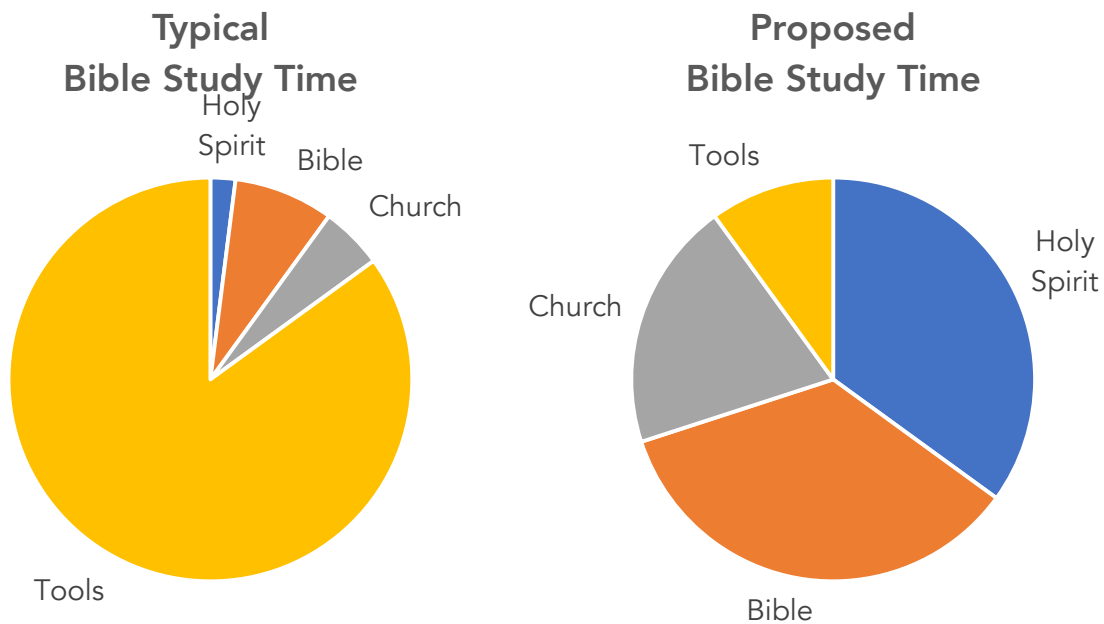


Romans

Personal Greetings ([Romans 16:1-16](#))

Introduction

A gentle review: **Did we do this?** Spend more time with God and His Word than with anyone and anything else.



Our approach each week will be REAP (read, explain, apply, personalize).

Here's our outline of the book of [Romans](#) (summarized from the ESV's outline):

- ✓ Paul's Introduction & Righteousness Introduced ([1:1-17](#)) (three weeks)
- ✓ Righteous Wrath ([1:18-3:20](#)) (six weeks)
- ✓ Saving Righteousness ([3:21-4:25](#)) (three weeks)
- ✓ Righteous Freedom ([5:1-8:39](#)) (11 weeks)
- ✓ Righteousness → Jews ([9:1-11:36](#)) (eight weeks)
- ✓ Righteous Living ([12:1-15:13](#)) (nine weeks)
- 7. Paul's Closing ([15:14-16:23](#)) (November to early December) (five weeks)
- 8. Righteousness Summarized ([16:25-27](#)) (December & wrap up) (two weeks)

Today's text ([Romans 16:1-16](#)) is the third part of this major section. As we discussed last week, this section can be thought of as how the righteousness of the gospel is impacting Paul. In today's text, it impacts who he is thankful for and why.

Paul the Minister to the Gentiles

14 I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another. 15 But on some points I have written to you very boldly by way of reminder, because of the grace given me by God 16 to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. 17 In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. 18 For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, 19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; 20 and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, 21 but as it is written, "Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand."

