are often church leaders. They use their position of leadership to teach false doctrine and subvert faith in the truth of the

Bible and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation. They may give lip service to the grace of God but in reality, they are religious legalists, fixated on OT law keeping and salvation by works while they oppose the grace of God in Christ.

1. They taught salvation by circumcision - Romans 3:20
2. Be circumcised after the manner of Moses - Acts 15:1
3. Command them to keep the law of Moses - Acts 15:5
4. Keeping the law is a yoke on the neck - Acts 15:10
5. Grace is better than OT law - Acts 15:11
6. Trying to keep the law troubles people - Acts 15:19
7. Law keeping troubles & subverts the soul - Acts 15:24
8. No law keeping = rejoicing and consolation - Acts 15:31
9. No law keeping = established in the faith - Acts 16:4-5

C. Perverters of the gospel of Christ - Galatians 1:6-9

It is a perversion of the gospel of Christ when anyone adds anything to the gospel as a requirement for salvation. People who do that are not real Christians because: **a.** they reject what real Christians believe about grace and salvation and the gospel, and, **b.** they cling to legalism and law keeping, rituals and rules. **c.** They cling to OT law, which ended when Christ died on the cross, Matthew 27:50, Hebrews 9:15-17, **d.** instead of trusting God and embracing NT salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

1. They trouble real Christians - Galatians 1:7
2. They preach another gospel - let him be accursed - Galatians 1:9
3. They preach another gospel - let him be accursed - Galatians 1:10
4. Never preach a gospel of works - Galatians 1:11
5. Peter's hypocrisy about the law - Galatians 2:11-13
6. Peter's false practice harmed others - Galatians 2:13-14
7. Cannot mix law or human works with gospel - Galatians 2:16
8. The purpose and end of the law - Galatians 3:22-25

D. False teachers in Ephesus - 1 Timothy 1:1-4, 7, 10, 19-20, 4:1

1. Charge some that they teach no other doctrine - 1 Tim 1:1-4
2. Desiring to be teachers of the law - 1 Tim 1:7
3. Any other thing contrary to sound doctrine - 1 Tim 1:9-10
4. Follow righteousness, godliness, faith, love - 1 Tim 6:11

5. Keep and avoid - 1 Tim 6:20-21
6. Depart from the faith... seducing spirits - 1 Tim 4:1
7. Forbidding to marry - 1 Tim 4:3
8. Commanding to abstain from meats - 1 Tim 4:3
9. Jesus died for all - 1 Tim 2:4-6, 4:9-10
10. Take heed unto thyself and the doctrine - 1 Tim 4:16
11. Double honour, labour in word and doctrine - 1 Tim 5:17
12. Servants honour your masters - 1 Tim 6:1-3

E. False teachers at the end of Paul's life - 2 Timothy 2:18

1. Shun profane and vain babblings - 2 Tim 2:14-19
2. These also resist the truth - 2 Tim 3:8
3. Men of corrupt minds - 2 Tim 3:8
4. Reprobate concerning the faith - 2 Tim 3:8
5. They will not endure sound doctrine - 2 Tim 4:3
6. Heap to themselves teachers - 2 Tim 4:3
7. Shall turn away their ears from the truth - 2 Tim 4:4
8. Shall be turned unto fables - 2 Tim 4:4
9. Demas hath forsaken me - 2 Tim 4:10
10. Having loved this present world - 2 Tim 4:10
11. Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil - 2 Tim 4:14
12. He hath greatly withstood our words - 2 Tim 4:15
13. At my first answer no man stood with me - 2 Tim 4:16
14. All men forsook me - 2 Tim 4:16

the doctrine which ye have learned; - Romans 16:17 refers to the doctrine you *have learned* from the people who led you to Christ, doctrine you learned from Paul and from the men and women whom Paul taught, 2 Timothy 1:13, 2:2, Acts 18:24-28. You shouldn't be listening to and learning false doctrine from Judaizers, legalistic false teachers who try to put you back under OT law, Galatians 3:10, 1 Timothy 1:5-7. For us in the twenty first century, we say: Don't listen to or financially support false teachers online and on YouTube.

Anyone who tries to put you under the law, 1 Timothy 1:7, Romans 13:10, doesn't know the law and they haven't a clue what they're talking about. You shouldn't be rejecting Paul's NT gospel of grace and putting yourself under OT law, just because you were dumb enough to listen to false teachers. You should be listening to and learning from Paul and from the men and women Paul taught, 2 Timothy 2:2, Acts 18:24-28.

NT Grace always supersedes OT Law.

Supersedes means: Displaces and Replaces. Supersedes means: takes the place of. Supersedes means: does away with and replaces. When we say, NT Grace always supersedes OT law, Always means: **a.** 20% of the time. **b.** 50% of the time. **c.** 80% of the time. **d.** 100% of the time. How often does NT Grace supersede OT law? _____ Is that the crystal clear teaching of the NT? _____ Do you believe NT Grace always supersedes OT Law? _____

Since God trusted Paul to write 14 of the 27 books in our NT, and, since God made Paul the apostle to the Gentiles and *a teacher of the Gentiles*, 1 Timothy 2:7, you should also trust Paul to be your apostle and your teacher. Here is a good question to answer. What is wrong with my thinking and my spiritual life that I refuse to trust what Paul wrote about NT grace and instead, I prefer to trust false teachers who put me under OT law? _____ How can I solve my problem of unbelief? _____

The best and quickest way to solve your problem of unbelief is by changing your mind and believing what Paul wrote because, what you've learned from Paul is primary. If someone, anyone, is teaching contrary to the doctrine Paul taught in his preaching, teaching and writing, your job as a Christian is to: reject the false teachers, kick them to the curb and avoid them because they are false teachers who teach false doctrine. And then, your assignment is to follow Paul, 1 Corinthians 11:1. Your order of the day is: Reject and avoid false teachers and follow Paul.

and avoid them. - What a remarkable contrast between Paul's instructions here, about false teachers and his instructions in Romans 14:1 and 15:7 and 16:1 about how to deal with baby Christians. Baby Christians are different than false teachers and so, we deal differently with baby Christians than we do with false teachers. The people Paul has in mind here in Romans 16:17, that we are to mark and avoid, are not baby Christians who are still struggling to embrace the grace of God in Christ as their means of staying right with God.

What Does Paul Mean When He Says: Avoid Them?

*“Now we command you, brethren,
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,
that ye withdraw yourselves”*

*from every brother that walketh disorderly,
and not after the tradition
which he received of us.”
2 Thessalonians 3:6*

*“A man that is an heretick
after the first and second admonition reject;
Knowing that he that is such
is subverted, and sinneth,
being condemned of himself.”
Titus 3:10-11*

- 1. Admonish them twice and then reject them.**
- 2. Withdraw yourselves from them.**

Admonish them twice and if they don't get right with God, then reject them, avoid them and withdraw from them. Which person of the Trinitarian Godhead will convict them when you admonish them? _____ When they reject your admonishment, they are at the same time rejecting the admonishment and conviction of the Holy Spirit. They've rejected your admonition, they've rejected the conviction of the Holy Spirit and they've rejected God's truth. Therefore, God's response is to reject them from fellowship in the local church.

Reject them. Don't let them keep performing on the praise and worship team. Don't let them keep serving as a deacon. Don't let them keep running the Sunday School. Don't let them keep singing solos before the sermon. Don't let them keep teaching Sunday School. Don't let them keep working in the bus ministry. Don't let them keep taking up the offering. Don't let them keep leading small groups in their home. *Reject them.* Amen? _____

What part of: avoid them, reject them and withdraw from them is difficult for you to understand? _____

Why treat false teachers this way?

God's purpose is: **1.** to publicly point out the false teaching, 2 Timothy 3:9, **2.** so Christians know what it is and **3.** publicly point out false teachers, **4.** so Christians know who they are. **5.** God's purpose is to keep false teaching and false teachers out of His church. **6.** God's purpose is to do this in a public and

confrontational way so that false teachers and their false teaching are rejected in the light, in public, not secretly behind closed doors.

Beyond those reasons, God's purpose is to make it clear that Christians do not believe and His church does not believe or teach what false teachers believe and teach. False teachers, if they are saved can, at any time, repudiate their false teaching and get their hearts right with God and be restored to fellowship. False teachers who are not saved need to get saved and repudiate their false teaching. Dealing with false teachers in this way is a form of biblical church discipline.

The people Paul has in mind in Romans 16:17 are false teachers who want to mess up baby Christians and other Christians and infect them with their doctrines of devils, 1 Timothy 4:1. Some of the first century false teachers are identified in Acts 15:1-2, as people who teach false doctrine about salvation. There were false teachers in the church at Antioch, the greatest missionary church in the NT, and Paul and Barnabas withstood them to their face, Acts 15:1-2. Why? Because that is the biblical, Christian, godly way to deal with false teachers who teach false doctrine.

The Jerusalem Council in Acts 15 made a Holy Ghost blessed decision that the false teachers were teaching false doctrine about getting saved by circumcision and Paul and Barnabas were right about the grace of God in salvation and physical circumcision being 100% unnecessary for anyone to get saved, Acts 15:19-28.

People who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the grace doctrine and the Christ doctrine Paul taught are to be rejected and avoided and withdrawn from, not received. No, you're not smarter than Paul on this issue. No, you don't have inside information that allows you to ignore what Paul says to do in Romans 16:17.

There is a difference between baby Christians who haven't yet learned doctrinal truth and false teachers who intentionally teach false doctrine and cause strife and divisions and give offense because of the false doctrines they teach. False teachers in Romans 16:17 are in a different category than baby Christians in Romans 14 and 15, who don't know any better, yet, who have a good heart toward God.

False teachers do not have a good heart toward God. That's why we are told to mark them and avoid them and reject them and withdraw from them. Is that crystal clear? _____ God is absolutely serious that Christians should reject false teachers and keep their false teaching out of the church and we should be

absolutely serious about rejecting them too. If you reject false teachers, that also means you do not support them financially. You don't give them money. You don't recommend their ministry. You don't go to their their home Bible studies.

**This is the normal biblical Christian way
to deal with false teachers
in the local church.**

1. Mark them
2. Avoid them
3. Reject them
4. Withdraw from them

16:18 - For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

For they that are such - Paul is talking about false teachers. Not everyone who says he is a Christian is necessarily a Christian. Some people say they are Christians so they can fool you and take advantage of you. They love to have the preeminence, 2 John 9.

They that are such refers to *them who cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned*. In plainer words, the false teachers who try to correct Paul's doctrine and deny the doctrinal truth Paul taught. False teachers teach something different than Paul taught. False teachers love to contradict what Paul taught. Wise men stay away from false teachers. Fools flock to false teachers, because they are fools, Proverbs 13:20. Choose your friends wisely. Are you walking with wise men or are you a companion of fools? Don't think this verse doesn't apply to you. This verse applies to all of us.

*“He that walketh with wise men
shall be wise:
but a companion of fools
shall be destroyed.”
Proverbs 13:20*

serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, - Here is where many Christians get messed up. They don't have enough spiritual backbone to make the judgment that false teachers *serve not our Lord Jesus Christ*. God says and Paul says and the Bible says: False teachers are not serving *our Lord Jesus Christ*. It's time to shout

AMEN! and agree with God, Paul and the Bible instead of contradicting God, Paul and the Bible. Grow some spiritual backbone and obey God.

Many false teachers profess to be saved and following God but even if they are saved, the reality is, they still do not serve *our Lord Jesus Christ*. No matter how nice their smile, no matter how smooth their speech, they are not serving *our Lord Jesus Christ*. How do we know that for sure? We know that for sure because the Bible tells us that for sure. Well then, who are they serving?

but their own belly; - False teachers do not serve *our Lord Jesus Christ*. Instead, they serve *their own belly*. False teachers are flesh oriented, smooth talking, religious grifters. Paul says it this way in Philippians 3:19. "Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)" False teachers have things upside-down and backwards. Don't make friends with false teachers.

and by good words and fair speeches - False teachers are great at sounding nice and pious and holy. They have the gift of gab and teach you to go to hell in such a nice way that you may even look forward to the journey. Don't let their *good words and fair speeches* deceive you. False teachers deceive the hearts of the simple. Are you simple enough to be fooled by them? _____

If you believe what the Bible says, in context, you need never be deceived by false teachers. Don't be ruled by your emotions. Never let your emotions be your excuse for following false teachers and believing false doctrine. Never follow your heart when it comes to Bible doctrine. Follow the truth of God and the truth of scripture in context.

deceive the hearts of the simple. - Did you see what Paul wrote there? He let us in on a great secret. False teachers appeal to our emotions. False teachers appeal to the hearts of the simple. False teachers don't want you to think biblically and logically. They prefer to stir up your emotions so you will make decisions based on emotion instead of facts and logic. That's how they *deceive the hearts of the simple*.

