

Romans 16:21–24
Great Greetings and Greater Grace

Monday, July 22, 2024 ▫ Read Romans 16:21–24

Questions from the Scripture text: Who greets them with Paul (v21)? What does the apostle call him? What three others? What does the apostle call them? Who greets them in v22? In Whom? What is his relation to the manuscript they receive? Who greets them in v23? What is he doing for Paul? For whom else? Who else greets them? What is his position in the city? Who is the last one that greets them? With what word does the apostle describe him? What salutation, greater than a greeting, concludes the letter (v24)? From Whom? Unto whom?

How can Christians be more encouraged? Romans 16:21–24 prepares us for the midweek sermon in the prayer meeting. In these four verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **Christians can gain encouragement by honoring those who encourage them, and especially by receiving Christ's own grace.**

The apostle has expressed delight in many individuals in the Roman church (v3–15), urging them also to delight in one another (v16), and warning against those who would divide the church or cause or make the church spiritually corrupting to one another (v17–20).

Now, he concludes the letter (in the original, v21–24 is found at the end of ch14) with greetings/expressions of pleasure from others that are with him. Of each of these men, Paul says something to commend them and their greeting. In this way, not only are they the more encouraged by the greeting, but they also are able more to honor the brother who greets them. By what attributes does God encourage us in others' relation to us and commend them to us to be honored?

The work of gospel ministry. Timothy is his fellow worker. He is well-known, having ministered long with Paul and being named as coauthor in six of Paul's letters and being described as the most likeminded man to Paul (cf. Php 2:20). But it is the work for which they are especially esteemed. He summarizes Timothy, who needs no introduction, as "my fellow worker." Work is honorable, and a greeting from a worker valuable. And this is all the more true when it is gospel work.

Believers from long-standing families of faith. Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater have the same ancestry as Paul. As we saw in v3–16, this increases his affection for them due to God's joint providence to them. But he has also taught the Roman church to esteem Jewish believers as natural branches to whom a covenantal heritage and right to the gospel belong (cf. 11:23–32). Not only are these three with Paul at Corinth, but his naming them as he is about to leave for Jerusalem probably indicates that they are Israelite-background delegates to accompany the gift for the Judean church. There is an honor to long-standing families of faith, whose households have been in the covenant as natural branches for many generations. We should take encouragement from the welcome/greetings and esteem them highly for God's blessing to and through them.

Humble servants and growing students. Though there is evidence in other letters that Paul employed a scribe, Tertius is the only one whose name we know. There are often lesser-known saints in service of those who are being used in more visible ways. They should be an encouragement to us and are worthy of honor. Having opportunity to write one sentence of Romans directly from himself, the apostle authorizes him to include two short words in the Greek that show he has "really gotten it" during the process of writing: "in the Lord."

His delighting in them has been produced in him from his union with Christ, and their preciousness to him is especially because they are in union with Christ. Several large sections of the letter have taught this, and the man whose hand wrote it is an example of the reality that was described.

Believers of earthly means and influence. By hosting Paul, Gaius (Gaius Titius Justus, cf. Ac 18:7, 1Cor 1:14) ended up hosting many others, as well as meetings of the church. For his house to accommodate them indicates that he is a man of means. As city treasurer, Erastus also would have had means and influence. An inscription from the time period identifies an Erastus as the next level higher in the city government, the "public works commissioner," who might well be the same man at a different point in his career. These men are esteemed not merely for being of means, but because they viewed their means and their expertise as belonging to the Lord. In connection with the gift to the Judean church, it may well be that the Corinthian church had delegated the city treasurer as part of the team to give an account of how the monies were delivered and spent! Being someone of means in the church gives an opportunity to distinguish oneself by generosity and humility. Those who have done such are worthy of honor.

Humble believers who other faithful churches have honored. It is implied that Quartus was a gentile from Corinth who was part of the team that was departing to take the gift to Jerusalem. All we are told is that he is "a brother." He was probably voted upon by his congregation on account of faithfulness and integrity, but we're just told that he's a "brother." That is enough. There does not need to be a distinguishing mark above this for us to honor someone.

