

**"Closing Remarks"**

**Part 6**

**Romans 15:14-16:27**

**Introduction:** Tonight, in our study we are coming back to Paul's closing remarks as he commends those who had served beside him in the ministry. We have already looked at the first seven people named in these first sixteen verses of chapter sixteen. Tonight, we shall pick up where we stopped.

➤ **Commendation of Fellow Believers**

➤ **Amplias**

**Notice Romans 16:8**

There is something interesting behind the name "Amplias". This was a common name among slaves and so Amplias may have been a slave of Paul's day and he turned to Jesus Christ. We do know that he was "beloved" of the Apostle Paul. This man had a special place in Paul's heart. Now, even though he may have been a slave he was now on the same level as all the saints in Christ. We who are saved, are all bond slaves of Jesus Christ.

**Colossians 3:23-24**

<sup>23</sup> *And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;*

<sup>24</sup> *Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.*

In the New Testament the focus was always on a man's character. It was on his walk with Jesus Christ. His position in life had nothing to do with how God looked upon him. With God there is no respect of persons.

**Acts 10:34**

<sup>34</sup> *Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:*

Application:

I point this out because we should never allow a person's position in life to change the way we see them. In the New Testament when we look at the qualifications for spiritual leaders there is no mention of a man's position in life or his level of education. It is always about his walk with the Lord. So, we must always be careful and guard against any kind of favoritism in the body of Jesus Christ.

**James 2:1-6**

*My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.*

<sup>2</sup> *For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;*

<sup>3</sup> *And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:*

<sup>4</sup> *Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?*

<sup>5</sup> *Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?*

<sup>6</sup> *But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?*

Sometimes this favoritism happens within the church. The man who is rich gets far better treatment than the man who is poor and this should not be. I have also seen people come in who are materially wealthy and they expect better treatment than the "common" person. Both situations are sinful and very wrong.

➤ **Urbane and Stachys**

**Notice Romans 16:9**

These two individuals were "helpers" which means "fellow laborers" in the Lord. This means they were of the same mind as Paul. They worked toward the same goal.

**1 Corinthians 1:10-11**

<sup>10</sup> *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

<sup>11</sup> *For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.*

➤ **Apelles and Aristobulus' household.**

**Notice Romans 16:10**

**Apelles** was a person who was "approved". The word "approved" here means "accepted and pleasing". This person was a person who had been tried and tested and had been found to be pleasing and approved.

The word "approved" is also found in James 1.

**James 1:12**

*<sup>12</sup> Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is **tried**, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*

The word is translated "tried" in this verse. Whoever Apelles was he was a believer that had been tried through the furnaces of affliction and had proven himself to be faithful.

**Application:**

There is a thought here that is very important for us who are believers. Paul was inspired of by the Spirit to record what we find in this section and it was the Holy Spirit who moved Paul to record the name of Apelles and how he was approved. The Lord knew what he had been through and his faith was found to be pleasing to Him.

I point this out to help you to understand that our Lord misses nothing in our lives.

**1 Peter 1:7**

*<sup>7</sup> That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*

Someday the faith we exercise in the tests and the trials will be rewarded as we stand before our Lord.

**Aristobulus' household** is also mentioned here. There are some that point out here that Aristobulus himself is skipped over and possibly because he was not a believer. But we could also conclude that his household would include him and so it is very possible that he and his entire household were believers.

Notice the words of Zeller on Aristobulus;

*Some, including Lightfoot and Hendricksen have suggested that Aristobulus may have been the grandson of Herod the Great (the brother of Herod Agrippa I), although it is difficult to determine if this were really the case. If so, then Paul was probably referring to slaves in his household who were believers. We should never be reluctant to look for believers even in the most unexpected places. The Herod family was one of the most ungodly*

families in the history of mankind, but God is able to do His wonderful work of grace even within the gates and walls of the most infamous unbelievers.

➤ **Herodion and the household of Narcissus**

**Notice Romans 16:11**

Notice the words of Lightfoot on Narcissus;

*"Narcissus could have been a rich and powerful freedman who was closely connected to the Emperor Claudius, serving as his secretary, and who was later put to death shortly after Nero assumed the throne. If Aristobulus was related to the Herods (see v.10), then he would have been a close ally of Claudius. These two possibilities may give us some help in understanding Philippians 4:22 ("[the saints] that are of Caesar's household"), because there would have been at least two households within the palace that had believers in them."*

➤ **Tryphena and Tryphosa and Persis**

**Notice Romans 16:12**

These were three ladies that are mentioned here. The word 'labour' here means "to labor to the point of exhaustion". It has the idea of very strenuous labor. There is something here about Persis that needs to be seen.

Notice the words of Hendricksen.

*"The labor of Persis is described in the past tense which is unusual (the labor of the first two women is described in the present tense). "Does the distinction in tense indicate that the frailties connected with old age have caught up with Persis, so that she is no longer able to labor as diligently as was once the case? If so, Paul takes care that her past labors are not forgotten. A lesson for us all to remember."*

➤ **Rufus and his mother**

**Notice Romans 16:13**

Rufus is referred to as "chosen in the Lord". There are several possibilities as to what Paul is referring to.

1. There are some that believe Rufus was simply an outstanding believer in the sense that he was a "choice believer". They believe he was an example of what all believers are to be like. He was well learned, and his faith was strong.

This could be what Paul was referring to, but others then ask why he is not mentioned more in the Scriptures. If Rufus were a choice saint, it could have been the result of what he witnessed earlier in his life.

**Mark 15:20-21**

*<sup>20</sup> And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.*

*<sup>21</sup> 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.*

We are not sure if this is the same Rufus, but it could be.

2. Another thought is that Paul may have referred to him as "chosen in the Lord" just to remind him of who he was in Christ. He was a member of the body of Christ therefore he was one of the chosen in that God chose to have a church before the foundation of the world.

Paul refers to Rufus' mother as his mother. Most likely there was a time when she stepped in and ministered to Paul as though he was her own son. Let us keep in mind that we are all one family in Christ.

- **Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, Philologus, Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas**

**Notice Romans 16:14-16**

This entire list in verses 1-16 is very important. It tells us this letter was written to common ordinary people and not to theologians.

Notice the words of Spurgeon;

*"They were like the most of us, commonplace individuals; but they loved the Lord, and therefore as Paul recollected their names, he sent them a message of love which has become embalmed in the Holy Scriptures. Do not let us think of the distinguished Christians exclusively so as to forget the rank and file of the Lord's army. Do not let the eye rest exclusively upon the front rank, but let us love all whom Christ loves; let us value all Christ's servants."*

- **A Warning of Caution**

Paul now goes from a loving greeting to a warning. It almost seems that at the last minute he felt the need to give to them this word of warning.

**Notice Romans 16:17**

This is a warning about being deceived by false teachers. Let us notice what Paul told the believers at Ephesus.

**Acts 20:29-31**

*<sup>29</sup> For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*

*<sup>30</sup> Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.*

*<sup>31</sup> Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.*

This warning is especially important for us today as our world races toward the Tribulation.

**1 Timothy 4:1-3**

*Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

*<sup>2</sup> Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;*

*<sup>3</sup> Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.*

**Conclusion:**

We will come back to this next week because there is much for us to consider. I will end tonight with a portion of the military manual given to Israel. It seemed rather harsh, but we can see the reason in what the Lord says.

**Deuteronomy 20:17-18**

*<sup>17</sup> But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee:*

*<sup>18</sup> That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so should ye sin against the LORD your God.*