The simple are emotions focused and emotions motivated instead of Bible focused and truth motivated. You do not have to be a simple Christian who always gets deceived by religious grifters. Go by what the Bible says in context, refuse to be led by your emotions and you will stop being a simple Christian. There is nothing spiritual about being a simple hearted Christian who is always getting deceived.

deceive the hearts of the simple - If you tend to be emotions focused, you can teach yourself to focus more on truth so that you have a balance between your emotions and truth, so that your simple heart doesn't get deceived. Your heart and your mind and your emotions and your money and your support do not belong to false teachers. All of those belong to God. Do you agree that false teachers are deceivers? _____

*“Keep thy heart with all diligence;
for out of it are the issues of life.”*

Proverbs 4:23

*“My son, give me thine heart,
and let thine eyes observe my ways.”*

Proverbs 23:26

16:19 - For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.

For your obedience - God places a high premium on obedience. When we are obedient or disobedient, God notices. Did it ever occur to you that the thoughts and motives of your heart and your daily activities and daily thoughts are being observed? Jehovah God Himself pondereth the hearts. Can you think of an area of your life where you need to change what you're doing and obey God? _____

*“Every way of a man
is right in his own eyes:
but the LORD
pondereth the hearts.”*

Proverbs 21:2

is come abroad unto all men. - This indicates that Paul was kept informed about the churches and the Christians in Rome and what they were doing, 2 Corinthians 11:28. That information probably came in the form of letters from some of the people Paul mentions by name in this chapter. Paul may also have heard in person from some of the people he mentions in this chapter, who came to visit him during his missionary adventures.

Come abroad unto all men - Paul is saying that people outside Rome have heard of the Christian life and Christian beliefs and and Christian faith and Christian evangelism of the Roman churches. The people who have heard are probably

the people in the churches Paul started in Macedonia and Achaia and other places. Paul commends the Christians at Rome because they work at obeying God and living as evangelistic Christians.

I am glad therefore on your behalf: - That other Christians are living for Jesus makes Paul glad. Paul isn't one of those Christians who gets irritated or angry or feels threatened when other Christians live for Jesus and give money to help get out the gospel and win souls. Some Christians get angry at that, perhaps because it makes them feel guilty for not doing what they should be doing. Not Paul. When Paul hears about Christians obeying God and living for Jesus, it makes him glad.

*“For my people is foolish,
they have not known me;
they are sottish children,
and they have none understanding:
they are wise to do evil,
but to do good
they have no knowledge.”
Jeremiah 4:22*

but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good - Rebellious and disobedient Israel and Judah, in Jeremiah's day, were *wise to do evil*, Jeremiah 4:22. Paul wants the opposite for first century Israel. He wants them to be obedient, to be *wise unto that which is good* because if Israel is *wise unto that which is good*, Israel will receive his, Psalm 25:22, Romans 11:7, Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. *That which is good* is whatever the Bible teaches and whatever is in the Bible that applies to them doctrinally and whatever God-called apostles are teaching them.

God doesn't want you to be simple concerning what the Bible teaches. God expects you to know what the Bible teaches and to believe and live what the Bible teaches. The contrast is between good and evil. Sinners who rebel against God are confused about good and evil. *I would have you wise unto that which is good and simple concerning evil*. Let's see if we can understand what Paul is saying. Here is our biblical frame of reference.

*“For your obedience
is come abroad unto all men.
I am glad therefore on your behalf:
but yet I would have you wise
unto that which is good,*

and simple concerning evil.”
Romans 16:19

“Woe unto them that
call evil good,
and good evil;
that put darkness for light,
and light for darkness;
that put bitter for sweet,
and sweet for bitter!
Woe unto them that
are wise in their own eyes,
and prudent in their own sight!”
Isaiah 5:20-21

“The words of his mouth
are iniquity and deceit:
he hath left off to be wise,
and to do good.”
Psalm 36:3

“Professing themselves to be wise,
they became fools,”
Romans 1:22

“For my people is foolish,
they have not known me;
they are sottish children,
and they have none understanding:
they are wise to do evil,
but to do good
they have no knowledge.”
Jeremiah 4:22

“Brethren, be not children in understanding:
howbeit in malice be ye children,
but in understanding be men.”
1 Corinthians 14:20

wise unto that which is good - It is never the course of Christian wisdom to become intimately familiar with evil or to spend your time talking and joking about evil and celebrating evil and playing around with evil. It is never the course of Christian wisdom to celebrate evil or make light of evil or glamorize evil, for

example, by celebrating and decorating for Halloween. Christians shouldn't celebrate Halloween and make light of the Satanic cult of druid darkness and death and witchcraft and witches and curses and spells which are part of Halloween.

Would Jesus celebrate the spiritual darkness and demonic imagery of Halloween? _____ If Jesus wouldn't play around with witches and goblins and devils and demons and use them to decorate His house, why do you insist on playing with them? _____ This seems like it would be easy to get our minds around and yet, many Christians defend their celebration of witches and demonic darkness. Does anyone really believe that Jesus would put witches and goblins and skeletons in His home to celebrate Halloween? _____ If Jesus wouldn't do it, why do we? _____

Beyond Halloween, Christians shouldn't imitate or dress like the poor sad Goth subculture, with its woke ideology and black nail polish, black leather and lace, black eye liner and perverted screaming music. People who toy with satanic Halloween and the satanic Goth subculture are doing the opposite of what Paul says here in Romans 16:19.

*“He that walketh with wise men
shall be wise:
but a companion of fools
shall be destroyed.”*
Proverbs 13:20

Are you as a Christian, walking in occult darkness and toying with the things of Satan? _____ Be careful about making excuses for walking in darkness. If you insist on walking in darkness, you won't be a vibrant growing Christian. Your Christian life will stagnate and you'll never get past the baby stage of Christian growth.

*“Thou shalt not follow
a multitude to do evil;
neither shalt thou speak
in a cause
to decline after many
to wrest judgment.”*
Exodus 23:2

*“Then spake Jesus again
unto them, saying,*

*I am the light of the world:
he that followeth me
shall not walk in darkness,
but shall have the light of life.”*
John 8:12

**If you're walking in darkness,
you're not following Christ.
If you're following Christ,
You shall not walk in darkness.**

Is this issue becoming clear to you now? _____ The darkness of evil has a negative effect on your heart and mind and desires. Evil blinds you to God's spiritual purpose for your life. Entertaining evil stunts your spiritual growth. Why? Because when you're walking in darkness, you're not following Christ. Evil has a negative effect on your fellowship with God. Evil is a joy killer and a thief that robs you of peace. It isn't good to delve deeply into evil, sin and wickedness, Ephesians 4:29-31, 5:1-13.

It isn't good to invite evil into your heart and into your home every year by celebrating and decorating for Halloween. That is the essence of the point Paul makes here. Don't get focused on and obsessed with the world, the flesh and the devil. What six things does God tell us to focus on and think about in Philippians 4:8?

and simple concerning evil. - Again, God doesn't want us simple concerning good. God wants us simple concerning evil. We are not to play with evil. We are not to make evil our home decorating theme. We are not to celebrate paganism and we are not to invite paganism into our home. God wants His church to be healthy, not sick with the spiritual diseases of paganism.

We can fill our mind with the things of the world or we can fill our mind with the things of God. Our natural human tendency is to think about evil and sin. Filling our mind with evil is the path to sorrow and defeat. Victorious fruitful growing Christians don't fill their mind with evil thoughts and their homes with evil things.

**There is fresh joy every day
when we read the Bible every day.**

Our natural spiritual tendency is to think about the goodness of God and the blessings of God. There is fresh joy every day when we read the Bible every day.

In the Bible we are reminded of the wisdom and power and goodness and blessing of God. Filling our mind with the things of God is the path to victory and peace of mind in our present life, despite outward problems.

16:20 - And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

*“And I will put enmity
between thee and the woman,
and between thy seed and her seed;
it shall bruise thy head,
and thou shalt bruise his heel.”
Genesis 3:15*

*“And, having made peace
through the blood of his cross,
by him to reconcile all things unto himself;
by him, I say, whether they be
things in earth, or things in heaven.”
Colossians 1:20*

*“And all things are of God,
who hath reconciled us to himself
by Jesus Christ,
and hath given to us
the ministry of reconciliation;
To wit, that God was in Christ,
reconciling the world unto himself,
not imputing their trespasses unto them;
and hath committed unto us
the word of reconciliation.”
2 Corinthians 5:18-19*

And the God of peace - God can be *the God of peace* only after the Calvary event, where Christ our Creator reconciled all things unto Himself. No one used this phrase, *the God of peace*, in the OT because it wasn't doctrinally true then. Calvary hadn't happened in the OT. In Isaiah 9:6, Christ is prophetically the Prince of Peace but no one on earth was preaching peace by Jesus Christ until after the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*“The word which God sent
unto the children of Israel,
preaching peace by Jesus Christ:*

(*he is Lord of all:*)”
Acts 10:36

The God of peace is a phrase used only by Paul in the NT, Romans 15:33, 16:20, Philippians 4:9, 2 Corinthians 13:11, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 13:20-21. If you know anything about false gods and false religions, you will better understand why Paul talks about *the God of peace*. The gods of false religions are foul, mean, vicious, wicked, unclean spirits. There are real world reasons why primitive pagans fear their pagan gods. Pagan gods never bring God’s peace to troubled hearts.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the God of peace because His salvation and His justification and His sanctification bring peace to troubled hearts and eternal life to troubled souls. If *the God of peace* is going to bruise Satan under their feet shortly, that means *the God of peace* is triumphing over Satan in a practical way in the lives of first century Roman Christians. *The God of peace* is still triumphing over Satan and bruising Satan today, in our lives as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

How can God be *the God of peace* in a world that is so messed up? Think about the reality of our world and our universe. The Lord Jesus Christ created everything that exists, John 1:1-2. The Lord Jesus Christ keeps His creation running because He holds it together or causes it to consist by the word of His power, Colossians 1:15-17.

The Lord Jesus Christ, Who is, *the God of peace*, is eternally victorious. He isn’t worrying and fretting about the condition of the world or the problems you face in life. God has all of that under control. God has already dealt with every problem you face and those problems are not for us to worry about. Instead, we pray about it and trust God, because we know that He has already taken care of every problem we face.

**The God of peace
never worries about
any of the things
that worry you.**

shall bruise Satan - This has dual meaning. First, in the first century context of ancient Rome, it refers to God bruising Satan as Roman Christians identify, mark and reject false teachers. Second, it has prophetic reference to the Proto-Evegelium, the first mention in the Bible, of Messiah and the glorious gospel of Christ in Genesis 3:15.

The Proto-Evangelium The First-Gospel

Genesis 3:15 has been called, the Proto-Evangelium, meaning: the first mention of the good news of the gospel. In the immediate context of the fall of Adam, God promises, in Genesis 3:15, that He will make right, everything Adam made wrong. The woman's seed, the virgin born Christ, will triumph over Satan's seed, John 8:44. Keep in mind that the apostle Paul makes the undeniable comparison between the first Adam and the last Adam, in Romans 5:12-19 and 1 Corinthians 15:45-49.

*“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman,
and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head,
and thou shalt bruise his heel.”* Genesis 3:15.

*“And I will put enmity between thee (meaning the serpent)
and the woman (meaning Eve),
and between thy seed (the serpent's seed, John 8:44)
and her (the woman Eve's) seed;
it (the woman's seed) shall bruise
thy (the serpent's) head,
and thou (the serpent) shalt bruise
his (Messiah's) heel.”*
Genesis 3:15.

Who gets bruised head and heel?

- 1. The woman's seed, will bruise the serpent's head.**
- 2. The serpent will bruise his, Messiah's, heel.**
- 3. He was bruised for our iniquities - Isaiah 53:5.**
- 4. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him - Isaiah 53:10.**
- 5. To set at liberty them that are bruised - Luke 4:18.**

In the OT, there are three heads that are bruised and wounded to death, which may be types of the woman bruising the serpent's head. **1.** Sisera's fatal head injury at the hands of Heber's wife, Jael, Judges 4:21; 5:26, 31. **2.** Abimelech's fatal head injury at the tower of Thebez, Judges 9: 53-54. **3.** Goliath's fatal head injury by David's slang stone to Goliath's forehead, I Samuel 17:49-51.

Those three incidents point to Revelation 13:1-3, where another bruising of the serpent's head takes place, in which one of the heads of the seven headed beast is wounded to death and then, his deadly wound is healed for a time. Like the false miracles of Pharaoh's magicians preceding the Exodus from Egypt, there is an apparent temporary victory for the side of evil, Revelation 13:3, 5-9.

*“And the LORD God
said unto the serpent,
Because thou hast done this,
thou art cursed above all cattle,
and above every beast of the field;
upon thy belly shalt thou go,
and dust shalt thou eat
all the days of thy life:
And I will put enmity
between thee and the woman,
and between thy seed
and her seed;
it shall bruise thy head,
and thou shalt bruise his heel.”*
Genesis 3:14-15

Genesis 3:14-15 has more than one meaning. In the OT and NT, before Messiah comes, Genesis 3:14-15 refers to God's people bruising Satan's head by obeying God and rejecting Satan's plan and Satan's false prophets and lying spirits. The bruising of Satan can be any number of incidents, both in the Bible and throughout history, in which God's side wins and Satan's side loses. Whenever anyone anywhere gets saved, that is another bruising of Satan.

