

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 215 – August 3rd – Romans 16:3-24

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Romans

Barrett, CK	<i>A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans</i> , San Francisco, Harper & Row, 1957.
Dunn, JDG	<i>Romans</i> , Word Biblical Commentary Vols 38A, 38B, Dallas, Word, 1988.
Moo, Douglas, J	<i>Romans: The NIV Application Commentary</i> , Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2000.
Murray, John	<i>The Epistle to the Romans</i> , 2 Vols, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1959 & 1965.
Wright, NT	<i>The Letter to The Romans</i> , The New Interpreter's Bible, Vol 10, Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2002.

Verse 3

Ἀσπάσασθε Πρίσκαν καὶ Ἀκύλαν τοὺς
συνεργοὺς μου ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ,

ἀσπάζομαι greet
συνεργός, ου m fellow-worker

Cf. Acts 18:2,18-19,26; 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Tim
4:19.

Cf. 1 Cor 16:15 where Stephanus has the same
honour in Achaea.

Verse 6

ἀσπάσασθε Μαριάμ, ἥτις πολλὰ ἐκοπίασεν εἰς
ὑμᾶς.

κοπιαῶ work, work hard, labour

Verse 4

οἵτινες ὑπὲρ τῆς ψυχῆς μου τὸν ἑαυτῶν
τράχηλον ὑπέθηκαν, οἷς οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος
εὐχαριστῶ ἀλλὰ καὶ πᾶσαι αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῶν
ἐθνῶν,

οἵτινες Pronoun, m nom pl ὅστις, ἥτις, ὅ τι
who, which

ψυχή, ης f self, life, 'soul'

ἑαυτός, ἑαυτή, ἑαυτὸν him/her/itself

τραχηλός, ου m neck

ὑπέθηκαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 pl ὑποτιθημι
risk

τὸν ἑαυτῶν τράχηλον ὑπέθηκαν 'risked their
necks.'

We have no other information on this incident.
It may have been at the time of the riot in
Ephesus (Acts 19).

Verse 7

ἀσπάσασθε Ἀνδρόνικον καὶ Ἰουνίαν τοὺς
συγγενεῖς μου καὶ συναιχμαλώτους μου,
οἵτινές εἰσιν ἐπίσημοι ἐν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις, οἱ
καὶ πρὸ ἐμοῦ γέγοναν ἐν Χριστῷ.

Ἰουνιᾶν NIV (along with RSV, NASB, TEV
and NJB) assumes that this is a contraction of
the masculine name Junianus. But the Greek
form could reflect the female name Junia (AV,
NRSV, REB). The latter seems more likely
since it is a common Greek name whereas the
contracted form of Ἰουνιανός is apparently
unknown. They were probably husband and
wife. (Some MSS read Ἰουλιαν).

This is the subject of much controversy,
particularly since it seems that they may be
termed 'apostles.'

συγγενής, ους m kinsman, fellow-
countryman

συναιχμαλωτός, ου m fellow-prisoner
ἐπίσημος, ον well known, outstanding

Either:

i) These were apostles (cf. 2 Cor 8:23; Phil
2:25) and well known as such; or

ii) They were well known **to** the apostles.

Moo thinks the former more likely but, along
with Cranfield and Dunn, thinks that the sense
is 'commissioned missionary.'

Wright also thinks the former is meant, though
he draws attention to Paul's use of the term
'apostle' to mean one who is 'a witness to the
resurrection' (cf. 1 Cor 9:1).

γέγοναν Verb, perf act indic, 3 pl γίνομαι

Verse 5

καὶ τὴν κατ' οἶκον αὐτῶν ἐκκλησίαν.
ἀσπάσασθε Ἐπαίνετον τὸν ἀγαπητὸν μου, ὃς
ἐστὶν ἀπαρχὴ τῆς Ἀσίας εἰς Χριστόν.

οἶκος, ου m house, home

For churches which met in homes see also 1
Cor 16:19; Col 4:15; Philem 2. Aquila and
Priscilla must have been fairly wealthy.

