

# Studies In Romans

## (Romans 16:1-16)

### 1. From this context, what do we find out about Phebe?

*"I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also"* (Romans 16:1-2).

- Commended by Paul (**Acts 9:26-31**, **Acts 18:24-28**, and **II Corinthians 3:1-3**; cf. **Proverbs 12:8**). Not self-commending (**II Corinthians 10:12**).
- A sister in Christ (**Matthew 12:46-50** and **I Timothy 5:1-2**).
- A servant of the congregation at Cenchrea (a place where Paul had been – **Acts 18:18**). If you look at a "widow indeed" you can see some things women should be doing (**I Timothy 5:9-10**).
- Should be received (**Philippians 2:24-29**, **Colossians 4:10**, and **III John 1:5-6**) as a "saint", which is synonymous with the terms "Christian" or "disciple" or "member of the church" (**Romans 1:6-7**, **I Corinthians 1:2**, **Ephesians 2:19**, **Colossians 1:2**, etc.).
- She had business [work] of you [implies spiritually relative]. That word [πράγμα pragma; Strong's #4229] is translated as "things (**Luke 1:1**, **Hebrews 6:18**, and **Hebrews 10:1**, and **Hebrews 11:1**), "matter" (**I Corinthians 6:1**, **II Corinthians 7:11**, **I Thessalonians 4:6**), and "work" (**James 3:16**). Obviously, she had shown herself to be a godly woman (**I Timothy 2:8-10**).
- She had assisted many brethren, including Paul. Support roles such as what she had done are vital to God's work (cf. **II Timothy 1:16-18**).

### 2. How far were Priscilla and Aquila willing to go to help Paul?

They put their own necks on the line: *"Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles"* (Romans 16:3-4).

- Aquila and Priscilla (**Acts 18:1-3**, **Acts 18:24-28**, and **II Timothy 4:19**).
- **John 15:13**, **Acts 9:22-25**, **Philippians 2:17**, and **I John 3:14-18**; cf. **John 13:34-35**.
- Gentiles [us; non-Jews] part of the church/body of our Lord (**Ephesians 2:11-17**).

### 3. Where did the congregation that Priscilla and Aquila were members of meet?

In their home: *"Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaphroditus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ"* (Romans 16:5).

- The local church is to assemble in one place (**I Corinthians 14:23**).
- That may be in a house (**I Corinthians 16:19**, **Colossians 4:15**, and **Philemon 1:2**) or may be some other place (**Acts 20:7-11** and **I Corinthians 11:18-34**).

4. From the woman named Mary through Olympas, what are some things that we learn about Christians who had contact with the church in Rome?

*“Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us. Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord. Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus 'household. Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord. Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord. Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them. Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them”* (**Romans 16:6-15**).

- This Mary, there are several mentioned in the New Testament of which it is often hard to discern which you are talking about (**Matthew 1:18, Matthew 27:61, Luke 10:38-42, Luke 24:10, John 19:25, and Acts 12:12**), labored much for Paul and other brethren (i.e. **Matthew 27:55**).
- Andronicus and Junia were disciples of note (**Galatians 2:1-6**) longer than Paul and were also in prison with him. Sadly, Paul often had company in prison for preaching Christ (**Acts 16:25, Colossians 4:10, Philemon 1:23**, etc.).
- Paul distinctly noted his love for Amplias, Urbane, and Stachys (cf. **Philippians 4:1**). While we are to love all brethren (**Hebrews 13:1**), sometimes there is a distinct relationship that you can even see in the life of Christ (**John 11:1-5, John 13:23-26, John 19:26, John 20:2, John 21:7, and John 21:20**).
- The language of “approved in Christ” (**II Corinthians 2:9, II Corinthians 8:22, and Philippians 2:19-22**).
- Herodion was somehow related to Paul as a kinsman (cf. **Numbers 27:11**).
- Tryphena and Tryphosa were laborers in the Lord (**Matthew 9:37-38**), but Persis labored much (**I Corinthians 15:58**).
- Christians are all “chosen” (**Ephesians 1:3-4**). Rufus seems to have been chosen for something specific (cf. **Acts 9:13-17**).
- With many salutations in this context, we see the phrase “and the brethren that are with them”. Fellowship with other saints is significant in our growth and strength as Christians (**Ephesians 4:16 and I Thessalonians 5:11-14**). That being said, it is not always easy to find faithful brethren with whom to be in fellowship with (**Matthew 22:14 and Luke 13:23-24**; cf. **Ephesians 5:6-11**).

5. Using the Scriptures, what do you know about a holy kiss?

Here is what is written in this context: *“Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you”* (**Romans 16:16**).

- We read of this kiss (**I Corinthians 16:20, II Corinthians 13:12, I Thessalonians 5:26, and I Peter 5:14**), but nothing is written to define it. Thus, we can't do it (**Romans 14:23, Ephesians 5:10, and I Thessalonians 5:21**).

6. Should congregations send salutations to one another?

Yes: "...*The churches of Christ salute you*" (**Romans 16:16**).

- The word "churches" shows plurality. While there is only one body/church (**Matthew 16:18**, **Ephesians 1:22-23**, and **Ephesians 4:1-6**), there are many local congregations (**Acts 9:31**, **Acts 15:41**, **I Corinthians 16:1**, **II Corinthians 8:1**, **Galatians 1:2**, and **Revelation 2-3**).
- The "one church" is made up of all individual saved, individual Christians (**Acts 2:47**).
- Congregations exist wherein local saints come together for worship and spiritual work (**Acts 15:22-30** and **James 2:1-9**).
- While you are a member of the church in the sense of all saved individuals all the time you are faithful (**Hebrews 12:22-23**), the church in the local sense is only the church when assembled for specific functions. This is clearly seen in how an individual Christian woman can speak in the home, but cannot speak in certain manners when the saints are assembled for worship (**I Corinthians 14:34-35**). She never ceases being a member of the church in the sense of all the saved, but outside of the assembly of the saints she is not in the local assembly at all times. Similarly, the helping of widows shows the difference of individual members of the church and the local body as a collective (**I Timothy 5:3-16**). The same is shown in handling matters of sin against brethren (**Matthew 18:15-17**).