

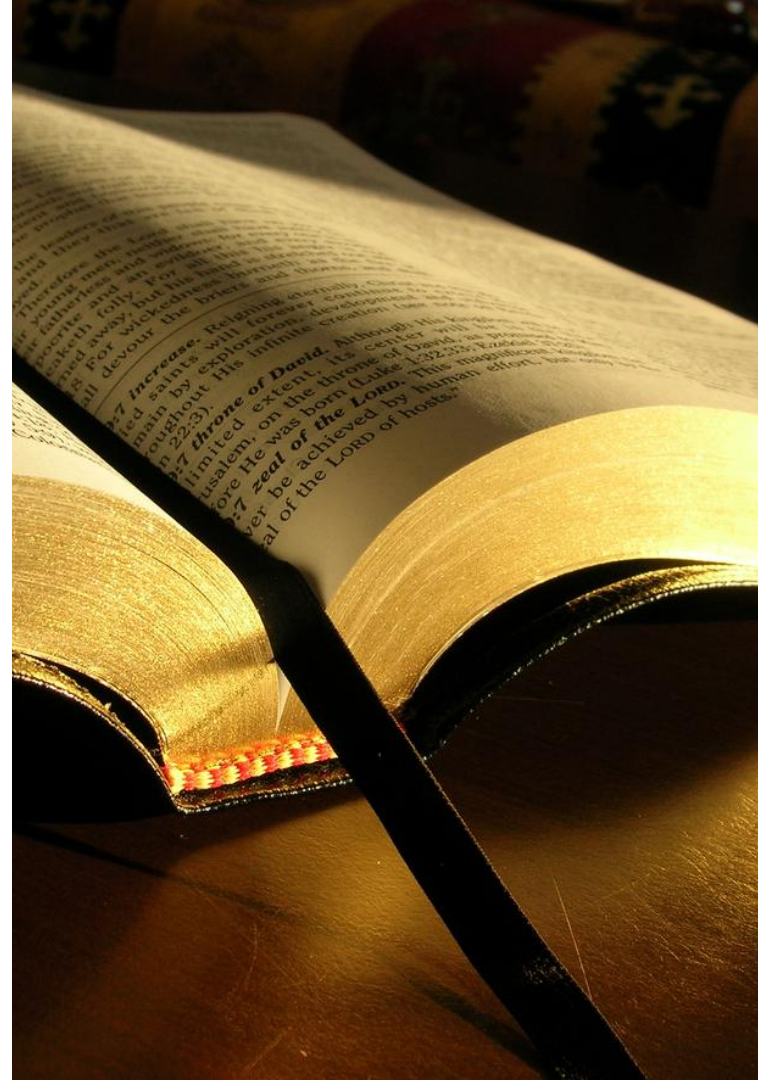


Romans 16

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Romans 16 may appear, at first, as simply a list of personal greetings, but on closer reading, it serves as a beautiful window into Paul the man, the life and depth of the early church, and a sweeping theological finale to Paul's epistle.

Paul begins by commending Phoebe, a servant of the church in Cenchrea, likely the one entrusted to deliver Paul's letter. Paul calls her a helper of many and of himself. She shows how women in the early church played key roles in ministry - through service, support, and sacrificial love.