Paul's Plan to Visit Rome

22 This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. 23 But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you, 24 I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a while. 25 At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. 26 For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. 27 For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings. 28 When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. 29 I know that when I come to you I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

30 I appeal to you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf, 31 that I may be delivered from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, 32 so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company. 33 May the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Read: Personal Greetings (16:1-16)

1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, 2 that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. 5 Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. 6 Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. 7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. 8 Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. 9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. 10 Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. 11 Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. 12 Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. 13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. 14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. 15 Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. 16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Explain: Personal Greetings (16:1-16)

Bible study is asking and answering questions about the text. Let's ask some questions.

Are there any literary/structural observations?

Names. Lots and lots of names. In week one of this text, we will look at the meaning of the names. In week two, we'll look at what these brothers and sisters did.

What do the names mean?

The format for our names will be: meaning; gender; origin.

1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe [bright, radiant; female; unknown], a servant of the church at Cenchreae, 2 that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

3 Greet Prisca [ancient; female; wife of Aquila; Latin] and Aquila [an eagle; male; husband of Prisca; Jew], my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked their necks for

my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. 5 Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus [praiseworthy; unknown], who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. 6 Greet Mary [their rebellion; female; Latin], who has worked hard for you. 7 Greet Andronicus [man of victory; male; Jew] and Junia [youthful; female; Latin], my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. 8 Greet Ampliatus [large; male; Latin], my beloved in the Lord. 9 Greet Urbanus [of the city, polite; male; Latin], our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys [head of grain; male; Greek]. 10 Greet Apelles [called; male; Latin], who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus [the best counselor; male; unknown]. 11 Greet my kinsman Herodion [heroic; male; unknown]. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus [stupidity; male; Roman]. 12 Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena [luxurious; female; unknown] and Tryphosa [luxuriating; female; unknown]. Greet the beloved Persis [a Persian woman; female; Persian], who has worked hard in the Lord. 13 Greet Rufus [red; male; Latin], chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. 14 Greet Asyncritus [incomparable; male; unknown], Phlegon [burning; male, unknown], Hermes [herald of the gods; male; Greek], Patrobas [paternal; male, unknown], Hermas [Mercury; male; unknown], and the brothers who are with them. 15 Greet Philologus [lover of the Word; male; unknown], Julia [soft haired; female; unknown], Nereus [lump; male; unknown] and his sister, and Olympas [heavenly; male; unknown], and all the saints who are with them. 16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

What do the words mean?

1 I commend [present active indicative; sets together, introduces, exhibits, stands near, constitutes, approves, commends, consists, makes, stands with; same word used in Romans 3:5; 5:8] to you our sister [sister (natural or ecclesiastical)] Phoebe, [the verb "is" is omitted in the ESV; present middle participle] a servant [diakonos; to run errands, attendant, waiter, deacon, deaconess, minister, servant; same word used in Romans 13:4; 15:8] of the church [ekklesia; a calling out, a popular meeting; religious congregation (Jewish synagogue or Christian community), assembly, church] at Cenchreae [a port of Corinth], 2 that you may welcome [aorist active subjunctive; admit, await, accept, allow, look (wait) for, take] her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help [second aorist active subjunctive; stand beside, exhibit, proffer, recommend, substantiate, be at hand, aid; same word used in Romans 6:13 (twice), 16, 19 (twice); 12:1; 14:10] her in whatever [pragma; deed, affair, object, business, matter, thing, work] she may need [make (have) necessity, be in want of, have, need] from you, for she has been [aorist middle indicative] a patron [patroness, assistant, succourer] of many and of myself as well.