Some of those bruising incidents occur in the mid-first century AD, in the Roman churches, as Roman Christians learn to recognize and identify false teachers and false teaching, then mark and reject false teachers and their false teaching, Romans 16:17. By being obedient to God in doing that, Roman Christians bruise Satan - *shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.*

Prophetically, from the Genesis 3:15 time frame, we are pointed to the future, where the Lord Jesus Christ as Messiah, shall bruise the serpent's head at Calvary. Concurrently at that time, the serpent is bruising Messiah's heel in the crucifixion, Psalm 22:12-13, 21. That bruising includes Christ dying on the cross to reconcile the world to God. The bruising was only temporary because on the third day, our Savior rose bodily from the dead so that we can be saved by his life, Romans 5:10. The final bruising of Satan is found in Revelation 20:1-3, 10.

Progressive Revelation Happens Over Time

The first inkling of the progressive nature of God's plan of redemption is found in Genesis, in chronological time based on the date of its writing, the second book of the Bible, written around 1450 BC. Job is the first book of the Bible, written around 1900 BC. God, the ultimate author of the Bible, put a literary hook in Genesis 3:15. This literary hook was no doubt, intriguing to people who only had the OT, but was difficult to understand with precision, until God gave the NT, where we see the life of Christ and Satan's activities against Christ and His saved followers. Then, Genesis 3:15 becomes more clear, more understandable.

Knowing that God put that Messianic literary hook in Genesis 3:15, on purpose, encourages us to believe that God plans things out perfectly, especially His plan of redemption, because He knows the end from the beginning. Where we see it clearly, because we have the NT, it was less clear in the OT time frame.

This Messianic literary hook/prophesy may have provoked discussion and interest, as literary hooks are wont to do but its prophetic meaning didn't become clear until the NT. We recognize this literary hook and this prophesy now, because God, the ultimate author of Genesis and of the OT, has also given us the wonderful NT revelation, which explains much more about Messiah Jesus.

The Serpent, The Bruising And The Two Seeds Throughout Scripture

In Genesis 3:1 - Now the serpent was more subtil
In 2 Cor 11:3 - as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty
In 1 Tim 2:14 - but the woman being deceived
In John 8:44 - Ye are of your father the devil
In Acts 13:10 - Full of all subtilty and all mischief

In Genesis 3:15 - the serpent's seed
In Genesis 3:15 - the woman's seed
In Revelation 12:1-17 - the remnant of her seed

In Genesis 3:15 - and thou shalt bruise his heel
In Genesis 49:17 - Dan shall be a serpent by the way
In Genesis 49:17 - Dan... an adder in the path
In Genesis 49:17 - a serpent... that biteth the horse heels

Exodus 4:2-3 - A rod... it became a serpent
Ex 7:12 - cast down... his rod, and they became serpents
Ex 7:12 - but Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods

In Numbers 21:8-9 - the fiery serpent
In Amos 9:3 - I command the serpent, and he shall bite them
In Isaiah 14:29 - his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent
In Isaiah 30:6 - the viper and flying fiery serpent

In John 3:14 - Jesus - And as Moses lifted up the serpent
In John 12:32 - if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men
In John 3:14-16 - the serpent in the wilderness
In 2 Kings 18:1-4 - Hezekiah... brake in pieces the brazen serpent

In Job 26:13 - his hand hath formed the crooked serpent
In Job 41:1 - Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook?
In Psalm 74:14 - Thou brakest the heads of leviathan in pieces,
In Ps 74:14 - leviathan... gavest him to be meat to the people
In Micah 3:3 - and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces,
In Genesis 3:15 - her seed; it shall bruise thy head,

In Isaiah 27:1 - shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent
In Isaiah 27:1 - even leviathan that crooked serpent
In Isaiah 27:1 - The LORD... he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea

In Jeremiah 46:22 - The voice thereof shall go like a serpent
In Daniel 7:8 - a fourth beast... a mouth speaking great things
In Psalm 140:3 - They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent
In Revelation 12:9 - that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan,
In Luke 4:3, 6, 9 - And the devil said unto him

In Amos 9:3 - I command the serpent, and he shall bite them
In Gen 3:14 - the serpent... upon thy belly shalt thou go,
In Gen 3:14 - and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life:
In Micah 7:17 - They shall lick the dust like a serpent
In Micah 7:17 - move out of their holes like worms of the earth

In Genesis 3:15 - the woman... and her seed;
In Isaiah 7:14 - the virgin birth of Christ - her seed
In Matthew 1:20-23 - the virgin birth of Christ - her seed
In Gal 3:16 - Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made.
In Galatians 3:16 - thy seed, which is Christ
In Galatians 3:19 - till the seed should come

In Matthew 23:33 - ye generation of vipers
In John 8:44 - Ye are of your father the devil
In Psalm 58:4 - Their poison is like the poison of a serpent
In Revelation 12:9 - that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan,

In Isaiah 14:29 - out of the serpent's root
In 1 John 3:10 - the children of the devil

In Gen 6:17 - I... bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh,
In Rev 12:15 - the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood
In Rev 12:15 - that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

In Revelation 12:3 - and behold a great red dragon,
In Revelation 12:9 - And the great dragon was cast out,
In Revelation 12:9 - that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan,
In Revelation 12:9 - which deceiveth the whole world,
In Revelation 12:9 - he was cast out into the earth,
In Revelation 12:9 - and his angels were cast out with him

In Rev 20:2 - And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent,
In Rev 20:2 - which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,
In Rev 20:10 - And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire
In Rev 20:10 - and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

As a general biological rule, according to current scientific knowledge, the woman does not have literal seed. Literal seed comes from the male, from the man, Leviticus 15:18. In Genesis 3:15, Moses is using analogy and metaphor to give us the first mention of Messiah and the Satanic opposition the Messianic line will face until Christ comes.

From these verses we learn who the woman's seed is and how He triumphs. The woman's seed is our Messiah, Redeemer, Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, Matthew 1:21, Galatians 3:16. The serpent's seed is everyone who is unredeemed, Matthew 23:33, Galatians 2:1-3, everyone who follows their father the devil, John 8:44.

The Proto-Evangelium meaning, The First-Gospel

Genesis 3:15 is the Proto-Evangelium, meaning: the first mention of the good news of the gospel. In the immediate context of the fall of Adam, God promises that, in Christ, He will make right, everything Adam made wrong. The woman's

seed, the virgin born Messiah Jesus, will triumph over Satan's seed, John 8:44. Keep in mind that the apostle Paul makes the undeniable comparison between the first Adam and the last Adam, in Romans 5:12-19 and 1 Corinthians 15:45-49.

*“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman,
and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head,
and thou shalt bruise his heel.”* Genesis 3:15.

*“And I will put enmity between thee (meaning the serpent)
and the woman (meaning Eve),
and between thy seed (the serpent's seed, John 8:44)
and her (the woman Eve's) seed;
it (the woman's seed) shall bruise
thy (the serpent's) head,
and thou (the serpent) shalt bruise
his (Messiah's) heel.”*
Genesis 3:15

- 1. The woman's seed will bruise the serpent's head.**
- 2. The serpent will bruise Messiah's heel.**
- 3. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him - Isaiah 53:10**

*“Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made.
He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one,
And to thy seed, which is Christ.”
Galatians 3:16.*

*“And the dragon was
wroth with the woman,
and went to make war with
the remnant of her seed,
(saved Jews in the tribulation)
which keep the commandments of God,
and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”
Revelation 12:17.*

*“Wherefore then serveth the law?
It was added because of transgressions,*

*till the seed should come
to whom the promise was made;
and it was ordained by angels
in the hand of a mediator.”*
Galatians 3:19.

The seed of the woman is Messiah Jesus - *and to thy seed, which is Christ,* Galatians 3:16. The seed of the serpent is the son of perdition and the anti-christ, 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4, Revelation 13:1-7.

The Proto-evangelium demonstrates the progressive nature of God’s revelation of the glorious gospel of Christ. That revelation in the Bible, happened over time, not immediately. Another example of the progressive nature of God’s revelation is found in the gospel of John, where Jesus Himself gives us an example of the progressive nature of revelation in scripture. Recognizing this progressive revelation (that God reveals His truth over time), is part of what it means to be a dispensationalist.

*“Howbeit when he,
the Spirit of truth, is come,
he will guide you into all truth:
for he shall not speak of himself;
but whatsoever he shall hear,
that shall he speak: and
he will shew you things to come.”*
John 16:13.

Jesus in his earthly ministry, promises more information, more knowledge, more revelation in the future, from the Holy Spirit. This promise in John 16:13 refers to the written NT, which would begin to be written after Jesus ascended to heaven. God did not reveal, in the book of Genesis, everything He wanted us to know. God did not reveal, in the OT, everything He wanted us to know.

God did not reveal, during the earthly ministry of Jesus, everything He wanted us to know. Some of the truths God wanted us to know were not revealed until the NT was written, between AD 35 and AD 95. The revelation of God and His redemptive plan for the human race was revealed progressively, over the course of the dispensations God put in the Bible.

**And the God of peace
shall bruise Satan
under your feet shortly.**
Romans 16:20

As we read Romans 16:20, remember that Luke 10:19 was written around or before AD 58, the time period in which Paul wrote Romans. Since Paul and Luke often traveled together, they probably talked about the topic of bruising Satan or treading on the adder or treading on serpents, from Psalm 91:13 and Luke 10:19, and what that meant in the first century AD time frame.

*“Thou shalt tread upon
the lion and adder:
the young lion
and the dragon
shalt thou trample under feet.”*
Psalm 91:13

*“Behold, I give unto you power
to tread on serpents and scorpions,
and over all the power of the enemy:
and nothing shall by any means hurt you.”*
Luke 10:19

*“But he was wounded for our transgressions,
he was bruised for our iniquities:
the chastisement of our peace
was upon him;
and with his stripes we are healed.”*
Isaiah 53:5

*“Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him;
he hath put him to grief:
when thou shalt make his soul
an offering for sin,
he shall see his seed,
he shall prolong his days,
and the pleasure of the LORD
shall prosper in his hand.”*
Isaiah 53:10

under your feet shortly. - *Shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly* is Paul’s Jewish way of saying, God is in charge and He will give you victory. This statement is in the context of Paul’s warning in Romans 16:17 about false teachers and false teaching. Paul has been warning Roman Christians about the false teaching of false teachers. There is dual meaning here in Romans 16:20.

under your feet - This calls to mind treading upon the serpent, with treading as a Jewish way of saying that enemies are defeated and God's people triumph, Psalm 91:13, Luke 10:19.

shortly - In context, the natural meaning of *shortly* is the meaning which was understood by the original hearers and readers of Paul's Epistle To The Romans. For Paul's original readers and hearers, here is what *shortly* meant.

1. God shall bruise Satan under their feet *shortly*, meaning: within a time frame, within the limits of space and time, by helping first century Roman Christians recognize and remove false teachers from the house churches of Rome. In that sense, it has warm practical and personal application to Roman Christians in AD 58.

2. *Shortly* also has prophetic meaning, that stretches all the way to Christ's second coming, which, whenever it happens, will bruise Satan under the feet of faithful Christian believers.

3. *Shortly* in its prophetic sense, refers to the Imminency of our Lord's return, that Christ's return can happen at any time, that there is nothing on God's prophetic timetable as yet unfulfilled, which prevents our Lord from coming back at any time.

4. *Shortly* then, under the doctrine of Imminence, also refers to Satan being eventually, imprisoned for a thousand years, Revelation 20:1-3.

5. *Shortly* also refers to Satan, finally *cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.* Revelation 20:10.

With that understanding, we catch a glimpse of the Pauline doctrine of Imminence. The doctrine of imminence (the timing of Christ's return), doesn't mean that Christ must come immediately or is coming immediately or even in the near future. Instead, the doctrine of imminence is that Christ can come immediately or in the near future. Please do not interpret the fact that Christ hasn't come back yet to mean that Christ didn't keep His promise to come back.

That Christ hasn't yet returned for His redeemed people amplifies the long-suffering of God and magnifies His mercy toward the lost. Please get the correct view about this. That Christ has not come back yet is not a failure to keep His

promise. The promises of God in the Bible about the second coming will be fulfilled according to God's timetable of longsuffering, grace and mercy. Why?

Because God is *not willing that any should perish*, so He is willing to delay His coming so that more people can get saved. Obviously then, Christ is not a Calvinist, willing only to save a small number of people for whom He died.