ἀγαπητός, η, ον beloved

ἀπαρχή, ης f firstfruit, first portion (set apart
to God)

Verse 8

ἀσπάσασθε Ἀμπλιᾶτον τὸν ἀγαπητόν μου ἐν κυρίῳ.

Verse 9

ἀσπάσασθε Οὐρβανὸν τὸν συνεργὸν ἡμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ καὶ Στάχυν τὸν ἀγαπητόν μου.

συνεργος, ου v.3

Verse 10

ἀσπάσασθε Ἀπελλῆν τὸν δόκιμον ἐν Χριστῷ. ἀσπάσασθε τοὺς ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοβούλου.

δοκιμος, ον approved, genuine, valued

τοὺς ἐκ τῶν Ἀριστοβούλου 'those who belong to the household of Aristobulus.'

"It is quite likely that Aristobulus was the grandson of Herod the Great and brother of Agrippa I. He himself was not greeted by Paul, possibly because he himself was not a Christian, but members of his family were sent warm greetings as fellow-believers." Derek Tidball, *An Introduction to the Sociology of the New Testament*. "The reference is probably mainly to the slaves who work for Aristobulus." Moo.

Verse 11

ἀσπάσασθε Ἡρῳδία τὸν συγγενῆ μου. ἀσπάσασθε τοὺς ἐκ τῶν Ναρκίσσου τοὺς ὄντας ἐν κυρίῳ.

"Probably a freed slave who took the name of the Herodian family he served." Moo.

συγγενῆ Noun, acc s συγγενης, ους v.7

"Similarly it was the family of Narcissus, rather than Narcissus himself, who were greeted. It is usually thought that this Narcissus was the famous and very wealthy freedman of the emperor Claudius whom Juvenal mentions and who exercised tremendous influence over Claudius. The fact that he personally was not greeted either implies that he was already dead or that he himself had not become a Christian." Tidball. Wright comments, "If this is the same man, as most assume, Christians within his household after his death would have occupied a challenging and dangerous position."

Verse 12

ἀσπάσασθε Τρύφαιναν καὶ Τρυφῶσαν τὰς κοπιώσας ἐν κυρίῳ. ἀσπάσασθε Περσίδα τὴν ἀγαπητήν, ἣτις πολλὰ ἐκοπίασεν ἐν κυρίῳ.

κοπιαω v.6

Verse 13

ἀσπάσασθε Ῥοῦφον τὸν ἐκλεκτὸν ἐν κυρίῳ καὶ τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐμοῦ.

ἐκλεκτος, η, ον chosen

Perhaps the same person as is mentioned in Mk 15:21 as the son of Simon, the man forced to carry Jesus' cross.

Wright comments, "One of the tantalising things about this chapter is that, like watching a sequence of film clips going by too fast to take in, we catch tiny glimpses into the world of early Christianity that could be very revealing if only we could freeze the frame and ask one or two leading questions. There was clearly quite a subculture growing up, but we know very nearly nothing about it."

Verse 14

ἀσπάσασθε Ἀσύγκριτον, Φλέγοντα, Ἐρμῆν, Πατροβᾶν, Ἐρμᾶν καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς ἀδελφούς.

The last is probably a reference to Christians who met in Hermas's house for worship.

Verse 15

ἀσπάσασθε Φιλόλογον καὶ Ἰουλίαν, Νηρέα καὶ τὴν ἀδελφὴν αὐτοῦ, καὶ Ὀλυμπᾶν καὶ τοὺς σὺν αὐτοῖς πάντας ἀγίους.

ἀδελφη, ης f sister, female believer

"Some have speculated that Philologus and Julia were husband and wife, with Nereus and his sister being their children. They, with Olympas, play host to another house church." Wright.

Verse 16

Ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἀγίῳ. Ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς αἱ ἐκκλησίαι πᾶσαι τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

ἀλλήλων, ος, ους reciprocal pronoun one another

φιλημα, τος n kiss

Cf. 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26; 1 Peter 5:14.