3 Greet [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*; **enfold** in the arms, salute, welcome, embrace, greet, take leave; occurs 17 times in today's text] **Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers** [co-laborer, coadjutor, companion in labor, fellow helper, fellow laborer, fellow worker, laborer together with, workfellow] **in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked** [aorist active indicative; to place underneath, to hazard, to suggest, lay down, put in remembrance] **their necks** [*trachelos*; throat, neck, life] **for my life, to whom not only I give thanks** [*eucharisteo*; present active indicative; to be grateful, to express gratitude (towards), to say grace at a meal, give thanks; same word used in **Romans 1:8, 21; 7:25; 14:6** (twice)] **but all the churches** [*ekklesia*; a calling out, a popular meeting; religious congregation (Jewish synagogue or Christian community), assembly, church; same word used in **Romans 16:1**] **of the Gentiles** [*ethnos*] **give thanks** ['give thanks' is not present in the Greek] **as well. 5 Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **also the church** [*ekklesia*; a calling out, a popular meeting; religious congregation (Jewish synagogue or Christian community), assembly, church; same word used in **Romans 16:1, 4**] **in their house** [dwelling, family, home, house, temple]. **Greet my beloved** [*agapetos*; beloved, dear; same word used in **Romans 1:7; 11:28; 12:19**] **Epaenetus, who was** [present middle indicative] **the first convert** [beginning of sacrifice, first fruits; same word used in **Romans 8:23; 11:16**] **to Christ in Asia. 6 Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **Mary, who has worked hard** [aorist active indicative; felt fatigue, worked hard, bestowed labor, toil, be wearied] **for you. 7 Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen** [*syngenes*; relative, countryman, cousin, kinfolk, kinsman; same word used in **Romans 9:3**] **and my fellow prisoners** [co-captives, fellow prisoners]. **They are** [present middle indicative] **well known** [remarkable, eminent, notable, of note] **to the apostles, and they were** [second perfect active indicative] **in Christ before me. 8 Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **Ampliatius, my beloved** [*agapetos*; beloved, dear; same word used in **Romans 1:7; 11:28; 12:19; 16:5**] **in the Lord. 9 Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **Urbanus, our fellow worker** [co-laborer, coadjutor, companion in labor, fellow helper, fellow laborer, fellow worker, laborer together with, workfellow; same word used in **Romans 16:3**] **in Christ, and my beloved** [*agapetos*; beloved, dear; same word used in **Romans 1:7; 11:28; 12:19; 16:5, 8**] **Stachys. 10 Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **Apelles, who is approved** [properly acceptable, approved, tried; same word used in **Romans 14:8**] **in Christ. Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. 11 Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **my kinsman** [*syngenes*; relative, countryman, cousin, kinfolk, kinsman; same word used in **Romans 9:3; 16:7**] **Herodion. Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. 12 Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **those workers** [felt fatigue, worked hard, bestowed labor, toil, be wearied; same word used in **Romans 16:6**] **in the Lord,**

Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **the beloved** [*agapetos*; beloved, dear; same word used in [Romans 1:7](#); [11:28](#); [12:19](#); [16:5, 8, 9](#)] **Persis, who has worked hard** [felt fatigue, worked hard, bestowed labor, toil, be wearied; same word used in [Romans 16:6](#), earlier in [Romans 16:12](#); **Mounce: The mention of exhausting work is restricted to women in the Lord.** **13 Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **Rufus, chosen** [select, favorite, chosen, elect; same word used in [Romans 8:33](#)] **in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well.** **14 Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers** [*adelphos*] **who are with them.** **15 Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister** [sister (natural or ecclesiastical); same word used in [Romans 16:1](#)], **and Olympos, and all the saints who are with them.** **16 Greet** [aorist active imperative; *aspazomai*] **one another with a holy kiss. All the churches** [*ekklesia*; a calling out, a popular meeting; religious congregation (Jewish synagogue or Christian community), assembly, church; same word used in [Romans 16:1, 4, 5](#)] **of Christ greet** [present middle indicative; *aspazomai*] **you.**

Are there any repeated words?

Greet, beloved, saints, Christ, Lord, sister,

Are there any repeated topics?

Family, love,

What are some observations of the text?

1 I commend [Jay Arnold: Paul was letting go of the care or protection of her to someone/some others. This has underlying impressions of confidence in the person being commended. . . . a sense of hope for embrace of her by others he trusted.] **to you our sister Phoebe, a servant** [Paul first identifies himself as a servant in [Romans 1:1](#), so this is a big compliment] **of the church at Cenchreae** [Was Phoebe a deacon? Maybe, but remember three things: (1) no one else in [Romans](#) who this word is used of was a deacon (public servants and Jesus), (2) Paul wrote [Romans](#) before [1 Timothy](#) (where the qualifications for deacons are listed—this timing is the one reason why this is not an error in the Bible), and (3) Phoebe would not meet the current biblical requirements to be a deacon], **2 that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.** [Most commentators believe Phoebe was the person who carried [Romans](#) to the Romans. She was a servant in Corinth (where Paul wrote [Romans](#)) and Paul tells them to welcome her.]