*“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise,
as some men count slackness;
but is longsuffering to us-ward,
not willing that any should perish,
but that all should come to repentance.”*
2 Peter 3:9

16:20 - The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

The grace - In the context, because Roman Christians will bruise Satan under their feet shortly, they will need the grace of God to fight the spiritual battles which that bruising entails. The bruising requires Roman Christians to identify, mark, avoid and reject false teachers. It takes guidance by the Holy Spirit and grace from God to face down the false teachers and expel them from the house churches of first century Rome. And so Paul says: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*

[What is Grace?](#) Grace is the undeserved favor of a loving God freely given to sinful people who did nothing to earn God's grace. Grace is mercy instead of judgment, loving-kindness instead of wrath, salvation instead of damnation. Grace is the positive life-affirming activity of God our Savior toward us, Who, instead of giving us what we deserve, kindly gives us what we do not deserve and could never earn, His free and abounding grace.

We find this phrase, *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you*, twice in Romans, here in 16:20 and again in 16:24. These form the two closing salutations to Romans. The first closing salutation is Paul's ending, Romans 16:20, and Paul's remarks, probably in his own hand, Romans 16:21. The second closing salutation is by Tertius, Paul's scribe, in Romans 16:22. Romans 16:23-27 are Paul's closing thoughts and Paul's benediction. The manner in which Paul dictated his epistles is illustrated in Jeremiah 36:1-4, 27-28, 32-33.

In the book of Romans, Paul mentions *grace* 24 times in 20 verses. Because Paul uses this phrase twice in Romans 16, some claim that Romans has two different endings instead of being a coherent message to the church at Rome.

The best way to view Romans is that Romans is exactly what it claims to be, the letter of Paul the apostle to the Romans, exactly as God intended us to have it.

of our Lord Jesus Christ - *Our Lord Jesus Christ* is not the same as the Jesus of the world or the Jesus of Mormonism or the Jesus of Jehovah's Witnesses or the Jesus of eastern religions. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the biblical Jesus, the holy, justifying, sanctifying Creator of our world and our universe. Their Jesus is the fake Jesus, the false Jesus, the inferior god of the cults. The Lord Jesus Christ of the world is not the holy Creator God of the Bible. The unholy fake Jesus of the world loves sin, loves wickedness, loves all religions, loves all people equally and isn't at all bothered by human sinfulness. The false Jesus of the world never calls anyone to take up a cross and follow him.

Their fake Lord Jesus, called *another Jesus*, by Paul in 2 Corinthians 11:4, is a false god whom they've named Jesus but who isn't the genuine holy Jesus of the holy Bible. The unholy Jesus whom the world worships never saved anyone from their sins. Their unholy Jesus agrees with their anti-biblical, anti-Christian world view. Make sure you aren't following the unholy fake Jesus of the world because that fake Jesus will lead you straight to a devil's hell and eternity in the lake of fire, Revelation 20:12-15.

be with you. - The genuine Jesus of the Bible is with you and goes with you because He is in you, while you are in Him, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Colossians 1:27, 2:10. If there is a secret to living the Christian life, the secret is, Christ in you, dwelling in your heart by faith, Ephesians 3:17, Galatians 2:20.

Amen. - The word, *Amen*, is found 78 times in 72 verses in the Bible, 27 times in the OT and 51 times in the NT. In OT usage, *amen* carries the meaning of: believe and faithful. In OT usage, *amen* is an expression of faith and trust in God. It conveys the belief that God will answer. *Amen* is audible shorthand, a vocal expression of faith that, God knows our needs, God hears our prayers and God will supply our needs and answer our prayers. In the NT, *amen* borrows its meaning from the OT and conveys the idea of: so be it, and, may it be so.

16:21 - Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you.

Timotheus my workfellow, - In Romans 16:21, Paul mentions four people who are working with him to evangelize Corinth, to disciple those who get saved and to help Paul keep up with problems in the churches and probably, to help answer letters from the house churches, 1 Corinthians 7:17, 2 Corinthians 11:28, that Paul and his coworkers started all over Achaia.

workfellow, - Paul used this word in 16:3, where it is translated, *helpers*, and in 16:9, where it is translated, *helper*. A *workfellow* is a companion in labour, a companion in work or a fellow who works with you. Paul uses the word 12 of the 13 times it occurs in the NT. John the apostle uses the word in its other occurrence, in 3 John 8, where it is translated, *fellowhelpers*.

Timotheus/Timothy occurs 24 times in 24 verses in the NT. It is transliterated as **Timotheus** 17 times and is translated as its English equivalent, Timothy, 7 times. The Greek name is **Timotheos**.

Timotheus - Latinized form of **Timotheos**

Timotheos - Greek form of Timothy

Timothy - English form of **Timotheos**

Timotheus is first mentioned in the Bible in Acts 16:1-3. Timotheus is the product of a mixed marriage. His Jewish grandmother Lois, is a Christian and his mother Eunice, 2 Timothy 1:5, is also a believing Jewess. Timotheus' unnamed father is a Greek, which probably explains why Timothy was not circumcised as an infant. Since Timothy has not yet been circumcised, Paul circumcises Timothy because he intends to take Timotheus with him on his missionary travels.

The circumcision of Timotheus, around AD 52, is for the sake of being a good testimony to Jews in Lystra, who knew Timotheus and his Jewish mother and Greek father. It is different than what Paul did in Galatians 2:1-5, 5:1-4. Lystra was in Galatia. In the circumcision of Timotheus, the issue was being a good testimony to Jews, not that circumcision was necessary for salvation, Acts 15:1. In the case of Titus, around AD 58, the issue is whether or not circumcision was necessary to be saved. This illustrates how to exercise the wisdom of Solomon, Proverbs 26:4-5. Answer some one way and some another way.

Timotheus is Paul's beloved son in the faith, his faithful follower and disciple, his apprentice, his student, his workfellow. Timotheus is a masculine Greek name for a man and is the Latinized form of **Timótheos**. Timotheus means: honoring God or, one who honours God.

and Lucius, - Lucius is a Latin name for a man. It means, white or bright or light. We do not know if Lucius was a saved Jew or a saved Gentile. Lucius is first mentioned in Acts 13:1, *Lucius of Cyrene*, as one of the leaders of the church at Syrian Antioch. This church was a great missionary church which became the epicenter of missionary Christianity, even surpassing the church at Jerusalem. Lucius may have been saved during the great persecution that followed the

stoning of Stephen, Acts 7:54-60, 8:1-3, and the great missionary effort that arose out of that persecution, Acts 11:19-21. Lucius is mentioned twice in the NT, here and in Acts 13:1.

and Jason, - Jason is a man's name. It means, one who will heal. In Acts 17:1-9, a wealthy Christian friend of Paul, in Thessalonica, named Jason, is mentioned four times. Thessalonica is 360 miles north of Corinth but given their close friendship, it is possible that the Jason in Corinth is the same Jason in Thessalonica, who was working with Paul in Corinth at the time Paul writes Romans in AD 58. In English, the name Jason has two syllables. In Greek, Jason is a three syllable word, ee-ah-soan. Jason is mentioned five times in the NT.

and Sosipater, - This is the Latinized name of a man and means, savior of his father (pater is Latin for father). Sosipater was working with Paul in Corinth at the time Paul writes Romans. There is another man in the NT with a variant of this name, Sopater of Berea, mentioned in Acts 20:4. Sopater also means, savior of his father.

It is probable that Sopater and Sosipater are the same individual, who is a friend and co-worker of Paul. If that is the case, Paul calls him Sosipater and Luke calls him Sopater. Sosipater is the given name and Sopater is the shortened form of the name, like a nickname. Lawrence is Larry and Richard becomes Rick and Nathan becomes Nate. In that way, Sosipater becomes Sopater.

my kinsmen, salute you. - Sosipater is Paul's kinsman, which indicates he was probably Jewish (a descendant of Abraham), or, he was a Gentile and therefore, a spiritual kinsman of Paul. We have no way of knowing if Sosipater was a kinsman of Paul in the sense of being a cousin or a close relative. Sosipater is only mentioned here in the NT. This salute is from Christians in Corinth who worked with Paul, to Christians in Rome who used to work with Paul. Paul's evangelistic heart is the link between these Christians.

16:22 - I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord.

I Tertius, - Tertius is a masculine noun, a man's name, of Latin origin and means, third. Tertius occurs only here in the NT. Tertius is a saved man, a friend and coworker of Paul, who helped Paul in his ministry in Corinth.

who wrote this epistle, - Tertius wrote the Romans epistle, in the same way that Baruch wrote the book of Jeremiah in the OT, as a scribe who took dictation, Jeremiah 36:2, 4, 17-18, 27-28, 32. Men of God like Jeremiah and Paul, used an amanuensis, ah-man-yoo-en-sus, meaning: a scribe, a secretary, a

stenographer, someone who took dictation, who wrote down what someone else spoke.

The biblical example is Jeremiah, who dictated the book of Jeremiah to Baruch, and Paul, who dictated Romans to Tertius, and Colossians to Tychicus and Onesimus; see the Colossians end note. It was Paul's habit to dictate his letters to an amanuensis. Paul then signed his letters with his own hand, 2 Thessalonians 3:17, 1 Corinthians 16:21, Colossians 4:18.

salute you in the Lord. - This is not Paul saluting Roman Christians. This is Tertius as Paul's scribe, enthusiastically saluting some of his personal Christian friends in Rome. Once Tertius has saluted them, Gaius wants to salute them also. It is easy to imagine Paul and his Christian converts sitting in the home of Gaius, where their house church met, fellowshiping and talking as Paul finishes his letter to the Romans. Once Tertius has received permission from Paul to add his Salute, on behalf of the gathered Christians, Paul tells Tertius to include the Salute from Gaius and the whole church.

16:23 - Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.

Gaius mine host, - Gaius is a masculine noun, a man's name, of Latin origin, meaning, lord. The Bible tells us that Gaius was a man of Macedonia, Acts 19:29, on a missionary journey with Paul in Ephesus, Acts 19:1, 17, 26, 28. Gaius was a close missionary partner with Paul and was also one of Paul's companions in travel.

The masculine name, Gaius, occurs five times in the NT, Acts 19:29, 20:4, Romans 16:23, 1 Corinthians 1:14, 3 John 1. The first four references are to Gaius who was Paul's friend and coworker. If Gaius was a young man in his 20s or 30s when he got saved and began working with Paul, it is possible that the Gaius to whom the apostle John addresses 3 John is the same Gaius who was Paul's friend.

In that case, about 36 years would have passed between Acts 19 and 3 John. If it is the same Gaius, at the time John addresses 3 John to him, Gaius would have been in his 50s or 60s. Given what John writes in 3 John 1-6, it is possible that the apostle John, not Paul, led Gaius to Christ. Or, this is a different Gaius than the Gaius associated with Paul.

With that possibility considered, this Gaius in Romans 16:23 is the same Gaius mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1:14-17, whom Paul baptized by immersion and in

whose house one of the house churches of Corinth met. Gaius hosted Paul and also hosted one of the house churches in Corinth. Priscilla and Aquila also hosted a house church in Corinth, Acts 18:1-4. Justus also appears to have hosted a house church in Corinth, Acts 18:7-8. Counting the church at Cenchrea, there were at least three house church in Corinth and one house church in Cenchrea, the eastern port city of Corinth.

It is interesting that Paul baptized Gaius because, as a general rule, Paul left baptizing his converts to his coworkers. Paul's apostolic ministry is remarkable for how little baptizing he personally did. Even in the mid-first century AD, Paul was a Christian celebrity and he wanted to avoid the adulation and false worship that sometimes accompany Christian celebrity, Acts 14:11-15.

mine host - A host is one who receives someone with hospitality, one who provides food and lodging, a safe place to stay. One of the first hosts we encounter in the Bible is Abraham, in Genesis 18, who hosts or entertains the angel of the LORD. The next host we encounter in the Bible is Lot, in Genesis 19, who insists on hosting God's angels, to protect them and keep them safe from the men of Sodom, Genesis 19:1-3.

and of the whole church, saluteth you. - *Gaius mine host* was not only Paul's host, he was also the host of the whole church, indicating the house of Gaius as the house where a Corinthian house church met. One of the other house churches in Corinth met in the house of Priscilla and Aquila, Acts 18:1-3, Romans 16:4-5. Paul also stayed in Corinth at the home of Justus, Acts 18:7 and they may also have had a house church. Do you view a house church as a logical/viable place for a church to meet in the twenty first century? _____

Erastus - Erastus is a masculine noun, a Greek name for a man, meaning: beloved. It occurs three times in the NT. Here in Romans 16:23, where Erastus is the chamberlain of the city of Corinth, in Acts 19:22, where Timotheus and Erastus are two men who ministered to Paul, and who are sent by Paul into Macedonia, Greece, toward Corinth, and in 2 Timothy 4:20, where Paul has left Erastus. These could all be the same Erastus. I believe that the three verses which mention Erastus in the NT are all referring to the same man. Paul did, after all, have a penchant for making friends in high places, Acts 19:31.