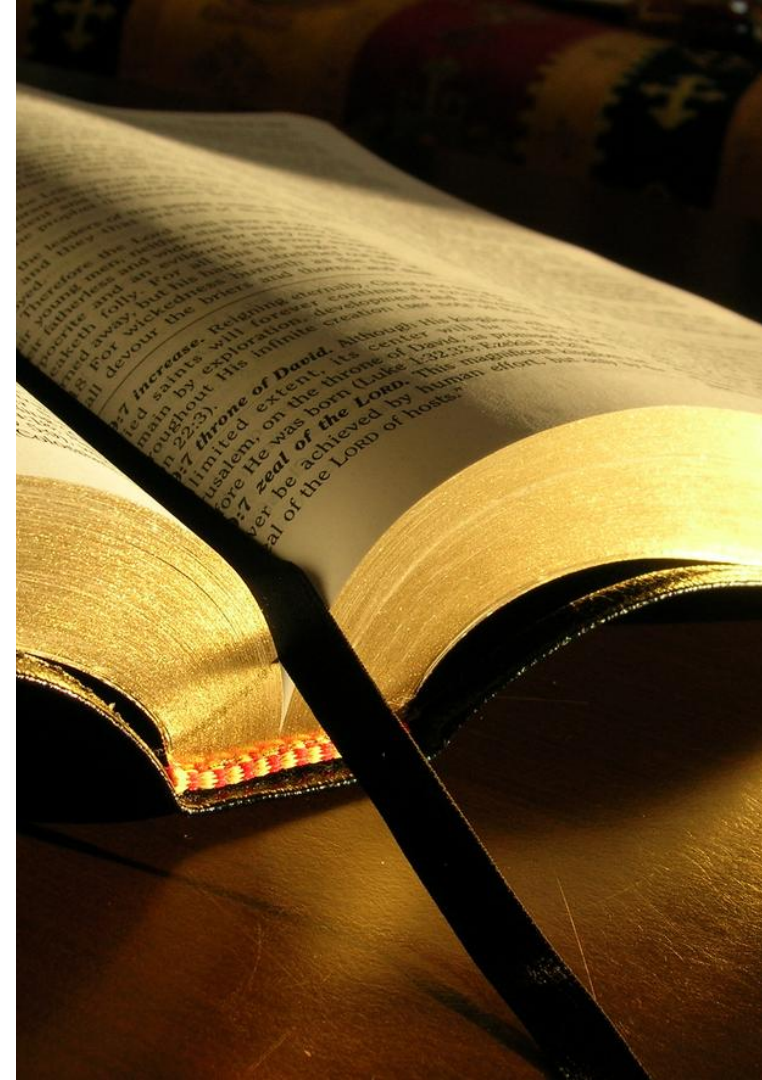




Paul then greets Priscilla and Aquila. Aquila was a Jew from Pontus; Priscilla was likely Roman, perhaps noble. Both were tentmakers like Paul and had been expelled from Rome under Claudius's edict (Acts 18:2). Despite their displacement, they served faithfully in Corinth, Ephesus, and later Rome. They hosted churches in their home and taught Apollos more accurately (Acts 18:26). Paul honors them as those who "risked their necks" for him, and he notes that all Gentile churches owe them thanks.

Lay couples, like them, show how hospitality, sound doctrine, and perseverance can be powerful in advancing the gospel.

Other names follow - each reflects a life changed by Christ. Some of these names appear archaeologically on Roman tombs. These names and greetings show the early church's diversity - men and women, Jew and Gentile, free and slave, city officials and ordinary workers - all one in Christ.