3 Greet Prisca and Aquila [Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures: They were driven from Rome by Claudius, came to Corinth, then to Ephesus, then back to Rome,

and again to Ephesus. They were good travelling Christians.], my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. 5 Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. 6 Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. 7 Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in Christ before me. 8 Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. 9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. 10 Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. 11 Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. 12 Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. 13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well [Hughes: What a difference authentic Christian affection can make in a cold indifferent world]. 14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. 15 Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them [About as close as Paul comes to saying, “the others.” Pay attention to this phrase—this is where we’d likely show up if Paul were writing to SHBC]. 16 Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you.

Valovcin: Crazy how much you can gain from reading a list of names. We truly take for granted how easy staying in touch with one another is today.

Apply (What is the point?)

1. God **provides** helpers
2. God’s children are **family** (brothers and sisters)
3. Christians **greet** each other

Personalize (What do we do with that?)

1. Be **thankful** for His helpers (to **Him** and to **them**)
2. Live as **family**
3. **Greet** as family

Next week: Final Instructions and Greetings (16:17-23)

17 I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. 18 For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. 19 For your obedience is known to all, so

that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. **20** The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

21 Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

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

23 Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

Homework

Resources (our helps—order matters)

- Holy Spirit
- Bible: [Romans](#) (ESV)
- Church: bit.ly/FlemingSS
- Tools: bit.ly/romans2017

Our process

- Ask (the Holy Spirit for help)
- Read ([Romans](#))
- Talk (about [Romans](#)—bit.ly/romans2017group)
- Send (feedback to jim314@yahoo.com by Wed)

Quotes & Observations

Amy Valovcin (Hughes)

The first characteristic of Paul's heart described in this chapter is that it overflowed with personal love.

What a difference authentic Christian affection can make in a cold indifferent world.

The absence of agape love in the typical church should burden our hearts. We must reach out in love to those around us.

Crazy how much you can gain from reading a list of names. We truly take for granted how easy staying in touch with one another is today.

Darla Skinner (Mounce)

Obviously the growth of the church is not dependent upon buildings erected for the specific purpose of worship.

Among the many to whom Paul sent his greetings was Epanetus, the earliest convert to Christ in Asia (v. 5b). Mary is identified as the one who “**worked very hard for you.**” This emphasis on strenuous labor is reflected in Paul’s greetings to three other women as well: Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis (v. 12). Although Priscilla and Aquila along with Urbanus are called “**fellow workers**” (vv. 3, 9), it is interesting too that the mention of exhausting work is restricted to women.

Jessica Norris (Kroll)

- Phoebe: means radiant; thought to be a business woman; probably a widow
- Priscilla and Aquila: husband and wife tentmakers; Christian heroes that are also mentioned in two other epistles
- Epaenetus: means praiseworthy; with Epaenetus, the floodgates opened of Asia Minor and praise was given to God for the conversion of multitudes of Gentiles
- Mary: she worked hard for the Romans; what she did exactly is unknown to us but God knows
- Andronicus and Junia: fellow prisoners with Paul but unsure of where exactly they were imprisoned together at
- Ampliatus: a common slave name
- Urbanus: native to Rome and means elegant, polite
- Apelles: Greek and Jewish name (if you Google Apelles a business pops up out of Columbus, OH, that is a debt collection service—that’s a squirrel moment on my part)
- Aristobulus: possibly the grandson of Herod the Great and brother of Herod Agrippa I
- Herodion: a man of Herod’s household
- Narcissus: possibly Tiberius Claudius; Narcissus was a wealthy free man of the Emperor Tiberius; executed by the order of Agrippina; his slaves would have become the property of the imperial empire and known as Narcissiani or household of Narcissus; Paul is only greeting the slaves who are in the Lord. (Of course his name reminded me of narcissist and so I had to google that too. Luke is talking about Greek mythology in school right now so this will be an exciting one to share with him.)
- Tryphaena and Tryphosa: probably sisters and maybe twins
- Persis: means Persian woman
- Rufus: may be the same man that Mark mentions as the son of Simon of Cyrene in Mark 15:21 who helped to carry the cross for Jesus
- The mother may be Simon’s mother who cared for Paul after he was brought from Tarsus to become a missionary colleague of Barnabas

- Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and brethren: a community of men. Hermes was the name of the god of good luck and a common slave name. Patrobas is an abbreviation from Patrobius. Hermes is an abbreviation of names like Hermogenes or Hermodorus which was a very common name.
- Philogus and Julia may have been husband and wife; Nereus and Olympas; associated to a tradition that goes back to the 4th century and is associated with Flavia Domitilla, a Christian woman who was banished to the island of Pandateria by her uncle Emperor Domitian in AD 95. She was released after his death the following year. These are a community of faith.
- Holy kiss: This was a common feature in Christian greeting and is still done in the Eastern Church but not the Western Church (thank goodness!)

Sean McGarvey (Ironsides)

It would seem that for the next two weeks, "[Greet] is the word." (Picture here a choreographed piece starring John Travolta.)

Another direction I could see this going is with Paul, stripes shaved in his eyebrow and dressed as Robert Matthew Van Winkle—a.k.a. Vanilla Ice ("Yo, VIP, let's kick it!"), rapping his saintly salutations and rabid respect to his Roman-regional posse.

H. A. spends a few paragraphs on this passage, noting that there are subtle nuances in the way Paul prefaces/puts forth the ones he chooses to name . . . or NOT name (v. 13 "Yo Rufus, word to your mother . . . and mine"), though he quickly moves on and turns an Ironside to them with **"we cannot linger over the record here."**

Definitely cool to know that someday we will have the opportunity to kick it with Paul's homies, so we're getting a little pre-introduction. Gives us a little backstory on the VIPeeps who will be at the after party.

Biblical figure lives matter.

Tim & Mila Archer (MacLaren)

Phoebe

Phoebe was one of many good women who helped Paul, as their sisters has helped Paul's Master and who thereby have won, little as either Paul or she thought, an eternal commemoration. She was a servant or as the margin preferably reads, a **"deaconess of the church which is at Cenchrea."** Phoebe was a Greek and the Roman readers of the epistle, all fused together by the power of the divine love that melted their hearts and the common faith that unified their lives.

For those of us who have to serve unnoticed and unknown, here is an instance and a prophecy which may stimulate and encourage. Surely I will never forget any of their

works is a gracious promise which the most obscure, and humble of us may take to heart, and sustained but which, we may patiently pursue a way on which here are "none to praise and very few to love."

Priscilla and Aquila

They were a mixed marriage that was not uncommon in those days. They had a church in their house. Aquila and Priscilla took their Lord and Master with them, and while working at their camel's hair tents, they were serving God. Paul implies that this couple was ready to lay down their lives for him.

Two households – Aristobulus and Narcissus

- I. The penetration power of Christian truth. Christ's truth is given, and then it spreads.
- II. These two household teach us very touchingly and beautifully the uniting power of Christianity.

Tryphena and Tryphosa

These two were probably sisters. They had a common faith. "Labour in the Lord" may suggest to us the most formidable foe of Christian earnestness. Their names, as we have already noticed, point to the state of society in which the parents' ideal for their daughters was dainty luxuriousness and a withdrawal from the rough and tumble of common life; but these two women, magnetized by the love of Jesus, had turned their backs on the parental ideal, and had cast themselves earnestly into a life of toil.

Persis

Persis helps us understand, by living example, that wonderful, new, uniting process that was carried on by means of Christianity. She is an unexpected immortality of true Christian service.