There is a first century inscription in Corinth with the name Erastus, which states: "Erastus in return for his aedileship laid (the pavement) at his own expense." J. Murphy-O'Connor, *St. Paul's Corinth*, Wilmington, 1983, p. 37.

the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, - The chamberlain of the city, according to Paul, was Erastus. The office of chamberlain was a government position under the authority of Rome. A city chamberlain was like a treasurer, in charge of government services related to finances, with fiduciary responsibility to Rome and the Roman Senate.

Remember that in 27 BC, at the command of the Roman Emperor Augustus, Macedonia was divided into two provinces, Macedonia (northern Greece) and Achaia (southern Greece). This division by Augustus the Roman Emperor was so that Achaia (southern Greece) could become a Roman Senatorial Province, governed by a Roman Proconsul while Macedonia (northern Greece) continued as a Roman Imperial province.

In AD 15, Emperor Tiberius made both Macedonia and Achaia Imperial provinces, ruled directly by a representative of the Emperor. In AD 35, Emperor Claudius made Macedonia and Achaia Senatorial provinces, with the governor or proconsul appointed by the Senate.

Quartus a brother. - Quartus is a masculine name, of Latin origin. It is the name of a man and means: fourth. Some ancient sources place Quartus among the other seventy disciples mentioned in Luke 10:1 and he is said to have become the bishop of Berytus, the Roman name for ancient Beirut, Lebanon.

16:24 - The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

The grace - Consider where we would be without the grace of our holy God. The grace of God is what distinguishes biblical Christianity from cults, false religions, idolatrous religions, agnosticism and atheism. The grace of our God is freely available to all of them if they want to believe on the risen Lord Jesus Christ and get saved.

of our Lord Jesus Christ - Can you provide a verse or verses which tell us that Jesus Christ is the Creator of the entire universe? _____

Jesus is the Light of the World, our Messiah, Redeemer, Savior, Risen Lord, Our coming King, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. False religions have their good works, their self-esteem, their law of attraction and their self-help fantasies. False religions always view the grace of God as cooperating with their religious good works so that they can get saved. That is nothing more than the religious fantasy of Bible rejectors who refuse to believe on the risen Lord Jesus Christ as the only way to heaven, John 14:6. Do you love and serve the real Jesus of the Bible or the fake Jesus of religious grifters? _____

be with you all. Amen. - You all - It sounds American southern but this isn't aimed at everyone on earth. Paul aims his benediction only at born again saved people. Everyone on earth can access the grace of God in Christ but only saved people who are in Christ get the grace of God. Our lost hell bound world needs Jesus. They don't need Jesus plus their false religion. They don't need Jesus plus their false gods. They don't need Jesus plus their religious good works. By grace alone through faith alone they need to believe on the risen Lord Jesus Christ alone.

Have you noticed that the glorious God of the Bible is always a giver. False gods are fakirs, takers, religious grifters. They lead everyone who follows them down to hell. The God of the Bible leads everyone who believes on Him straight to heaven. The grace of God is not cheap but the grace of God is over-flowing and abundant in the lives of every believer. Even unbelievers receive the temporal grace of God in the sense of Matthew 5:45 and Acts 14:16-17.

16:25 - Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, -

Now to him that is of power to stablish you - This is the same word Paul used in Romans 1:11, where it is translated: *be established*. God stablishes or establishes you according to Paul's gospel of grace. That's why getting the gospel right is so important.

Spiritual stability in your life happens as God works in you: **1.** by saving you, **2.** by dwelling in your heart by faith, **3.** by justifying you by faith, **4.** by giving you His righteousness, Romans 5:18-19, 1 Corinthians 1:30, **5.** by sanctifying your heart by faith, **6.** by giving you His infallible word, **7.** by giving you all spiritual blessings in Christ, Ephesians 1:3, **8.** by making you a light in the darkness so that you reflect *the light of the glorious gospel of Christ*, 2 Corinthians 4:4, into your world.

**God is never interfaith and
real Christians are never interfaith.**

Therefore, Christians will never be established in Christ by eastern religious meditation or interfaith fellowships or positive thinking or positive affirmations or religious slogans or walking a labyrinth or grave soaking or speaking in tongues or praying with prayer beads or praying in tongues or chasing prosperity gospel pipe dreams by giving money to prosperity pimps.

God establishes you in Christ as you learn Bible doctrine, live by faith, walk in the Spirit and obey God. There are no shortcuts to biblical spirituality. There are no secrets and there are no shortcuts to: reading your Bible, learning Bible doctrine, living by faith, walking in the Spirit and obeying God.

There is no shortcut to learning to personally trust God. There is no shortcut to you personally waiting on God and praying to Him until He answers YOU. If you understand that statement, please put your initials here. _____ When Paul says Jesus Christ has power to establish you according to my gospel, here is what he means.

**My Gospel Is
Paul's Gospel+
1 Corinthians 15:1-4**

1. Paul's gospel is not the gospel of the KOH
2. Paul's gospel is not the gospel of the KOG
3. Paul's gospel is not the everlasting gospel
4. Paul's gospel is not the prosperity gospel
5. Paul's gospel is not the social gospel
6. Paul's gospel is not the good works gospel
7. Paul's gospel is not the be religious gospel

**Beyond 1 Corinthians 15:1-4,
Paul's Gospel Is**

1. About penal substitution - Isa 53:6 1 Tim 2:6, Tit 2:14,
2. About propitiation - Romans 3:25
3. About remission of sins - Romans 3:25
4. About our sin debt being paid - Romans 3:26
5. About being reconciled to God - Romans 5:11
6. About being saved by His life - Romans 5:10
7. About being justified by his grace - Romans 3:24
8. About being justified by faith - Romans 3:28, 5:1
9. About being justified by his blood - Romans 5:9
10. About sanctification by faith - Acts 26:18
11. About being predestinated to adoption - Ephesians 1:5
12. About being sealed by the Holy Spirit - Ephesians 1:13
13. About eternal security - OSAS - Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30

OSAS = Once Saved Always Saved
OSAS = Once Sealed Always Sealed
OSAS - Once Sealed, Always Saved
OSAS = Once Sealed Always Secure
OSAS = Once Saved Always Sealed
OSAS = Once Sealed Always Safe
OSAS = Once Saved Always Sanctified

When you learn those incredible biblical doctrinal truths and made them part of your daily life, you will be spiritually established. If you don't learn those incredible doctrinal truths, you can still be saved and go to heaven but without those truths, you will never be spiritually established. Without those incredible doctrinal truths, you will always be a baby Christian, stammering and struggling, *tossed to and fro* with every wind of doctrine, Ephesians 4:14.

What should you do?

Take that list of 13 incredible doctrinal truths and learn them. Study them, meditate on them, read and reread them. Make doctrinal truths a part of your life and your thoughts. Make notes in the margin of your Bible where those verses are found. Look up those verses and highlight them in your Bible. Make those verses part of your life and your thoughts and your daily habits.

Take Action: Print each of those 13 incredible truths on separate 3x5 cards and review them daily until they are permanently fixed in your mind.

Read and reread the verses until you have them in your mind and your heart. Would it be helpful to your Christian life if you write down those verses or print them out and work at memorizing them? _____ Remind yourself daily of what you have in Christ. Refuse to be a spiritual victim because, in Christ, you are never a victim. In Christ you are always spiritually victorious, 1 Corinthians 15:57.

*“That we henceforth be no more children,
tossed to and fro,
and carried about
with every wind of doctrine,
by the sleight of men,
and cunning craftiness,
whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”
Ephesians 4:14*

according to my gospel, - Paul's gospel, Romans 2:16, 16:25, 2 Timothy 2:8, beyond the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, encompasses the revealed truths associated with Paul and his gospel. The truths of Paul's gospel go beyond the death, burial and resurrection of Christ for our sins, Galatians 2:14. Paul's gospel includes the revelations given to Paul about remission of sins and redemption, propitiation, reconciliation, adoption, justification by faith, sanctification by faith, Jews and Gentiles being one body in Christ, the sealing by the Holy Spirit and eternal security of all who believe in Christ and whatever else Paul taught in his NT epistles.

Paul's gospel is not the gospel of the kingdom of heaven. The KOH is only found in Matthew's gospel and is not the gospel of the kingdom of God, found in the other gospels. And Paul's gospel is not the creation gospel, aka, the everlasting gospel preached by an angel in Revelation 14:6. Paul's gospel is found in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

When Paul refers to, *my gospel*, Romans 2:16, 16:25, 2 Timothy 2:8, that includes the basic gospel plus the Pauline doctrinal truths surrounding the gospel that God revealed to Paul. It isn't called *my gospel*, meaning, Paul's gospel, because Paul invented it or made it up. It is called Paul's gospel or *my gospel* because it was revealed to Paul and given to Paul by inspiration so that Paul could write it down in the NT and reveal it to us.

and the preaching of Jesus Christ, - The preaching of the biblical Jesus Christ is all of the post-resurrection doctrinal truths about Jesus Christ which are found in the NT, especially those truths revealed to the apostle Paul. The Lord Jesus Christ is the center of the biblical gospel and the center of God's plan of redemption.

That is true now, under grace, in a way that wasn't true in the OT, under law, because, back then, Christ hadn't come yet, therefore, there was no Christian gospel in the OT. Paul means, the preaching of Jesus Christ in the sense of Paul's gospel, in the sense of conforming to the gospel truths revealed by God to Paul and written down by Paul in the Pauline epistles.

Paul is referring to the preaching of Jesus Christ as it relates to the list of spiritual blessings Paul mentions in Ephesians 1:3 and the rest of Ephesians. Paul means, the preaching of Jesus Christ as the only all-sufficient propitiating sacrifice for Jews and Gentiles who believe on the risen Christ. Paul means, the preaching of Jesus Christ as the only risen Savior who can save Jews and Gentiles and make them all one body in Christ. Everything in the Christian life revolves around the glorious truths of Pauline doctrine about the biblical Christ.

according to the revelation of the mystery, - Mysteries in the Bible can only be known to human beings by revelation from God, meaning, they can only be known when God reveals them to us and shows us what the mysteries are and what the mysteries mean. If God hasn't yet revealed them to us, as was the case in the OT, then God's mysteries in the Bible cannot be known.

Eight of the ten mysteries in the NT were revealed to Paul, Ephesians 3:3-4, so that Paul could reveal them to us, Ephesians 3:9, 2 Corinthians 12:1-7. In the NT, Jesus Christ is the One who reveals things, Galatians 1:12, 2:2, Revelation 1:1-2. God chose to reveal most of His prophetic mysteries to and through the apostle Paul.

In the Bible, a mystery is a Bible truth that was not revealed in previous times but is now (first century AD time frame) revealed to God's people in the Bible. It was a mystery because it was a truth not known or knowable until God revealed it in the Bible/NT, at the particular time He chose to reveal it, Colossians 1:26.

A mystery in the NT can also refer to something God wants us to believe, without us being fully able to understand it, without us being able to fully comprehend it by common sense, worldly wisdom, life experience or logic. If we ever comprehend it, it will be by the illumination of God to our spirit.

An example of that kind of mystery is the mystery of Christ and the church, Ephesians 5:32. Even after repeated reading of Ephesians 5, the mystery is still difficult to make sense of. God expects us to believe these mysteries by faith because they cannot be understood by human logic.

When we think of mysteries in the Bible, one of these mysteries is mentioned by Mark, the author of the Gospel of Mark. One of these mysteries is mentioned by the apostle John in the book of Revelation and the other eight mysteries in the NT are revealed to the apostle Paul, 2 Corinthians 12:7, and through what God gave Paul by inspiration, to give to us.

Here are ten NT mysteries

1. The mystery of the kingdom of God - Mark 4:10-12
2. The mystery of Israel's blindness and restoration - Romans 11:25
3. The mystery of the gospel of Christ - Romans 16:25, Ephesians 6:19
4. The mystery of the rapture - 1 Corinthians 15:51
5. The mystery of Christ (Jew-Gentile in one body) - Eph 3:3-9, Col 4:3
6. The mystery of Christ and the church - Ephesians 5:32
7. The mystery that Christ dwells in your hearts by faith - Ephesians 3:17
8. The mystery of iniquity doth already work - 2 Thessalonians 2:7

9. The mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh - 1 Timothy 3:9, 16
10. MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT - MOHAR - Revelation 17:5

The particular mystery that Paul mentions in Romans 16:25 is the mystery of the gospel of Christ, meaning that, in Christ, saved Jews and Gentiles are one body. The mystery of the gospel and the mystery of Christ are connected and related. This mystery was not preached or known or revealed in the OT. This mystery was not preached or known or revealed in the time frame covered by the NT gospels. By the wisdom of God, this mystery:

- a. was kept secret since the world began - Romans 16:25
- b. was not made known unto the sons of men - Ephesians 3:5
- c. the fellowship of the mystery... was hid in God - Ephesians 3:9
- d. was hid from ages and generations - Colossians 1:26
- e. caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter - 2 Cor 12:4
- f. through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh - 2 Cor 12:7
- g. But now is made manifest - Romans 16:26
- h. but now is made manifest to his saints - Colossians 1:26
- i. now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour - 2 Tim 1:10

which was kept secret since the world began, - This describes progressive revelation - God, in the Bible, revealing His plan over the centuries, on His schedule. The universe and the world in which we live operate by the will of God, consist or hold together and work properly by the will of God, on God's timetable. God didn't reveal everything that would happen on earth to Adam and Abraham and Moses. Some things were kept secret since the world began until, in the wisdom of God and the fulness of time, Mark 1:15, Galatians 4:4, Ephesians 1:10, it was the right time to reveal them.

