

## **LESSON 16 ROMANS 15:14-16:27: FINAL GREETINGS**

### **I. Introduction**

As Paul concludes the book of Romans, the last couple of verses are reminiscent of what we would call today his stream of consciousness. With how loaded the previous 14+ chapters of the letter were, he may have felt some pressure on how to outdo himself in the conclusion. Of course, all scripture is divinely inspired so notwithstanding, God is still able to use Paul's thoughts to drive home some very important spiritual truths while also doing a bit of housekeeping. Paul starts by expressing confidence in the Roman church, then explains his ministry and then discusses his travel plans before acknowledging the contributions of several individuals in the Roman church. People like Phoebe, Priscilla and Aquilla, Epenetus, Apelles, Persis, etc were highlighted and commended for various reasons. Through these individuals, the power of relationships and connection was therefore highlighted in the context of Paul's remarkable apostolic ministry. Paul was highly anointed and spiritually gifted but he needed the cooperation of so many others to fulfill his calling!

It is believed that Phoebe was the bearer of the letter to the Romans and thus would have likely had the privilege of reading the letter to the Church as was the custom of the day. Phoebe was a prominent christian woman and leader in the church. She was described as a benefactor of many therefore it is reasonable to assume she was wealthy. Hopefully this confirms to us today that gender or socio-economic status should never hinder us from serving meaningfully in the body of Christ.

It is interesting that while the book of Romans was a major theological discourse, it was still able to address issues like divisiveness, heresies etc. Paul concludes with a doxology (a short hymn or verse that praises God) extolling God for His wisdom and the revelation of the mystery of the gospel made known to all nations to bring about the obedience of faith. It is really humbling to know that we were always a part of God's salvation plan.

### **II. Study the Scriptures: Read the Passage Romans 15:14-16:27**

Note your thoughts as you read:

Write down any questions that come to mind as you read:

**III. Think Through the Following Questions:**

1. How was the role of Phoebe significant to Paul's ministry?
2. What can we learn from the life of Priscilla and Aquilla from the scriptural references to them?
3. Paul greeted so many individuals in concluding this letter? Was there a strategy behind his intentionality? What can be inferred about diversity and inclusion in the early church?
4. What can we infer from the mention of Erastus in verse 24?
5. What are the implications of Romans 15:27 for the church today?
6. How can we identify and avoid those who cause division within the church? How can we protect our community from divisive influences?
7. What lessons can we apply regarding the role of relationships to our personal lives and ministry?
8. What is the mystery that Paul referred to, how is it now revealed and how does this revelation impact our understanding of God's salvation?

**IV. Lessons Learned: Are there any new things you learned from this passage today?**

**V. Application: How Do You think this will impact your thinking and/or actions going forward?**