



## Relentless Grace: How the Gospel Changes Everything

Paul's Letter to the Romans

### Session 18 – Gospel Hands and Feet | Romans Chapter 16

Congratulations! Upon completion of this last session through Paul's letter to the Romans, you will receive your **GOSPEL HANDS AND FEET CERTIFICATE** authorizing you to go into all *your* world and preach the Good News to everyone. Actually, the Lord has already commissioned every believer to do that in Mark 16:15 (see fine print provisions in Acts 1:8, John 17:17–18, Matthew 5:16).

*Who needs the gospel?*

*What does the gospel look like in the everyday life of a believer?*

You're ready. Get set. Go.

### Icebreaker

When credits roll at the end of a movie do you head for the exit or stay to read them? What would motivate you to sit through reading a list of names?

### Goals for this Session:

- Discover why Romans was written for people just like us.
- Consider what fueled Paul's capacity for long-term, long-distance friendships.
- Pray for fresh opportunities to cultivate community and demonstrate love.

## Greetings to Rome

### Romans 16:1–16

Paul sends personal greetings to friends in Rome. Though he had yet to visit Rome, some of the people living there now knew Paul and served with him over the course of his missionary travels.

1. Paul introduces Phoebe to the church in Rome. From what we know, she helped support her church in Cenchrea (a suburb of Corinth) as well as Paul's ministry. She may have been saved during Paul's year and a half ministry in Corinth (Acts 18:11). It's likely that she delivered this letter for Paul since she was traveling to Rome.

- a. What did Paul ask the church in Rome to do for Phoebe, and why?

- b. As you skim this list of names, what stands out to you from Paul's personal, affirming descriptions of these people?

#### Good to Know

**Priscilla and Aquila** were close friends with Paul. Originally from Rome, they migrated to Corinth and set up their tent making business; Paul lived with them for a time. They invested their lives in sharing the gospel and discipling believers (Acts 18).

**Andronicus and Junias** may have been a married couple. Paul used the Greek feminine (Junia) but later texts use the masculine (Junias). So they may have been missionary partners like Paul and Silas. Paul mentions they were Christians before he was, which may indicate they were saved during Pentecost (Acts 2). They were highly regarded by the apostles and spent time in prison with Paul.

**Rufus** may also be the one mentioned in Mark 15:21. If so, his father was Simon of Cyrene who carried Jesus' cross.

The rest of Paul's list gives us a snapshot of the church in Rome: Males, females, Jews, Gentiles, slaves, freedmen, free born, well-to-do. Three house churches (verses 5, 14-15) and possibly two more (verses 10-11). From Paul's instructions on "weak" and "strong" members in the church, it's likely that most of the house churches were a blend of Jews and Gentile believers.

- c. If you were on this list, what would you hope Paul would be able to say about you?

2. Paul's friends and fellow servants included singles, couples, widows, slaves, wealthy business owners, baby Christians, and mature believers. Some were related to Paul by blood or by tribe, and some were *like* family to Paul. What do all these ordinary people with diverse backgrounds have in common? They were actively serving the Lord, learning and growing as they went. They remind us that Romans was written for people like us.

*"So we, being many, are one body in Christ."* Paul's list of names is evidence that he practiced what he preached. Romans 12–15 is summed up in four commands.\* What makes us a strong community of believers? Give some examples from scripture or your own experience.

a. **Accept one another** (Romans 15:7, 16:1–2).

b. **Be a servant** (Romans 12).

c. **Cultivate relationships** (Romans 14:7–8, 16:16).

**"The church must be a place where words are reliable, worship is meaningful, faith is invincible, grace is noticeable, and love is tangible."**

Charles Swindoll

d. **Demonstrate love** (Romans 13:10, 14:19, 15:1–2).

### Memory Verse

As you memorize this verse, let it sink in and make it part of your prayers. Ask the Holy Spirit to examine your heart and increase your understanding.

"Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ . . . to God, alone wise, be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ forever. Amen."