16:26 - But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:

But now is made manifest, - Now is the first century AD, 2 Timothy 1:10. The first century AD was when God revealed His plan to Paul and made it manifest or made it known, in writing. In the first century AD is when God revealed Paul's gospel and the mystery of Jew and Gentile being one body in Christ, to the apostle Paul so that Paul could write it in scripture and reveal it to his fellow apostles, Galatians 2:1-2, to the first century world and to us, Ephesians 3:1-11, 2 Timothy 1:10, 3:15-17.

No human author of the OT knew those truths because those truths were not revealed to them. No judge or prophet or priest or King of Israel or Judah in the OT knew those truths because God didn't reveal those truths to them. Because we have the whole Bible now - they didn't have the whole Bible back then - we know (or should know) a lot more about God's truth and God's plan than they knew.

God kept Paul's gospel and the mystery of saved Jews and Gentiles being one body in Christ a secret until Paul got saved and then, in God's wisdom, God revealed these hidden things to Paul so that God could reveal them to us through the apostle Paul, Galatians 1:1, 11-12.

and by the scriptures of the prophets, - This refers to the OT prophets and the OT scriptures, which contained the truth of God but some of that truth of God about the mystery of Christ and the mystery of the gospel was hid in God until the first century AD and the ministry of the apostle Paul. So, when people read the OT, before God revealed the mystery to Paul, for him to write it down in the NT, they couldn't see or understand the mystery. In the fulness of time, God revealed the mystery through Paul. Do you see Jesus in the scriptures of the OT prophets? _____ What ones stand out to you? _____

The scriptures of the prophets refers to the Hebrew OT, Luke 24:25-27. Paul was not a nitwit professing Christian, like so many false teachers are today, who believe in divorcing the gospel of Christ from the OT. Instead of that bizarre foolishness, Paul, like Jesus, constantly quoted the OT and appealed to the authority of the OT to support his gospel preaching and evangelism.

according to the commandment of the everlasting God, - This is a clear statement of the plan of God being worked out at the command of God on His timetable, century after century, millennium after millennium. God's commandment is worldwide evangelism through the church which is His body, Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Colossians 1:24-29. Essentially, the church is doing now, what unbelieving Israel refused to do - Believe on Jesus, get saved and evangelize the world.

*“And the times of this ignorance
God winked at;
but now commandeth
all men every where to repent:”
Acts 17:30*

*“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise,
as some men count slackness;*

*but is longsuffering to us-ward,
not willing that any should perish,
but that all should come to repentance.”*

2 Peter 3:9

made known to all nations - Starting in the first century AD, when God revealed it to Paul and Paul revealed it to us in his NT writings. When it comes to the glorious gospel of Christ, 2 Corinthians 4:4, God is an *all nations* kind of God - no limits and no exclusions on who gets the gospel, no limits or exclusions on who can get saved. God doesn't divide the human race into the people He elected to save and the people He elected to damn. That TULIP foolishness isn't even found in the Bible. According to 2 Peter 3:9, God wants: **a.** Only a few to repent and get saved. **b.** Only the elect to repent and get saved. **c.** All to come to repentance and get saved.

Are you an *all nations* kind of Christian? _____ If you are not an evangelistic, missionary minded, *all nations* Christian, then you are not following God and you are not following Christ and you are not following Paul, 1 Corinthians 11:1.

all nations - Paul used the words, *all nations*, with intent, to call to our mind God's view of all nations. When we explore these words, *all nations*, in the OT, from our perspective of knowing the mystery because we now have and believe the NT, we see God's plan to include Gentiles foreshadowed and prefigured in the elements of the Jewish Temple coming from all nations, a foreshadowing that Gentiles can be in the family of God. *All nations* explains God's intention, from the beginning, that the gospel is for everyone including the Gentile nations. God saves believing individuals, Jews and Gentiles alike, Romans 10:11-13.

All nations speaks of God's evangelistic command to us

Deuteronomy 26:19, 28:1 - Israel was to be high above *all nations*

Deuteronomy 28:37 - Rebellious Israel will be a byword among *all nations*

2 Samuel 8:11 - David dedicated silver and gold from *all nations*

1 Chronicles 29:1-10 - That silver and gold from *all nations* was used in building Solomon's Temple, 1 Chronicles 22:14

1 Chronicles 16:24 - Declare his glory... among *all nations*

Psalms 67:2 - That thy way may be known upon earth... among *all nations*

Psalms 86:9 - *All nations*... shall come and worship before thee, O Lord

Malachi 3:12 - And *all nations* shall call you (Israel) blessed

Matthew 28:19 - Jesus - Go ye therefore, and teach all nations

Mark 13:10 - And the gospel must first be published among all nations

Luke 24:47 - repentance and R.O.S. should be preached... among all nations

Acts 14:16 - Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways

Acts 17:26 - And hath made of one blood all nations of men

Romans 1:5 - obedience to the faith among all nations

Romans 16:26 - made known to all nations for the obedience of faith

Revelation 7:9 - a great multitude... of all nations

Revelation 15:4 - all nations shall come and worship before thee

for the obedience of faith: - This phrase refers to people obeying the gospel, Romans 10:16, and getting saved. The purpose of preaching the glorious gospel of Christ is *for the obedience of faith*. We preach the glorious gospel of Christ so that people can obey the gospel, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and get saved.

There is an expectation, when we preach the glorious gospel of Christ, that all who hear are capable of believing, that all who hear are capable of getting saved, that all who hear are capable of obedience. No verse about election says that only a few are elected to get saved and everyone else is unelect and Christ didn't die for them, therefore they cannot get saved. Only TULIPs believe that false teaching.

Does the glorious gospel of Christ have boundaries which limit who can get saved? _____ Is the glorious gospel of Christ limited in its scope, meaning, most who hear it cannot get saved because, according to TULIP Teaching, Jesus didn't die for them? _____ Is the glorious gospel of Christ only for a select few who are chosen and elect or is the glorious gospel of Christ for all who believe? _____

According to John 3:16 and the words of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who did Christ die for? _____ According to 1 Timothy 2:4, how many people will God have to be saved? _____ According to 1 Timothy 2:6, how many people did Jesus give himself a ransom for? _____ According to 2 Peter 2:1, did Jesus also die for false teachers? _____ According to 2 Peter 3:9, how many people does God want to repent and get saved? _____ According to Romans 10:13, who can get saved? _____

16:27 - To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

To God only wise, - There is no wisdom in the false teaching of false teachers or in the false teaching of the cults, including the TULIP cult. Never farm out your Christian thinking to a TULIP. Never tiptoe through the tulips with the TULIP tribe. Never trust the wisdom of anyone who denies what the Bible says about salvation and offers you another way of salvation which isn't found in the NT. The curse of God is upon those who offer an unbiblical, unChristian way of salvation, Galatians 1:6-9. Do you believe Galatians 1:6-9 is true? _____

To God only wise refers to the wisdom of God. Christians get the wisdom of God from what the Bible says in context. We do not get the wisdom of God from TULIP philosophers and TULIP teachers who offer us a non-biblical, non-Christian plan of salvation. Please don't fall for the TULIP lie about salvation.

TULIP teaches that no one can accept Christ, believe on Christ, come to Christ, have faith in Christ, call upon Christ, repent of his sin of unbelief in Christ or have saving faith in Christ or receive Christ because all sinners are, according to TULIP, Totally unable to accept Christ, to believe on Christ, to come to Christ, to receive Christ. To check that out in the Bible, please read John 1:11-12. Does receiving Him come before salvation? _____ According to TULIP, every sinner is so lost that he cannot get saved by receiving Christ, period.

So, according to TULIP, God has to save the sinner against the sinner's will, without the sinner wanting to get saved, while the sinner resists getting saved, without the sinner coming to Christ, while the sinner is unable to call upon the name of the Lord, without the sinner calling upon the name of the Lord, without the sinner believing on the risen Christ as his Savior from sin, hell and the wrath of God. That is precisely the weird unbiblical, unChristian, ungodly, unholy way that every sinner, according to TULIP, gets saved. I will give you a \$1 million dollar bill if you can show me a Bible verse which says what TULIP teaches.

TULIP believes and teaches that God saves lost hellbound sinners

1. Before they accept the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior
2. Before they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ
3. Before they call upon the name of the Lord
4. Before they believe on the risen Christ
5. Before they believe the gospel
6. Before they have faith in Christ
7. Before they repent of their sin of unbelief
8. Before they come to Christ

9. Before they receive Christ

to God only wise - TULIPs are not very wise and so, they say you can only do all of the 9 things on that list after God saves you, not before God saves you. If you as a Christian, believe what the Bible says in context about salvation, TULIP people denigrate you by calling you an Arminian. Never pit a puny philosophical TULIP brain against God and the Bible. You will lose every time. Jesus never taught TULIP and the apostle Paul never taught TULIP and the Bible never teaches TULIP.

TULIPs are not wise because TULIPs teach that you can only do those things on that list about getting saved, after God saves you without you doing any of the things on that list. Does the Bible ever give that backwards plan of salvation? _____ If you answered Yes, please list the verses which give that backwards plan of salvation, where you get saved without believing in your heart.

TULIP False Teaching About Salvation in their own words.

R.C. Sproul, 1939-2017

“In historic Reformation thought, the notion is this: regeneration precedes faith.” R.C. Sproul, August 25, 2017, Article, TULIP and Reformed Theology: Irresistible Grace. Precede means: to come before.

“The reformed view of predestination teaches that before a person can choose Christ his heart must be changed. He must be born again... one does not first believe, then become reborn... In regeneration, God changes our hearts. He gives us a new disposition, a new inclination. He plants a desire for Christ in our hearts. We can never trust Christ for our salvation unless we first desire Him. This is why we said earlier that regeneration precedes faith.” R.C. Sproul, 1939-2017, Chosen By God, pp. 72, 118.

Notice what Sproul says. “The reformed view of predestination teaches...” He doesn’t say, “The Bible view of predestination teaches... or, The Bible view of predestination says...” because he knows the Bible doesn’t agree with or teach or say what he believes about the reformed view.

On your journey to heaven,
never let anyone reroute you

away from the Bible and
toward the reformed view.
That can be a spiritually deadly mistake.

Remember, the word, regeneration, only occurs two times in the NT, Matthew 19:28 and Titus 3:5, and never in the OT. Regeneration means, the new birth. Does the Bible ever say that regeneration or the new birth, precedes faith? _____ If you answered, Yes, where does the Bible say that? _____ Since the Bible doesn't say that, why would anyone ever teach that heresy? _____

John Piper, 1946-

"We can say, first, that regeneration is the cause of faith... Having been born of God results in our believing. Our believing is the immediate evidence of God's begetting." John Piper, March 2, 2008, Online sermon.

Does the Bible ever say that, regeneration is the cause of faith? _____
Does the Bible say that, Having been born of God results in our believing? _____
Does the Bible ever say that, Our believing is the immediate evidence of God's begetting? _____ If you answered Yes, where does it say that? _____

A.W. Pink, 1886-1952

"A man is not regenerated because he has first believed in Christ, but he believes in Christ because he has been regenerated." A.W. Pink, 1886-1952, The Sovereignty of God.

Does the Bible say that regeneration comes before faith? _____
Does the Bible ever say you have to be regenerated before you can believe on Christ? _____ Does the Bible say you have to get saved before you can believe on Christ? _____ If you answered, Yes, where does the Bible say that? _____

According to Reformed and Calvinist teaching, only after God regenerates you (or saves you) by irresistible grace, apart from repentance, apart from faith in Christ, apart from belief on Christ and apart from believing the gospel, then and only then are you capable of having faith to believe on Christ.

In plainer words, they teach that you have to get saved and regenerated before you can believe on Christ as your Savior. Have you ever read any verse(s) in the Bible, which say that? _____ If Yes, which verses? _____
TULIP teaches that no one can do what the Bible says we must do to get saved.

To get saved, we must: Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 16:30-31. TULIP denies that we have the ability to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore, TULIPs are traitorous to the truth of the Bible. The false teaching of Irresistible Grace - the I in TULIP - should not be believed or taught by anyone. TULIP teaches that God regenerates/saves you as a sovereign act of His irresistible grace without your will being involved. There are three things to keep in mind about that.