The greatest encouragement. These men were in Corinth, and although they couldn't be in Rome, their greetings could. So their greetings came by way of this letter. The last line of the letter is reserved for an infinitely greater gift from a much further absentee. "Our Lord Jesus Christ" could not be in Rome because He is on the throne of glory (even now, as you read this devotionally!). Yet, by His apostle, He could send to Rome (and to you, Christian reader) His grace. By His Spirit, He would use His own Word not just to express delight in the believers there but to work His own life, gladness, and strength in them. How marvelous! And "be with you all" reminds us that this is for every Christian everywhere. The other men in this section do not know you. But our Lord Jesus Christ personally knows you and communicates His grace to you by this letter, if you are a Christian. Amen! Praise God!

Whom do you know who work hard in the ministry? Whom do you know from multi-generational covenant families? Whom do you know who are humble servants and growing students of the Bible's theology? Whom do you know that is a believer of earthly means that has not been "ruined" by them but is employing them humbly as belonging entirely to the Lord? How does this passage help you receive what encouragements they give you? How will you seek to honor them as we have learned? But what is your greatest encouragement?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for using us to encourage one another. Help us to increase our honor for Your servants so that we might draw even more encouragement from them. But, most of all, thank You for communicating Your own grace to us through Your Word. Grant that we might grow in and by that grace, we ask in Your own Name, Lord Jesus Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP197 "Christian Unity" or TPH534 "Fill Thou My Life, O Lord, My God"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 16 verses 21-24. These are God's words. Timothy my fellow worker and Lucius Jason and Cesa Patter my countrymen greet. You I tertius who wrote this epistle. Greet you in the Lord. Gaius my host and the host of the whole church greets, you Arrest us, the treasurer of the city greets, you and quartus.

Brother. The grass of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be with you all. Amen. So, for the reading of gods inspired and And Aaron's. We've already had. Paul's, greetings to. Different ones in the church at Rome. And his instruction to them to greet one. Another expressing and taking Delight. not only in one another but opportunities to reconnect with one another And we've had this.

A strong final urging. Note and avoid. Those who cause Division. And who And cause brothers and sisters to fall into sin to stumble into sin. And with this verses 21 through 24, the letter actually concludes, Both in. the Western texts. variants and even an Erasmus.

Greek New Testament that he was able to assemble with what he had. the benediction. that you have in verses 25 through 27 actually comes in The middle of the argument. About the strong bearing with the weak. Sorry. That's in the West in the western text.

And in Erasmus's text verses 25 through, 27 are where they are. But in the majority text, the text used in the church throughout the ages and especially the Greek speaking. Once Rome. switched to Latin. what is 1625 through 27? In our Bible is actually between Chapter 14 and chapter 15.

So that in the midst of the argument, or the encouragement, there's reasoning with them for the strong to Bear up the weak. he gives this benediction. now to him who is able to establish you and bring about The Obedience of Faith Etc. So that the, this benediction, which is, really a doxology unto God.

Belongs there. So, We'll talk more about that next week, Lord willing. but this is the original close of the letter in verses 21. Through 24. greeting them. And, Ultimately Christ. greeting them by his Apostle. At the end, in verse 24. And so Paul, having greeted them, It is those who are with Paul rather right now.

I have to close the letter. Whose greetings, he sends first Timothy and then Lucius Jason and Cecy. Patter. And then tertius and Gaius and quartus. And as he sends their greetings, he gives short summaries of their honors. As he. As he sends their greetings, he gives short summaries of their honors both.

So that the Roman Church may be more encouraged by those who are taking Delight in them and that they may give more honor to their brothers. And so, one of the things that we see here, especially That for which we are. Honor receive encouragement about and esteem more. Highly.

Our brothers in the faith. Brothers and sisters Timothy, he calls my fellow worker. Now Timothy Famous in the churches. Paul identified him as a co-author. Of six of his letters. In Philippians chapter 2 verse 20. Paul says of Timothy that there is no one else as like-minded. As Timothy is, And for yet, for all of that, the honor that By which he commends Timothy to them.

