

BIBLE & BAGEL

Romans – Our Common Faith

5 May 2016

As we close the book of Romans, we see the Apostle Paul sending greeting to various people in various places, this shows us the wide network he had throughout the Roman Empire, quite astonishing to think that this was achieved without the internet or other modern technology but in the midst of his greetings he also gives a warning ...

Rom 16

I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, 2 that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.

3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. 5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Greet my beloved Epänetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia to Christ. 6 Greet Mary, who labored much for us. 7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my countrymen and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. 8 Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord. 9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved. 10 Greet Apelles, approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus. 11 Greet Herodion, my countryman. Greet those who are of the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.

12 Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, who have labored in the Lord. Greet the beloved Persis, who labored much in the Lord. 13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. 14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren who are with them. 15 Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you.

In our modern culture we might think this to be a strange command but actually in the custom of the day and even today in some cultures people greeted each other by kissing on the cheek of course men with men and ladies with ladies. It was a common form of greeting and we should not read more into it.

17 Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. 18 For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple. 19 For your obedience has become known to all. Therefore I am glad on your behalf; but I want you to be wise in what is good, and simple concerning evil. 20 And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

It seems like in an afterthought Apostle Paul warns the believers to take note of people who cause division and offense and teach things contrary to what he had already taught. He says these people are not serving the Lord but their own “belly”. This could mean that they are trying to build their own following of supporters for monetary gain



but also that they are trying to gain fame to boost their egos. He says that the obedience of the believers in Rome has become known but he wants them to be wise in good and simple or in some translations “innocent” of evil. He encourages them to stand firm saying that God will soon crush Satan under their feet.

We are often told that we should not judge others, whilst Yeshua did tell us not to judge peopleⁱ, we are also told in scripture to judge prophecies which include teachingⁱⁱ. 1 Thessalonians 5:20 tells us not to treat prophecies with contempt but also tells us to test all things, i.e. prophecies as well as teaching, to hold on to the good things and avoid the bad. The question is how can we tell the difference? Very often wrong teachings come in very subtle forms and we may not be able to catch it right away. The key is to be well versed in the Word of God and to ask the Holy Spirit for the gift of discernment. When we are grounded in the Word, the Spirit will set off a “warning light” in our spirit to warn us. Test that prophecy or teaching with what the Word says and if you find it questionable then avoid it but if it is right then receive it. Ground yourself in the Word.

21 Timothy, my fellow worker, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my countrymen, greet you. 22 I, Tertius, who wrote this epistle, greet you in the Lord.

Here’s something interesting, at the end of the epistle this person Tertius says he wrote the epistle. This may confuse some but the simple answer is that Tertius was Apostle Paul’s secretary. We know from the book of Galatians that Paul had trouble with his eyes when he was beaten, the Galatians nursed him back to healthⁱⁱⁱ but his eye or eyes were affected and so he would dictate his epistle while Tertius wrote it.

23 Gaius, my host and the host of the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, and Quartus, a brother. 24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began 26 but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith — 27 to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen. NKJV

May God establish each one of us in His Word that we may walk in obedience to Him, Amen.

ⁱ Matthew 7:1, Luke 6:37

ⁱⁱ 1 John 4:1, 1 Thessalonians 5:20

ⁱⁱⁱ Galatians 4:12-14,