1. The Bible never says what TULIP teaches and never even hints that the TULIP plan of salvation is true because the TULIP plan of salvation is not biblical. The TULIP plan is foolish philosophy, not biblical truth.

2. No TULIP anywhere ever got saved according to the TULIP plan of salvation. If they are saved, they got saved according to Paul's NT gospel plan of salvation and then got led astray by false teachers and started teaching the traitorous and false TULIP plan of salvation. Never forget, people who teach a traitorous and false plan of salvation are under the curse of God according to Galatians 1:6-9.

3. TULIP teaches that you are not able to accept God's saving grace and so, God must save you irresistibly, against your will, since your will, according to TULIP, is as dead as a mackerel on the beach. According to TULIP, you cannot call upon the name of the Lord and you cannot resist God's saving grace when He decides to save you against your will, before you believe, without you believing, without you repenting of your unbelief, without you having faith.

Does the Bible say anything about the ability of unsaved men to resist God? The Bible says: Resisting God the Holy Ghost, is exactly what God's elect, Isaiah 45:4, unsaved Jews in national Israel, did for fifteen hundred years, Exodus 32:1-15.

*“Ye stiffnecked and
uncircumcised in heart and ears,
ye do always resist the Holy Ghost:
as your fathers did, so do ye.”
Acts 7:51*

The Bible never says: only after God regenerates/saves you against your will, before you do any of these things, are you able to accept, believe, repent your

sin of unbelief, receive Christ, etc. and do these things. If you think the Bible does say that, please list the verses which say that. _____

Obviously, the Bible never says what TULIP teaches about Total Inability. Obviously, if Total Inability was the teaching of the NT, there would be many verses which actually say that man's will is Totally Dead and Totally Unable to obey God or come to Christ or call upon the Name of the Lord and we could easily list the verses. And yet, no verse in the OT or the NT, in context, says what TULIP teaches about Total Inability and no verse or passage of scripture ever gives the false TULIP plan of salvation.

**When a Calvinist says that
salvation is not by works,
what he really means is,
salvation is not by faith.**

That is, after all, what TULIPs really believe. TULIPs, in their spiritual blindness, joyfully throw sola fide (justification by faith alone) under the bus. TULIPs claim sola fide - justification by faith alone, as if they believe it and then, in their next breath, TULIPs deny sola fide by clinging to Calvin's view of Total Inability. How do TULIPs do that?

Many TULIPs think that believing is a work and faith is a work, in spite of God, the Bible and Paul making it clear in Romans 4:5, that believing and faith are not works. TULIPs believe and teach that your belief and your faith are not involved in God saving you because you are Totally Unable to believe and Totally Unable to have faith and Totally Unable to call upon the name of the Lord and doing those things to get saved would be works.

*“But to him that worketh not,
but believeth on him
that justifieth the ungodly,
his faith is counted
for righteousness.”
Romans 4:5*

*“worketh not, but believeth -
his faith is counted”
Romans 4:5*

1. Is Romans 4:5 crystal clear, unmistakably clear, stunningly clear, irresistibly clear? _____ 2. According to Romans 4:5, is believing a work? _____ 3.

According to Romans 4:5, is faith a work? _____ 4. According to Romans 4:5, is a man's faith counted for righteousness or is faith not counted? _____

*“For by grace are ye saved
through faith;
and that not of yourselves:
it is the gift of God:
Not of works,
lest any man should boast.”
Ephesians 2:8-9*

*“That if thou shalt
confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus,
and shalt believe in thine heart
that God hath raised him from the dead,
thou shalt be saved.
For with the heart man believeth
unto righteousness;
and with the mouth
confession is made unto salvation...
For whosoever shall call
upon the name of the Lord
shall be saved.”
Romans 10:9-10, 13*

5. What is the biblical order or, which comes first, confessing with the mouth or salvation? _____ 6. What is the biblical order or, which comes first, believing in thine heart or salvation? _____ 7. What is the biblical order or, which comes first, calling upon the name of the Lord or salvation? _____ 8. Does the Bible say that God saves you before you call upon Him? _____

**What Is The Correct Order of Salvation?
Which comes first?
Circle the correct answers.**

- 1. Bible** - First, confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, then Salvation.
or
1. TULIP - First, salvation by Irresistible Grace, then
confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus.

- 2. Bible** - First, believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead,

then Salvation

or

2. TULIP - First, salvation by Irresistible Grace, then believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead.

3. Bible - First, call upon the name of the Lord, then Salvation.

or

3. TULIP - First, salvation by Irresistible Grace, then call upon the name of the Lord.

Which is the Bible way of salvation?

Which is the TULIP way of salvation?

**Do you believe the Bible
or do you believe TULIP?**

be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen. - The biblical Christian plan of salvation glorifies God. The unbiblical unChristian TULIP plan of salvation never glorifies God because it is not biblical and it is not Christian and it is never found in the Bible. In fact, according to Galatians 1:6-9, the false plan of salvation of the TULIP tribe has the everlasting curse of God upon it.

(Written to the Romans from Corinthus, and sent by Phebe servant of the church at Cenchrea.)

(Written to the Romans from Corinthus, - The apostle Paul is the author of this epistle to the Romans. It was written specifically to Roman Christians. We know that beyond a doubt because Paul personally greets or salutes 26 people by name plus many others who are not named. who were in Rome, working for Christ in Roman house churches when Paul wrote this letter in the mid-first century, AD 57-58.

Ancient Corinth is said to be named after Corinthos, one of the sons of Zeus. The land area around ancient Corinth is also called Corinthus, Corinthus is the Latin word for Corinth. In Bible times, Latin was the official language of Rome, which explains Luke 23:38, John 19:20.

The Greek word for Latin is: rōmaisti, pronounced hro-mah-is-tee' similar to saying, Roman. When you spoke Latin in the first century AD, you were

speaking rōmaisti or, Roman, the language of the Roman Empire. The area around ancient Corinth is today called, Archaia Korinthos. Modern Corinth is about three miles northeast of the archaeological ruins of ancient Corinth.

Corinthos = name of a Greek god
Corinth = English name for the Greek city
Corinthus = Latin name for the Greek city
Korinthos = Greek name for the Greek city

and sent by Phebe - By Paul's own testimony, Phebe is our sister, a saved and born again Christian and a servant of the church at Cenchrea, Romans 16:1. From the Romans end note here, we learn that Paul's letter to the Romans was sent by Phebe, meaning, Phebe personally carried Paul's letter to Rome or personally led the delegation from Corinthus/Cenchrea which carried Paul's letter to Rome.

servant of the church at Cenchrea.) - For more on Phebe as a servant of the church at Cenchrea, see our comments on Romans 16:1-2.

Open Book Review Questions For Romans 16

1. Romans 16:1 - Who carried Paul's Epistle to the Romans to Rome? **a.** The prophet Elijah. **b.** Aaron the brother of Moses. **c.** King Hassan of Morocco. **d.** Lazarus the best friend of Jesus. **e.** Phebe, servant of the church at Cenchrea.
2. Romans 16:1 - *Phebe our sister* means: **a.** Paul and Phebe were biological brother and sister. **b.** Phebe was a biological sister to people in Rome. **c.** Phebe was a soul sister. **d.** Phebe was a born again Christian and therefore, a spiritual sister in Christ to all who are saved.
3. Romans 16:1 - Phebe was a *servant of the church at Cenchrea*, meaning: **a.** Phebe was a deaconess. **b.** Phebe was the church janitor. **c.** Phebe was a slave who served the rich Christians at Cenchrea. **d.** Phebe helped out the church at Cenchrea by serving wherever needed. **e.** Phebe was the Head Pastor of the church at Cenchrea.
4. Romans 16:1 - Phebe is mentioned in v. 1 because: **a.** She led the delegation from Corinth/Cenchrea which carried Paul's letter to the Romans to Rome. **b.** She was a rich woman who got angry if not allowed to do fun stuff like carry Paul's letter to Rome. **c.** It was the dangerous time of year for traveling by ship on the Mediterean and no one else wanted to chance it.
5. Romans 16:1 - The Greek word for servant here is, diakonos, which is sometimes translated, deacon. Did the KJV get it wrong by translating diakonos as servant instead of deacon? **a.** Nope, of the 31 times diakonos is found in the NT, it is only translated deacon 2 times. **b.** Diakonos doesn't always mean deacon. Sometimes it means: servant or servants, sometimes it means: ministers, and one time it is translated, deacons. **c.** In AD 58, no one had the complete NT to hold in their hands and read, therefore, in AD 58, when Paul wrote Romans, no one was talking about diakonos and insisting it always means, deacon or deaconess.
6. Romans 16:1 - Cenchrea was: **a.** a small southern city about 40 miles from Birmingham, AL, **b.** an ancient Roman city on the island of Sicily, **c.** the eastern port city of Corinth in Greece.
7. Romans 16:2 - Why did Paul ask Roman Christians to receive Phebe in the Lord? **a.** He was testing their loyalty to him in case he decided to run for Pope.

b. He knew how difficult it could be to be a stranger in a Roman city. **c.** He expected Roman Christians to show Christian kindness to Phebe because she was saved and they were saved and they were part of the wonderful family of God.

8. Romans 16:2 - *As becometh saints* means: **a.** Behave like the loving Christians you profess to be. **b.** You can only become a saint after you pile up lots of good works. **c.** If you're too cheap to buy your sainthood, you'd better get busy working for it. **d.** Just focus on loving God and serving Jesus.

9. Romans 16:3 - Priscilla and Aquila were: **a.** Two slaves Paul owned. **b.** Two sisters who sometimes helped Paul in his ministry. **c.** Two elderly widows who spent their time helping Paul witness. **d.** A lovely married couple, serious Christians who were close friends of Paul and moved from city to city so they could work with Paul in ministry.

10. Romans 16:4 - Why did all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks for Priscilla and Aquila? **a.** They always served a free meal after church. **b.** They didn't get mad at people when professing Christians lived dirty sinful lives. **c.** They were serious Christians who helped Paul start church after church. **d.** They were serious Christians who loved opening their home as a place for the church to meet.

11. Romans 16:5 - *Likewise greet the church that is in their house.* What does that mean? **a.** Priscilla and Aquila owned a church building and lived in one of the Sunday School rooms. **b.** Priscilla and Aquila charged monthly rent so the church could meet in their house. **c.** Priscilla and Aquila, in Rome, Ephesus and Corinth and probably other cities, opened their personal home so that Christians were welcome to have church in their house.

12. Romans 16:5 - House churches were: **a.** Great cathedrals in which a few rich Christians lived in the first century AD. **b.** Meeting places for Christians because there were no actual church buildings in the first century AD. **c.** A place to meet for first century Christians which was already available everywhere the gospel was preached.

13. Romans 16:5 - Who was *the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ*? **a.** Mary the sister of Lazarus. **b.** The Ethiopian eunuch, who was visiting Israel at the time. **c.** the well beloved Epaenetus.

14. Romans 16:5 - In Romans 16, how many house churches are mentioned by Paul? **a.** Two. **b.** Three. **c.** Four. **d.** Five. **e.** Six. **f.** Seven.

15. Romans 16:5 - List two advantages for early Christians meeting in house churches. _____

16. Romans 16:7 - *Salute Andronicus and Junia* - Who are these people? **a.** They are two saved and born again men. **b.** They are a married couple and Junia is the wife. **c.** They are co-workers with Paul who got saved before Paul got saved. **d.** They are apostles just like Peter, James, John and Paul. **e.** They are not apostles but they were of note among the apostles because of their loving service for God.

17. Romans 16:7 - Why do we believe Junia was a man and not a woman? **a.** Junia is the Greek form of the male Hebrew name Yehunni. **b.** Romans 16:7 does not say Junia is a woman. **c.** Romans 16:7 doesn't say that Andronicus and Junia are apostles. **d.** No woman in the Bible is said to be an apostle in the sense of being chosen by Jesus to hold the apostolic office.

18. Romans 16:7 - *My fellowprisoners* means: **a.** Andronicus and Junia were prisoners WITH Paul in the same jail or prison Paul was in. **b.** Andronicus and Junia were prisoners LIKE Paul, in some jails or prisons but not necessarily at the same time Paul was in jail or prison. **c.** First century Christians besides Paul, were privileged to witness for Christ while incarcerated. **d.** Andronicus and Junia were imprisoned BY Saul/Paul before he got saved, Acts 8:3.

19. Romans 16:7 - If someone is *of note among the apostles*, does that mean, they are an apostle? **a.** Yes. **b.** No. **c.** If it doesn't say they were an apostle, we should not insist they were an apostle.

20. Romans 16:10 - *Them which are of Aristobulus' household*. Does this indicate that a house church met in the house of Aristobulus? **a.** Yes. **b.** No. **c.** I am not sure which answer is correct.

21. Romans 16:11 - *The household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord*. Was there a house church meeting in the house of Narcissus? **a.** Yes. **b.** No. **c.** I believe there is a good probability of that.