Conclusions from this list of greetings

Moo draws the following conclusions:

"Social composition of the church ... The historian Peter Lampe has done a thorough study of the names in Romans 16. He concludes that most of the people whom Paul mentions are Gentiles or freedmen or are descendants of slaves and freedmen (*freedman* is the term given the class of freed slaves in the Roman empire). Note too that Paul specifically mentions at least two groups of slaves: the household (servants) of Aristobulus (v.10) and those of Narcissus (v.11)... What little evidence we have suggests that most of the early Christians came from the 'lower' classes."

"Organisation of the early church. What 16:1-16 reveals about the organisation of the church is that it was apparently loose. Paul refers to at least three, and perhaps five, house churches (vv. 5,14,15 are clear; the 'households' mentioned in vv.10 and 11 may also represent house churches). The Christian community reflects the loose organisation of the Jewish community, which was apparently also broken up into many independent synagogues. It was probably the case, for instance, that certain house churches were composed of believers 'weak in faith' and others of believers 'strong in faith' (see comments on 14:1-15:13). Paul's plea for acceptance of one another, then, is seeking reconciliation among various 'churches' in Rome."

"Women in the early church. Of the twenty-seven Christians Paul greets or commends in verses 1-15, ten (more than one-third) are women. Six of them (Phoebe [vv. 1-2], Priscilla [v.3], Junias [v.7], Tryphena [v.12], Tryphosa [v.12], and Persis [v.12]) are commended for their labour 'in the Lord.' Junia is a 'commissioned missionary' (*ἀποστολος*; see comments on v.7), and Phoebe is a benefactor and deacon of the church. What conclusions can we draw...? (1) women made up a significant part of the early Christian church...; (2) women were given the same access to God that men enjoyed (e.g., Gal 3:28; 1 Peter 3:7); and (3) women engaged in significant ministry."

And Wright concludes, "What we ... have, then, is a small, vulnerable church, needing to know and trust one another across various boundaries; a church many of whose members were not native to Rome, living most likely in immigrant communities within particular areas; a church in which men and women alike took leadership roles; a church where families and households formed the basis of worshipping communities. There is something both attractive and frightening about this picture: enormous potential, huge risks, a community both lively and vulnerable. This is the community that will now be the first to hear one of the greatest letters in the history of the world."

Verses 17-19

"Paul does not elsewhere launch into a warning about false teachers in the conclusion of a letter. But he does issue exhortations and warnings that may presume their presence (e.g. 1 Cor 16:13-14; 2 Cor 13:11; Col 4:17). It is a greater mystery why he waits until the very end of Romans to issue such a warning. Possibly he waits until now because the false teachers have not yet arrived on the scene, or because he only hears about the threat as he is finishing the letter." Moo.

Verse 17

Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, σκοπεῖν τοὺς τὰς διχοστασίας καὶ τὰ σκάνδαλα παρὰ τὴν διδασχὴν ἣν ὑμεῖς ἐμάθετε ποιοῦντας, καὶ ἐκκλίνετε ἀπ' αὐτῶν·

παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge
σκοπεω pay attention to, watch out (for)
διχοστασια, ας f division, dissension

A word found only here and in Gal 5:20.

σκανδαλον, ου n that which causes sin/
offence, obstacle

παρὰ preposition with acc beside, rather
than, contrary to

διδασχη, ης f teaching, what is taught
ἐμάθετε Verb, aor act indic, 2 pl μανθανω
learn, find out

ἐκκλίνετε Verb, pres act imperat, 2 pl
ἐκκλινω turn away, turn aside

Verse 18

οἱ γὰρ τοιοῦτοι τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν Χριστῷ οὐ δουλεύουσιν ἀλλὰ τῇ ἑαυτῶν κοιλίᾳ, καὶ διὰ τῆς χρηστολογίας καὶ εὐλογίας ἐξαπατῶσι τὰς καρδίας τῶν ἀκάκων.

