



PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS – Final Faithful Instructions

CG Study Guide: Romans 16:17-27 – Week of January 15, 2023

Verse 17- Paul starts with an appeal to a practical application of the doctrine he has laid out in the entire letter. He instructs the Church to actively watch for those who would bring in false doctrine, and to avoid them. This is a proactive application of our theology.

Verse 18- Paul adds additional context to those who bring a contrary doctrine. They are serving their own interest, their own appetites. They come with words that are easy on the ears. They often tell us what we want to hear, and by doing so deceive the naïve. This is why Paul tells us to avoid them. To be clear, Paul is saying that those who bring a contrary doctrine are not in Christ, and so we are not causing division amongst the body by avoiding them.

Verse 19- Paul is giving this warning in the previous two verses, not because of the current situation in Rome, but simply to equip them for the future. The obedience church in Rome is well known, and Paul's instructions to them are so they can stay that way. He wants them to be innocent or unmixed with evil. To do so, they must be actively looking for evil, so they can avoid it. This active pursuit of "being unmixed" is both an external and an internal process.

Verse 20- Paul reminds the Church of the sovereignty of God. The God of peace will by His strength crush Satan under the feet of the Church. The sovereign plan of God has been to redeem creation from the fall, by ultimately destroying Satan, sin, and death through the work of Jesus. Just like we are called by God into the grace of His redemption, we are likewise called into God's plan to destroy Satan. It is God's power at work within us, and nothing to boast about in ourselves. We should rejoice in the fact that our names are written in heaven, and that is what matters (Luke 10).

Verse 21-23- Paul continues to send greetings.

Verse 25-27- Paul personally ends the letter (2 Thessalonians 3), and he does so by reminding us of the glory of God, the importance of the Gospel, and hope we have in God through Christ Jesus. He commits the Church to God, that they would faithfully accomplish what God has strengthen them to do. That they would preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all nations, and that through the power of God and the preaching of the Gospel there would be obedience of faith. This likewise is our charge, that we would glorify God through Jesus Christ.

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

We must keep watch, as our enemy is seeking to divide the body. The war is won, now we are called to faithfully fight the battle, being vigilant until God crushes Satan under our feet.

Heart

We are to fully submit ourselves to God's will and purpose, and to desire to be equipped for obedience. Our lives should be built on the rock of Christ Jesus.

Hands

We are to be on watch! Furthermore, we are to be equipping ourselves, so that we may not be naïve. Look to God who strengthens us, and diligently work towards His glory.

Read Romans 16:17-26

1. As members of the body, how do we practically “watch out” for those who would cause division? How/where would we find this division? How should we respond?
2. Paul earlier in Romans was instructing the Church to be unified (Romans 14), but in this verse 17 he tells us to avoid people who cause division (divide from those who divide). How do we reconcile the instruction to stay unified with the instruction to avoid? How do we determine when/how to implement this instruction?
3. In verse 18, Paul warns about listening to those who pursue their own appetites by “smooth talking and flattery.” What does this “smooth talking and flattery” look like in our context today? How do we properly guard our hearts against it? What responsibility do we have individual in guarding our hearts or those of our siblings?
4. What does it mean to be “wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil?” Where is an area of life where you are being challenged to implement this principle?
5. **Read Verse 20** Paul tells the Church that God will soon crush Satan under their feet. What does Paul mean by this? How is this process similar to/linked to our salvation?
6. **Read Verses 25-27** What does Paul mean that the mystery was kept secret for long ages? How has Paul made the case for this for this from the letter to the Romans?
7. Paul refers to “my gospel.” He personally claims it. What is meant by this? What ways can this same mindset be applied in our own lives?
8. Reflecting on the year spent in this book, what principal or passage has equipped you most for the good work that God has called you to?