



# Spiritual Family

After Romans 15.14, Paul has shifted his focus. First, he talks about his relationship to our Lord in ministry. Then, in chapter 16, He talks about his relationship to the people in ministry. The emphasis is to show His love, his mutual accountability, and his dependence on the people living with the body. Today, we'll examine four

important parts of this text that teach us how to strengthen the relationships we have with one another ... And by doing so, strengthen the bond we have with Christ.

## I. ROMANS 16.1-2: COMMEND ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- A. 16.1-2 - *I commend to you our sister Phoebe...*
- B. Paul's three fold commendation.
  - 1. 16.1b - She is *our sister*. She belongs to the family of God.
  - 2. 16.1c - She is *a servant*. A general term, not a special office.
  - 3. 16.2 - She has been a *patron of many and myself as well*.
- C. 16.2a - *welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints*.

## II. ROMANS 16.3-16 - ACKNOWLEDGE PEOPLE:

- A. 16.3-16 - Focus on 16.3-4a - *my fellow workers... who risked their necks for my life...*
  - a) 16.4a - loyalty. Everyone could use friends like that.
  - b) 16.5 - dedicated servants - had a church meeting in their house.
- 2. 16.5 - *beloved Epaenetus, the first convert to Christ in Asia*.
- 3. 16.6 - *Mary worked hard for you... They labored to the point of weariness*.
- 4. 16.7 - Andronicus & Junia were *fellow prisoners. Well known to the apostles*.
- 5. 16.8 - Amphiliatus - was a slave name.
- 6. 16.9 - Urbanus - *a fellow worker. Stachys is Paul's beloved*.
- 7. 16.10 - Apelles - *was approved in Christ*. He was tried and proven true.
- 8. 16.13 - Rufus and his mother...*who has been a mother to me as well*.
- B. Can you see it? Feel it? This is just a great display of open love.
- C. Simply put, there is power in acknowledgement. It is validation.
- D. Who can you think of in this family who needs your acknowledgment?

## III. ROMANS 16.16 - EXPRESS AFFECTION:

- A. 16.16 - *Greet one another with a holy kiss*. This is simply a warm, friendly greeting.
- B. There is power in the human touch.
  - 1. There is something with this kind of affection that helps break down barriers.
  - 2. Today, many yearn for human touch and seldom receive it.

## IV. ROMANS 15.33 - WE CONFER A BLESSING:

- A. 15.33. See also 1 Corinthians 16.23-24; Galatians 6.18.
- B. This is all about asking God's favor on someone else. The love we have for each other is a way to confer this blessing on others.
- C. Today, God still commends our accomplishments. *You play a role in this*.

## V. CONCLUSION

- A. We're family. It's one marked by intimacy. It's one marked by love.
- B. It's one of the hundredfold blessings we've been given by our God in this life.