Is that he is his fellow worker. And so, Labor in the Lord minister, the ministry of the Gospel. Is to be highly regarded. Highly esteemed. and

Naming him in this way. At the close of the letter. May make this actually the seventh letter then. That Paul is giving some measure of acknowledgment to Timothy. And participating, although he's not mentioned in the beginning of it. But Timothy my fellow worker. And so we are to honor.

Those who are And certainly those who are like-minded. unto the Apostle, those whose minds are according to scripture, especially the faithful Minister, the faithful worker. In the gospel. When he greets us, we are to be the more encouraged because he is a faithful. worker in the gospel.

And we are just email Miley for that sake for that reason. when he says, Lucius Jason and Cecy, Pat are my countrymen. He is not only. Recognizing the honor of those who. Have a common ancestry. common ethnic origin with himself. but in this case, you remember, He was about to leave Corinth or maybe by the time the letter is written has just left Corinth and is on his way to Jerusalem.

taking an offering from the Macedonian and decayan churches. the care of The poverty of the Jewish Church in Jerusalem. And so when he identifies them as being of common dissent. he's probably Identifying them. Not only as to be honored. For being Natural branches of the tree into which the Gentiles have been grafted.

So that there is an honor given to Jewish Christians that he's taught them about earlier in the book. But also recognizing them as some of the men who have been appointed to go with him. To carry the gift and give a report. that everything was done in order and maybe give a report of how it was used.

and so forth. Next, he permits tertius, who is the? Secretary or scribe, or And there's Administrative assistant as it were to whom Paul has dictated this letter. That gives tertius. Opportunity to give his own greeting. and As he gives his own greeting, he gets to write.

one verse of the book of Romans from himself, he demonstrates that he has. Assimilated. some of what the book has taught, I tertius, who wrote this epistle. Greet you in the Lord. And so, the place that Union with Christ been given throughout the letter. tertius has understood and is perhaps reinforcing and re-encouraging that to them but also recognizing that they are in the Lord.

And so his Delight in. Is a delight that is not just in them themselves, but in the Lord, who has brought them into Union with himself, Union with himself and his death Union with himself. In his resurrection, the one by whom they are Walking in newness of life. You know, there's things from chapter six and we could the faith that is into Christ.

chapter three and four and The union with Christ. sonship and the love of God that is in Christ. The no condemnation that is in Christ, in chapter 8 and Many. And many different things. Of course, throughout the whole letter. but Churches takes this opportunity.

And he says, I churches who wrote this episode, greet you And then, He adds. These three short words in the Lord. Next. Paul writes to them or of course by tertius's hand. Guy is my host. And of the whole church greets, you This is probably. Gaius titious Justice.

who is hosting? Paul during his time in Corinth. And Not only was he willing to host Paul but Whenever anyone else had. something that they needed to see Paul about spend some time with him. Get Training instruction Council, whatever it is. or perhaps someone was visiting Corinth to see Paul from out of town or perhaps.

at times the Corinthian Church. would come and gather at at this man's house. He was a man. Of some means. And, And Paul. Honoring him. Not just for, Is being hospitable to a saint. Or even to an apostle. But his employing, his house in the work of the ministry of the church.

they he's not honoring him for being a man of means. He's honoring him for being a man, whose means Have been devoted unto the Lord. That too should encourage us. Such people. Have been objects and evidences of such Grace. give us greetings. And we should have steam them, highly.

Forward as well. Erastus. The treasurer of The city. there were different positions in Corinth. There's an inscription. That has been discovered. In recent archeology. Well, recent last 150 years. Of an arastas at the same time of the next level up from this. not just the treasurer of the city, but I forget the The full name of the title, but it's like, the manager of all the business of the city or something like that, it's just one word in the Greek.

but that was, that was the role of Of the title is probably the same erastus. But here is one. His place in Roman government. Has not kept him from Confessing Christ as King. From becoming. A Christian and taking his Delight. In the church. And so those who Do not allow their place in the world.

inhibit or diminish. Devotion to Christ and to his people. They too are to be encouragements to us. And highly esteemed and then Cortez who has just called a brother. And probably quartus is. Part of the traveling party. and one who the largely Gentile churches in Ikea and Macedonia.