τιουτος, αυτη, ουτον such, of such kind
ἑαυτος v.4
κοιλια, ας f stomach

Barrett believes the reference here is not to gluttony but to a preoccupation with food laws. Murray thinks it simply means preoccupation with self-service, as does Moo who thinks the term "a synecdoche for sensual appetites generally. The false teachers are interested in their own pleasure and ease, not in helping people to know God." So Wright who thinks it refers to "their appetites in general." Cf. Phil 3:18-19.

χρηστολογία, ας f smooth talk, plausible talk

εὐλογία, ας f blessing, praise

ἐξαπατάω deceive, lead astray

ἄκακος, ον innocent, unsuspecting

Verse 19

ἡ γὰρ ὑμῶν ὑπακοή εἰς πάντας ἀφίκετο· ἐφ' ὑμῖν οὖν χαίρω, θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς σοφοῦς εἶναι εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀκεραίους δὲ εἰς τὸ κακόν.

ὑπακοή, ης f obedience

ἀφίκετο Verb, aor midd dep indic, 3 s

ἀφικνεομαι reach, be known to

χαίρω rejoice, be glad

θέλω wish, will

σοφος, η, ον wise, experienced

εἶναι Verb, pres infin ειμι

ἀγαθος, η, ον good, useful, fitting

ἀκεραιος, ον innocent, guiltless

κακος, η, ον evil, bad, wrong, harm

ἀκεραίους δὲ εἰς τὸ κακόν a play on the phrase τῶν ἀκακῶν at the end of the previous verse. An echo of Jesus' words recorded in Matt 10:16.

Verse 20

ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης συντρίψει τὸν Σατανᾶν ὑπὸ τοῦς πόδας ὑμῶν ἐν τάχει. ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μεθ' ὑμῶν.

εἰρήνη, ης f peace

συντριβῶ break in pieces, crush, shatter, bruise

Σατανᾶς, α the Adversary, Satan

πόδας Noun, acc pl πους, ποδος m foot

ταχος, ους n speed; ἐν τ. speedily,

quickly, without delay, soon

Cf. Gen 3:15, and see also Lk 10:17-19 and behind that Ps 91:13. Cf. also Rev 12:10-11. "Paul elsewhere sees the new, young church vulnerable to enemy attack; it was part of his theology of new creation that the church was now, like Adam and Eve, open to fresh deceit (2 Cor 11:3). But his earlier exposition of the victory of God in Jesus Christ over the sin of Adam and all its entail (5:12-21) enables him here simply to promise that the victory promised in Genesis will be theirs, and that it will come soon." Wright.

"Paul's grace wish in verse 20b finds a parallel in every other letter he writes. It acts as a kind of bookend with the beginning of the letter, since Paul there wishes the Romans 'grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ' (1:7)." Moo.

Most MSS read Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ but the shorter reading Ἰησοῦ is supported by p⁴⁶ & B 1881 and "appears to be more primitive." Metzger. The Byzantine Text, followed by the TR, repeats 'the grace' before the doxology, i.e. as 16:24.

Verse 21

Ἀσπάζεταιται ὑμᾶς Τιμόθεος ὁ συνεργός μου, καὶ Λούκιος καὶ Ἰάσων καὶ Σωσίπατρος οἱ συγγενεῖς μου.

συνεργος, ου see v.3

Λούκιος probably not Luke the Evangelist Ἰάσων cf. Acts 17:5-9.

Σωσίπατρος cf. Acts 20:4.

συγγενης, ους see v.7

Verse 22

ἀσπάζομαι ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ Τέρτιος ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἐν κυρίῳ.

ἐπιστολη, ης f letter

Paul's amanuensis "peeps for a moment out of hiding." Wright.

Verse 23

ἀσπάζεταιται ὑμᾶς Γάϊος ὁ ξένος μου καὶ ὅλης τῆς ἐκκλησίας. ἀσπάζεταιται ὑμᾶς Ἔραστος ὁ οἰκονόμος τῆς πόλεως καὶ Κούαρτος ὁ ἀδελφός.

