

Living in Community with the Gospel of Grace

Week 5 - Romans 16:27

? When was the last time you wrote a letter or what's the best thing you've received in the mail?

Objectives:

- Coming alongside community for the sake of the gospel
- Discernment of danger in the community

Gospel Community

Romans 16:1-16 (NIV)

¹ I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae. ² I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me.

³ Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. ⁴ They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them.

⁵ Greet also the church that meets at their house. Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia. ⁶ Greet Mary, who worked very hard for you.

⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.

⁸ Greet Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord.

⁹ Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my dear friend Stachys.

¹⁰ Greet Apelles, whose fidelity to Christ has stood the test. Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus.

¹¹ Greet Herodion, my fellow Jew. Greet those in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord.

Greet my dear friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord.

¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too.

¹⁴ Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the other brothers and sisters with them.

¹⁵ Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the Lord's people who are with them. ¹⁶ Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ send greetings.

? Paul doesn't come anywhere close to naming as many people (in other places of scripture) as he does here in Romans 16. Amongst them are common slave names and female names. What does this list of names tell us about Paul? What does it tell us about sharing the gospel?

Possible answers: Paul is well-connected, values diversity in the church, supported by a sort of chosen family. Sharing the gospel is community-oriented, not a one-person job, etc.

? What would your list of names in your community look like?

Possible answers: Answers will vary. Think about family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, etc.

Fueled by the Gospel

Romans 16:17-27 (NIV)

¹⁷ I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. ¹⁸ For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people. ¹⁹ Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I rejoice because of you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil.

²⁰ The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

²¹ Timothy, my co-worker, sends his greetings to you, as do Lucius, Jason and Sosipater, my fellow Jews.

²² I, Tertius, who wrote down this letter, greet you in the Lord.

²³ Gaius, whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy, sends you his greetings. Erastus, who is the city's director of public works, and our brother Quartus send you their greetings.^[24]

²⁵ Now to him who is able to establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, ²⁶ but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith— ²⁷ to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

? In verse 17 there is a call to “keep away from them” those who cause divisions and put obstacles in the way. How do we discern when to keep away from someone?

Possible answers: Looking at trends of a person's behavior over time, encouraging boundaries vs complete avoidance, seeking sound counsel, etc.

? Verse 20, describes the Genesis theme (see Genesis 3:15) that Satan will soon be crushed under your feet. How does this encourage you? How does this give you strength and power against the enemy?

Possible answers: We worship the God of peace, so we can find peace no matter the circumstances; confidence that God will use us in some way to establish His victory; a reminder that God has already won! This promise will come to pass.

? Are there parts of Paul's closing benediction (verses 25-27) that are applicable and encouraging in your life today?

Possible answers: Answers may vary

? In what ways do you see God's wisdom (verse 27) in scripture or in your daily life?

Possible answers: Answers may vary - creation, God's provision over time, His all-knowing nature, various stories in scripture.

For Discussion and Accountability

? What was God telling you through this passage this week? What did you need to hear?

? How have you experienced division or deception in the past and how have you seen God work through that?

? How can we as a community encourage each other towards peace and unity?