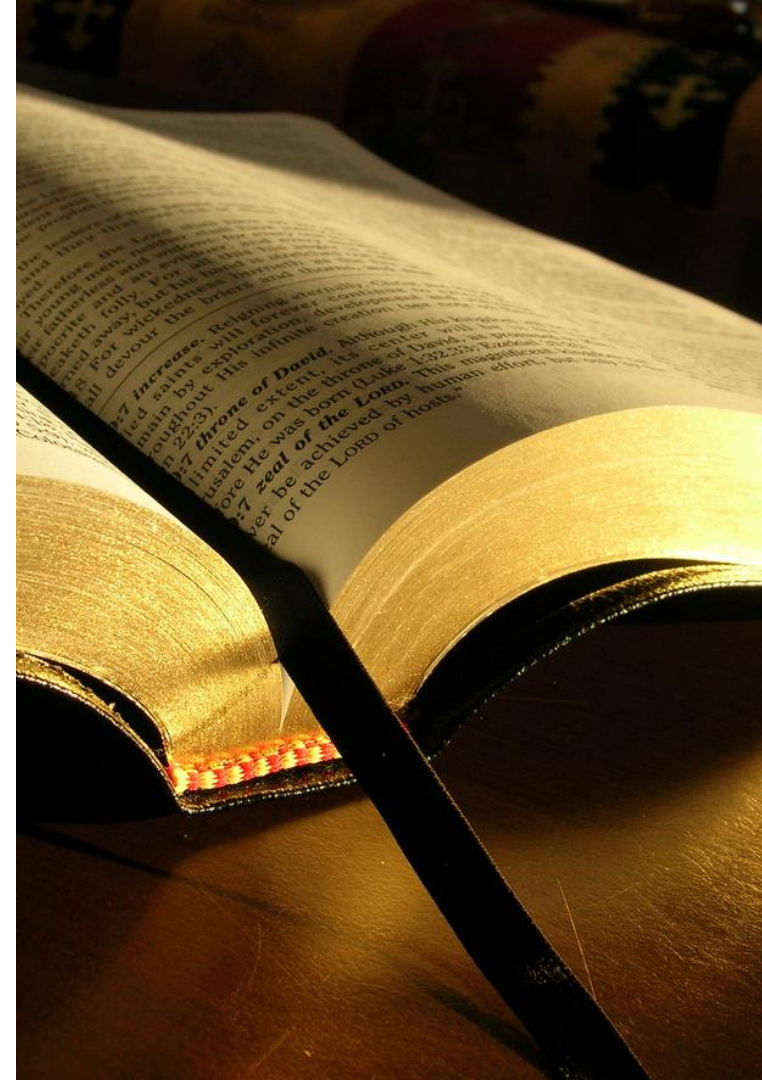


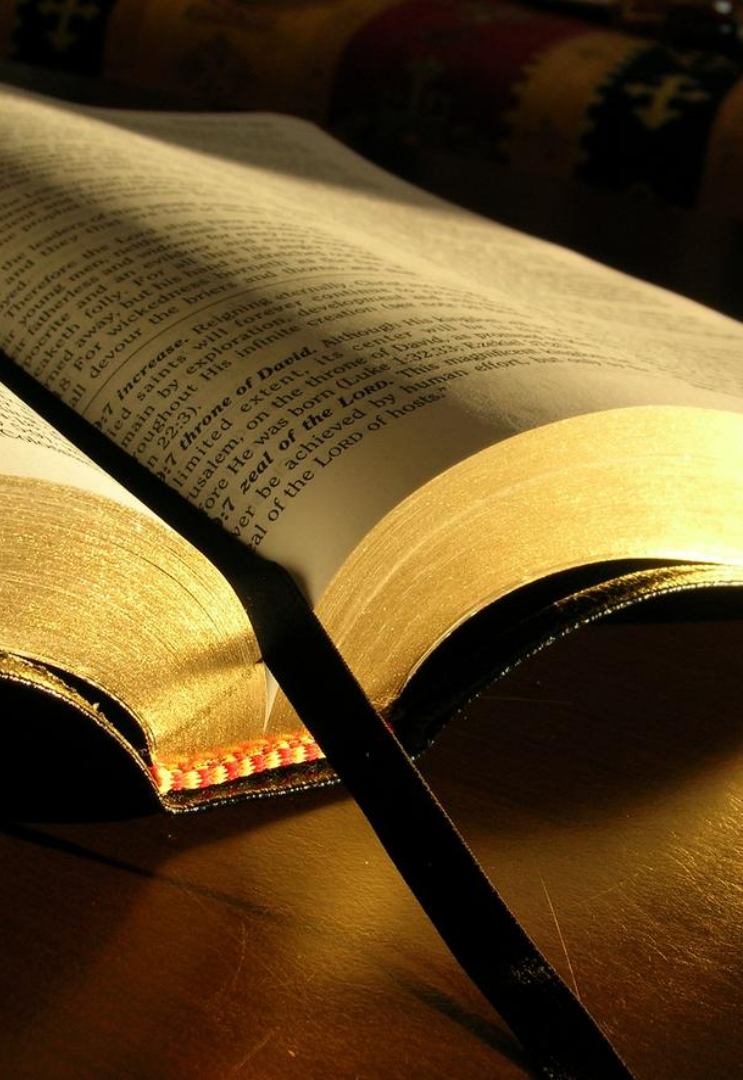


In verse 17, Paul warns the church to avoid those who cause divisions contrary to sound doctrine i.e., doctrine matters. False teachers serve their own desires, not Christ, and use "smooth words" to deceive the simple.

Today, such warnings are timely. In many places, especially working class and poor areas, false teachers promise wealth in exchange for faith - and a sizeable financial offering - exploiting the desperate.

Paul then refers back to Genesis: “And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.” This echoes Genesis 3:15, God’s promise that the woman’s seed would crush the serpent. Douglas Moo notes this draws the whole arc of redemption together: Christ has won and the Church now shares in His triumph. Longenecker adds that “under your feet” uses royal imagery, portraying Christ as King and believers as victors through Him.





Tertius, the scribe who penned the letter, adds his own greetings. His name, meaning “third,” follows Roman naming customs for slaves. That Paul includes his greeting shows trust and affection.

Romans ends with Paul’s doxology: The mystery is now fully revealed through the Scriptures and made known to all nations.

As Jesus told the Emmaus disciples, all the Scriptures point to Him.

Romans 16 reminds us that the gospel is not advanced by celebrity or spectacle, but by ordinary saints who live faithfully.

The Church still thrives today where hospitality is practiced, doctrine is guarded, and believers' lives are transformed in Christ.

As Paul declared in Romans 1:16–17, this gospel is "the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes" and reveals "the righteousness of God from faith to faith."

To Him be glory forever! Amen!

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