Romans 16:25, 27 NKJV

*Think About It . . .*

Which part of this verse resonates most with you today? How and in what way?

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\* Adapted from Charles Swindoll's **ABC's of Authentic Affection**, *Insights on Romans* (Illinois: Tyndale House, 2015), p. 366

## Greetings from Corinth

### Romans 16:17–27

Paul reminds the church to stay vigilant in the truth and sends greetings from others who were with him in Corinth.

1. A caution (verses 17–18). What potential trouble does Paul warn about, and who might be particularly vulnerable?

- a. What two things does Paul urge them to do in response?

**“We need to take what God has given us and use it constructively in the lives of others. We’d better make sure we get our Bibles open and use the Word of God.”**

**Greg Laurie**  
*Secrets to Spiritual Success*

Use the following verses for additional insight and instruction.

1 Timothy 1:5–7

2 Timothy 2:15–16

2 Timothy 3:13–17

- b. Simple obedience (verses 19–20). A Sunday school teacher asked the class if they knew what false doctrine was. One little boy said, “It’s when the doctor gives the wrong stuff to people who are sick.” He thought she said false *doctoring*—but when you think about it, he’s right! When someone wants to get right with God, giving them wrong information only makes things worse.

Paul commends the Romans for their obedience and encourages them to keep being wise in what is good and simple (pure; undiluted) concerning evil. Accepting and obeying God’s Word may appear naïve to the world, but it will protect us from false *doctoring*.

What is one valuable lesson you’ve learned about obedience?

Share a valuable lesson you’ve learned about disobedience.

2. *How the gospel changes everything.* Paul sends greetings from friends who are with him in Corinth. Paul was planning to leave soon for Jerusalem and three of these men would go with him (Timothy for certain, possibly Sosipater and Gaius as well). Paul closes his letter with praise and glory to God for the gospel—especially grateful to be used by God!

Since this is our last session in Romans, now is a good time to go back over your own Romans Road.

We've seen how the gospel changes everything in every chapter of Romans. Now it's your turn to share something of how the gospel has changed everything *for you* as a result of this study through Romans.

Share at least two main takeaway points, insights, or life-changing experiences that has grown your faith.

a. **The gospel is incentive for me to . . .**

b. **The gospel is incentive for me to . . .**

### **Good to Know**

**Timothy** was like a son to Paul and one of his most trusted assistants. He first joined Paul on his second missionary trip and served with him for the rest of Paul's earthly ministry.

**Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater** were Jewish friends and trusted aides.

**Tertius** ("third") was the scribe who penned this letter as Paul dictated.

**Gaius** was a convert from Paul's first trip to Corinth and one of only two men that Paul baptized personally. The church met in his home and he was Paul's host at the time Paul wrote Romans.

**Quartus** ("fourth") gets an honorable mention from Paul as a brother.



**Gospel at a Glance: Wise in What Is Good** | "We live in such a wicked time in which we are exposed to so many things that could be spiritually harmful. It seems that we are lacking purity today. But according to Romans 16:19, we as believers are 'to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil.' Another translation reads, 'I would have you well versed and wise as to what is good and innocent and guileless as to what is evil' (AMP). God is offering you true happiness, which is not contingent on how much you have but on *whom* you know. If you don't get your life properly aligned with God, you will always be chasing an elusive dream. But if you get your life aligned with God and start seeking Him, you will find purpose in life. You will find the happiness you are seeking." – Greg Laurie<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Greg Laurie, *Every Day With Jesus: Forty Years of Favorite Devotions*, ©2013, 2018 by Greg Laurie, p. 61

**A**doration **C**onfession **T**hankfulness **S**upplication

“Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.” Ephesians 6:18 NIV

In each session, we will pray—for ourselves, for others, for our church, and for our nation. As a focus for prayer, use the memory verse, another scripture, or what the Lord has impressed on you from the chapter. No need to be profound or elaborate, just authentic.

Write a simple prayer, including each element here.

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