22. Romans 16:12 - *Persis, which laboured much in the Lord*. What does this mean, since Paul saluted Tryphena and Tryphosa and their labour in the present tense and differentiated Persis by putting her labour in the past tense? **a.** Persis was old and probably retired. **b.** Persis was elderly and physically unable to do

much labor. **c.** Persis has lived a blessed life of labouring for Christ and was still held in high regard by her fellow Christians and by Paul.

23. Romans 16:12 - Why does Paul say, *the beloved Persis*, instead of saying, Persis my beloved? **a.** Persis is a woman and Paul is a man. It would not be proper for Paul, a single man, to refer to Persis, a woman, as, my beloved. **b.** Paul referred to some men as, my beloved, in Romans 16, because that simply identified them as beloved co-workers, not as lovers.

24. Romans 16:13 - *Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord*. Who is Rufus? **a.** This Rufus is the son of Simon a Cyrenian, Mark 15:21. **b.** This Rufus is not the Rufus of Mark 15:21 but instead, is a different Rufus.

25. Romans 16:13 - *Rufus chosen in the Lord*. What does it mean to be, chosen in the Lord? **a.** Rufus is chosen IN the Lord, meaning, Rufus got in Christ, meaning, when Rufus believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit baptized him into the body of Christ, 1 Cor 12:13, then Rufus was in the Lord and being in the Lord, then Rufus was chosen in the Lord. **b.** Rufus was not chosen in eternity past or saved and born again in eternity past. **c.** Rufus was not unconditionally elected to get saved in eternity past. **d.** Rufus was not chosen in the false sense of irresistible grace. **e.** Rufus was not predestinated to get saved by a decree of God made in eternity past. **f.** All of the above.

26. Romans 16:13 - *Rufus... and his mother and mine*. What does this mean? **a.** Paul and Rufus were blood brothers with the same parents. **b.** Paul and Rufus were both Jewish men who had received Jesus their Messiah. **c.** Paul and Rufus were brothers in Christ and that is the basis of their kinship.

27. Romans 16:14 - *Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them*. Does that sound like a house church in first century Rome? _____

28. Romans 16:15 - *Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them*. Does that sound like a house church in first century Rome? _____

29. Romans 16:16 - What does it mean to, *Salute one another with an holy kiss*?

30. Romans 16:16 - Does this verse say: The Church of Christ salutes you?
_____ What does the verse say? _____

31. Romans 16:16 - The Bible never mentions the denomination which calls itself, the Church of Christ. **a.** True. **b.** False.

32. Romans 16:16 - What are *the churches of Christ*? **a.** The only correct biblical name for any church anywhere. **b.** The collective name of many churches, similar to, the churches of God and the churches of the Gentiles and the churches of Achaia. **c.** Not the name of a church denomination.

33. Romans 16:16 - Does Paul say that every modern church must use the name, Church of Christ? **a.** Yes. **b.** No. **c.** If you answered Yes, please list the verse(s) where Paul says that. _____

34. Romans 16:16 - Does the Bible ever mention the modern denomination which calls itself, the Church of Christ? **a.** Yes. **b.** No.

35. Romans 16:16 - Does this verse say or does any verse say that, you contact the blood of Christ in the waters of the baptismal pool? **a.** Yes, the Bible says that. **b.** No, the Bible never says that. **c.** Since the Bible never says that, no one should promote and teach that false teaching.

36. Romans 16:16 - Is the term, the churches of Christ, just another name for the church of God, Acts 20:28? **a.** Yes. **b.** No.

37. Romans 16:17 - According to this verse, do Christians have a responsibility to learn sound doctrine and reject false doctrine? **a.** Yes. **b.** No.

38. Romans 16:17 - Why are Christians told to mark false teachers and avoid false teachers? _____

39. Romans 16:17 - Should we get friendly with false teachers and listen to their false teaching in hopes of winning them to Christ? **a.** No, that is the opposite of what the Bible says. **b.** Yes, Paul, God and the Bible got it wrong in Romans 16:17.

40. Romans 16:17 - How should Christians deal with false doctrine? **a.** Spread it everywhere. **b.** Don't listen to it. **c.** Don't believe it. **d.** Don't spread it. **e.** Don't support it financially. **f.** Don't let false doctrine infect your local church.

41. Romans 16:17 - How should Christians deal with false teachers?

- a.** Reject them.
- b.** Reject their music.
- c.** Reject their books.

- d.** Reject their leading.
- e.** Reject their influence.
- f.** Reject their authority.
- g.** Reject their ministries.
- h.** Reject their teachings.
- i.** Reject their appeals for money.
- j.** Reject their "Bible" Conferences.
- k.** All of the above.

42. Romans 16:17 - Given that, in Romans 16, Paul mentions at least five house churches in Rome, to whom does Paul direct his warning about false doctrine and false teachers? **a.** To the church at Corinth. **b.** To the churches of Asia. **c.** To Christians in the house churches of Rome.

43. Romans 16:17 - Which of the following will help Christians obey Paul's instructions in Romans 16:17?

a. Knowing what the Bible says. *"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."* Isaiah 8:20

b. Walking in the Spirit. *"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."* Galatians 5:16

c. Obeying the leading of the Holy Spirit. *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."* Romans 8:14

d. Rejecting false teachers and their false teaching, as God instructs us. *"A man that is an heretick, after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself."* Titus 3:10-11

44. Romans 16:17 - What are seven reasons to never tolerate false teachers in your church? **a.** To publicly point out their false teaching, 2 Timothy 3:9, **b.** So Christians recognize their false teaching for what it is. **c.** To publicly point out false teachers, **d.** So Christians know who the false teachers are. **e.** Because God's purpose is to keep false teaching and false teachers out of His church. **f.** Because God's purpose is to do this in a public and confrontational way so that false teachers and their false teaching are rejected in public. **g.** Because dealing with false teachers in this way is an excellent form of biblical church discipline. **h.** All of the above.

45. Romans 16:18 - According to Romans 16:18, who do false teachers serve? **a.** Our Lord Jesus Christ, **b.** Their own belly. **c.** The Sultan of Siam. **d.** Not our Lord Jesus Christ.

46. Romans 16:18 - What are two methods used by false teachers to deceive Christians? **a.** Good words. **b.** Fair speeches. **c.** Barbecue suppers.

47. Romans 16:18 - What do false teachers intend to do? **a.** Deceive the hearts of the simple. **b.** Fool the foolish. **c.** Hornswoggle the saints. **d.** Lead astray the spiritually lazy.

48. Romans 16:19 - According to Romans 16:19, is it better to be known for your obedience or for your disobedience? _____

49. Romans 16:19 - According to Romans 16:19, which is better? **a.** Being wise unto that which is good. **b.** Being simple concerning evil. **c.** Both are correct.

50. Romans 16:19 - What does it mean, to be wise unto that which is good?

51. Romans 16:19 - What does it mean, to be simple concerning evil?

52. Romans 16:19 - Will you make it one of your Rules of Life to obey what Romans 16:19 says? **a.** Yes. **b.** No. **c.** Why are you trying to get me to live like a real Christian?

53. Romans 16:20 - Who was this said to? _____ When was this said to them? _____

54. Romans 16:20 - List two things which describe what it means, to *bruise Satan under your feet shortly*. _____

55. Romans 16:20 - *Shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly* - Does that primarily mean the second coming of Christ or does it have other meanings? _____ Please name another meaning besides the second coming of Christ. _____

56. Romans 16:20 - What is the proto-evangelium in Genesis 3:15? **a.** The first mention of human rights. **b.** The first mention of heaven. **c.** The first mention of

equal rights for all. **d.** The first mention of priests and popes. **e.** The first mention of Messiah. **f.** The first mention of the Gospel.

57. Romans 16:20 - Paul alludes to Genesis 3:15 when he speaks of bruising Satan. In your own words, please explain what Genesis 3:15 means.

58. Romans 16:20 - Is the virgin birth of Christ the point that Moses makes in Genesis 3:15, when he writes about the seed of the woman? **a.** Yes, that makes sense to me now. **b.** No, I don't understand everything I know about that. **c.** Yes, probably because Moses mentions the woman's seed.

59. Romans 16:20 - The seed of the woman can only be Messiah Jesus. Is that how you understand Genesis 3:15 and Romans 16:20? **a.** Yes, I understand Genesis 3:15 as the first prophesy in the Bible about Messiah Jesus. **b.** No, I'm still struggling to get my mind around these truths.

60. Romans 16:22 - Who wrote Romans? **a.** Paul the apostle. **b.** Tertius. **c.** Timothy. **d.** John the Baptist. **e.** Aquilla and Priscilla.

61. Romans 16:22 - How can we explain Romans 16:22? **a.** Paul just pretended he wrote Romans. **b.** Paul dictated Romans to Tertius. **c.** After dictating Romans to Tertius, Paul wrote a short ending and signed the letter to the Romans with his name so Christians in Rome would know it was legit and Paul wrote it.

62. Romans 16:22 - What are some biblical examples of someone dictating a book of the Bible instead of writing it by hand all by themselves? **a.** Jeremiah in Jeremiah 36:1-4, 18, 27. **b.** Paul in 1 Corinthians 16:21. **c.** Paul in Colossians 4:18 plus the endnote. **d.** Paul in 2 Thessalonians 3:17. **e.** All of the above.

63. Romans 16:23 - *Gaius mine host, and of the whole church* - Was there a house church meeting in the house of Gaius? **a.** Yes, it definitely indicates Gaius hosted the whole church. **b.** No, if it doesn't definitively say, Gaius hosted a house church, then I cannot believe it. **c.** Please don't ask me to think.

64. Romans 16:25 - Christians are established according to: **a.** Baptist beliefs, **b.** Roman Catholic beliefs, **c.** Evangelical beliefs, **d.** Cultural beliefs, **e.** According to Paul's gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ.

65. Romans 16:25 - *My gospel*, meaning Paul's gospel is: **a.** The Kingdom of Heaven, **b.** The Kingdom of God, **c.** The Creation Gospel, **d.** The Everlasting

Gospel, **e.** The gospel of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ according to the scriptures, **f.** The prosperity gospel, **g.** The social gospel, **h.** The good works gospel, **i.** The religious gospel.

66. Romans 16:25 - To whom did God make known the revelation of the mystery? **a.** Anne of Cleves, **b.** William the Conqueror, **c.** Lazarus the resurrected friend of Jesus, **d.** Barnabas the missionary companion of Paul, **e.** The apostle Paul.

67. Romans 16:25 - How many of the ten NT mysteries were revealed to Paul? **a.** Three, **b.** Five, **c.** Seven, **d.** Eight, **e.** All ten.

68. Romans 16:25 - Were NT mysteries known to people in the OT or were NT mysteries *kept secret since the world began*? **a.** NT mysteries were known to many people in the OT. **b.** NT mysteries were kept secret from everyone in the OT and only made known in the NT, after the resurrection of Christ.

69. Romans 16:26 - When Paul writes: *But now is made manifest...* when is now? **a.** 400 BC, **b.** The mid-first century AD, **c.** AD 325 during the Council of Nicaea, **d.** AD 904 under Pope Sergius III.

70. Romans 16:26 - Everyone who believes the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, meaning Paul's gospel, gets: **a.** A brand new Tesla in a color of their choice. **b.** A small vacation home near the beach. **c.** Political power to run their local church. **d.** The ability to forgive sins. **e.** Saved and justified by faith.

71. Romans 16:26 - *Made known to all nations* refers to: **a.** Evangelizing the lost. **b.** Witnessing to the unsaved. **c.** Leading people to Christ and then discipling them. **d.** Starting Christ honoring churches in every nation. **e.** All of the above.

72. Romans 16:26 - *For the obedience of faith.* That phrase implies that people, when they hear the gospel, will obey the call of God and get saved. Are you participating in spreading the glorious gospel of Christ *for the obedience of faith*? _____

73. Romans 16:27 - What is the TULIP plan of salvation, in your own words?

74. Romans 16:27 - What is the Bible plan of salvation, in your own words?

75. Romans 16:27 - TULIP teaches that God saves you BEFORE you believe on Jesus. Is that what the Bible says? _____

76. Romans 16:27 - TULIP teaches that God saves you BEFORE you have faith in Jesus. Is that what the Bible says? _____

77. Romans 16:27 - TULIP teaches that God saves you BEFORE you repent of your sin of unbelief in Christ as your Savior. Is that what the Bible says? _____

78. Romans 16:27 - TULIP teaches that God saves you BEFORE you believe the gospel. Is that what the Bible says? _____

79. Has anyone anywhere, including TULIPs, ever gotten saved according to the TULIP plan of salvation? **a.** Haha, No, of course not. **b.** No, not even in Fantasy Land. **c.** No way, no how, world without end, Amen. **d.** Never ever. **e.** No, not even in Bizarro world. **f.** All of the above.

Thank You for studying Romans with us.

May God abundantly bless you.