

# Encouraging Fellow Workers

Romans 16

## 1. Intro

1. Paul has reviewed his ministry. He talked about his past, talked about his present situation and tells them his desire for his future.
2. In closing Paul extends greetings to the church in Rome.
  1. In doing so, he weaves into his writings three ideas:
    1. Social composition; an organizational structure and the importance of women

## 2. Letter Delivered

1. Phoebe
  1. Phoebe carried the letter from Paul to Rome
  2. She was from Cenchrea which was just east of Corinth
  3. Had some type of leadership role.
  4. Had assisted Paul in his work. Enough so that he trusted her with this letter.
2. Paul, in closing, mentions many people by name and what they may have been involved in.
  1. We can glean from this a bit about the early church.

## 3. Early Church Structure

1. Social
  1. Many names suggest freed slaves
    1. servants mentioned specifically in v 10 & 11
    2. Most likely many of the early church common people
  2. Some are of means
    1. Household of Aristobulus; Narcissus(10-11)
    2. We see Priscilla and Aquila moving around suggesting that they had the money to do so (tent maker)
  3. God has a concern for the poor and hopeless; but anyone can come to Him.
2. Organizational
  1. House churches mentioned in v. 5, 14, 15.
  2. House churches necessary early on.
    1. Seemed to have a loose structure
    2. Not necessary “the way”.
  3. Need to function together (not compete)
    1. Maybe why Paul wrote chp 14
3. Women
  1. Women make up a good portion of the church (about 1/3 as mentioned)
  2. Have the same access to God as men.
  3. Engaged in significant ministry
    1. Phoebe – some sense of leadership (1)
    2. Priscilla and Aquila – Paul's co-workers (3)
    3. Mary (6)

4. Andronicus and Junia – husband and wife team? (7)
5. Tryphena and Tryphosa – sister? (12)
4. Are important asset to God's program

#### 4. Beware

1. Paul warns against false teachers
  1. Serve their own interest (18a)
  2. Are good talkers (smooth) (18b)
  3. End up causing division (17b)

#### 5. Conclusion

1. As we minister we should encourage our brothers and sisters as they work along side of us.
  1. Paul needed and received help from a variety of places.
2. We cannot go it alone.
3. Each of us has a role to play as the Church of Jesus Christ goes forward.