Γάϊος cf. 1 Cor 1:14.

ξενος, ου foreigner; host

The latter sense is intended here. Gaius is Paul's host and would seem to have been owner of a house in which the church at Corinth frequently met.

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire

"An inscription has been discovered in Corinth that refers to an Erastus who was an *aedile* of the city. This title may be equivalent to Paul's *oikonomos* (NIV 'director of public works'). Even if the two are not identical, Erastus may first have served as *oikonomos* before being promoted to *aedile*." Moo.

οικονομος, ου m steward, manager

πολις, εως f city, town

Verse 24

Ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν. Ἀμήν.

This verse is omitted from what are considered the best MSS. It consists of a repetition of the latter half of v. 20, with some variations.

Verses 25-27

The following verses are found moved to two other places in a variety of MSS but hardly any copies omit them altogether. The repositioning may have been to make the truncated letter (without greetings) more suitable for general church reading.

On these verses, see particularly, I. Howard Marshall, "Romans 16:25-27 – An Apt Conclusion," *Romans and The People of God*, eds. Sven K Soderlund & NT Wright, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1999, pp 170-184. The doxology echoes many of the key themes of the letter.

Verse 25

[Τῷ δὲ δυναμένῳ ὑμᾶς στηρίζαι κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιόν μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμα Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν μυστηρίου χρόνοις αἰωνίοις σεσιγημένου

στηρίζω strengthen, establish, set firm

"While Paul (cf. 1:11) or others seek to establish believers in their faith, only God can ultimately do so." Moo. He is the source of all power.

κήρυγμα, τος n message, proclamation

ἀποκάλυψις, εως f revelation

μυστηριον, ου n secret, mystery (of something formerly unknown but now revealed)

χρονος, ου m time, period of time

αιωνιος, ου eternal, everlasting

σεσιγημένου Verb, perf pass ptc, m & n gen s

σιγαω keep silent, keep secret

Cf. 1 Cor. 2:6-7; Eph 1:9; 3:3-9; Col 1:26-27..

Verse 26

φανερωθέντος δὲ νῦν διὰ τε γραφῶν προφητικῶν κατ' ἐπιταγὴν τοῦ αἰωνίου θεοῦ εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη γνωρισθέντος,

φανερωθέντος Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s

φανερωω make known, reveal

γραφη, ης f writing, Scripture

προφητικος, η, ου prophetic

ἐπιταγη, ης f command, authority

"The fact and timing of the revelation of this mystery lay in God's plan; it was his 'command' that put the gospel into effect." Moo.

αιωνιος, ου eternal, everlasting

ὑπακοη, ης f obedience

πιστις, εως f faith, trust, belief

Cf 1:5.

γνωρισθέντος Verb, aor pass ptc, m nom s

γνωρίζω make known, disclose

"All this is designed to explain the significance of the gospel proclamation of Jesus Christ: when this gospel is announced, it enables people of every nation to see that in Jesus the veil has been drawn back on the eternal plan of the eternal God, and to respond in grateful and obedient loyalty and trust. And it is by this gospel that God is able to strengthen the young church, not least through Paul's ministry as he comes to Rome (1:11)." Wright.

Verse 27

μόνῳ σοφῷ θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ᾧ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας· ἀμήν.]

μονος, η, ου only, alone

σοφος, η, ου wise, experienced

Some MSS read αὐτῷ in place of ᾧ, some few (including B) omit either. Metzger writes "Despite the difficulty of construing the sentence when ᾧ is read, the committee felt constrained to include the word on the strength of early and diversified external evidence. The other readings have an appearance of being correctives introduced by various copyists in order to avoid anacoluthon and to complete the sentence."

δοξα, ης f glory

αιωνας Noun, acc pl αιων, αιωνος m age, eternity

"The concluding description of God (16:27) reminds us especially that he has instituted a 'wise' and wonderful plan for the redemption of his creation (cf. 11:33-36). Surely our response should echo Paul, as we give glory to him through Jesus Christ!" Moo.