Have elected. Delegated to go with Paul as a gentile delegate. question. And so there's some ordinary. church government. Church operation work that is behind here but Cortis as a brother and it's implied, a brother who has had the esteem of the congregations. the congregations. Macedonia are likely Ikea probably from Corinth.

Since that's where Paul was, when he began writing this letter and perhaps still is if they have not left yet, But, as they are with Paul in his work, as they are with Paul. Preparing for The ministry to the Judean Saints. so they are with Paul in expressing their Delight in the Roman Church so that there is an example here.

Not only of. whom to be encouraged by as they greet us and what we should esteem in others. As Paul gives us the Various things that he commands about them. But

also, as an example to us to enter into and take opportunities. one another's Ministries. To other Christians to other churches.

If we That someone is going to go to a certain place or as writing to certain place, or you know, talk to certain people, that we take opportunity. to encourage piggyback our own encouragement and greeting. Etc. and just taking every opportunity to increase and improve and enrich.

The good that is done. To Believers to churches. in every way. That we can, and of course, From whom and in the words of tertius in verse 22 in whom do we do this? Have we learned this? it is the Lord Jesus Christ. the encouragement and esteem.

In verse 24, of course, is higher. Then all the rest put together. But it is truly. By him in us and for his sake in our brothers. That all of our greetings among one another, and the horizontal. level. In the horizontal way. Are expressed here. He says the grace.

This is the conclusion of the whole letter now. The grace of our Lord. Jesus Christ be with you all. And as we have seen throughout, this means not just blessing for those. Who deserve only curse. Certainly means that in the context of the book of Romans, but also you think of places like chapter 6, 7 8, And on.

But especially six, seven, eight the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Be with you, all of our Lord. Jesus Christ. Be with you all a reminder. That the Christ's grace to us is also Christ's Grace in The strength of God, the in Who in ourselves have only weakness.

Just as in ourselves, we deserve only curse in ourselves. We have only weakness About how strengthening and gladdening. This would be to be reminded. That there are not just these brothers on Earth who are working with Paul and have hosted him in Corinth and accommodated. All his ministry while he was there and are some of whom are now going with him.

To Jerusalem and that all of these brothers, greet them. But that the reason Paul is writing, This particular letter, as we heard at the beginning of the letter, is that he is an apostle. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. And, Just, Paul's not now in Rome because he's And Corinth with these other guys, Jesus is not now in Rome.

Because he is sitting on the throne of Glory. But he too greets. By his Apostle. And he doesn't just greet. He doesn't just express Delight. By his Apostle, and by this word of his Apostle that he is sending to them. And by his spirit's use of this word, The Lord Jesus is giving his own gladness and strength.

To be in. And that, of course, is The most encouraging thing of all. This is what he does. Preserving for us, the book of Romans. And causing it to be translated into English. And bringing us to himself and bringing us under the ministry of Our parents who teach us the word, giving us even the opportunity and ability to have our own copies.

To read it for ourselves and especially By sending for us. His ministers. Read and preach his word in the public Worship in which the activity of the Lord Jesus is. is unique. and Particular promises. Or attached to it as he preserves us and preserves for us and unshakable Kingdom.

And the preaching of his word in the public worship and all of these things. And so, at the conclusion of the letter, Has last worked. Is the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Be with you all. Amen. Hey man. Let's pray.

Lord, I thank you for this portion of your word. Thank you for this letter. That your spirit carried Paul along. As he wrote by tertius's hand to the Romans. Thank you. Preserving it for us with all of your Holy scripture. Thank you for this time that you gave us.

As a household to be in it. As we worship you in your word. We pray. Lord that you would now apply it to us. That we would be encouraged, glad and strengthened And that we would. Have our minds more conformed to Christ that your spirit would make us. Who seek to Gladden others and to take encouragement from those by whom you greet us that you would remind us and teach us and grow us in pursuing.

That, which is honorable. And give us also to honor others. Thank you for how much there is here for us. in a And not at first. Obvious to our dullness. helpful passage. but indeed It is Rich with instruction and help and we pray that your spirit would use it that way.

Help us as we go from your worship. With literally, your Being sung. And then your song on our hearts and on our lips. That we would. Be helped to be conformed to the mind of Christ. And the rest of our labors for this day. We ask these things in his name.

Amen.