

I. Introduction and review.

II. Welcome God's servant. v. 1-2

- A. Pheobe probably carried this epistle from Corinth to Rome.
- B. Paul commends Phoebe to the church in Rome.
1. Why are letters of commendation necessary? Acts 18:27 Phil. 2:29 I Co. 16:10f II Co. 3:1 9:2-3
 2. Pheobe was most commendable: our sister, a servant, a saint.
 3. How ought we to emulate this practice of the early church.
- C. Welcome and help believers from other churches. 12:13 III John 5-8
1. Why would this have been especially important in Pheobe's situation?
 2. Hospitality, especially towards godly strangers, is a vital mark of true faith. 12:13 Gen. 19 Mt. 25:34-40
 3. We should be ready to help other Christians.
- D. Was Pheobe a deaconess?
1. The Greek word *diakonos* can be translated servant or deacon. 13:4 15:8 Mt. 20:26 Jo. 2:5 Col. 1:23 I Tim. 3:8 4:6 I Co. 3:5
 2. The question is not whether women may exercise authority over men in the church. I Tim. 2:11-14
 3. The office of deacon is reserved to men. Acts 6:1f I Tim. 3:8-13
 4. Is there evidence for a separate office of deaconess for women? I Tim. 3:11 5:8f
 - a. The original "deacons" who ministered to the widows were all men. Acts 6
 - b. I Timothy 3:11 refers to the wives of Deacons.
 - c. It is more likely that Pheobe was a servant in a general sense.
 5. Women have vital serving ministries in the church.
 6. You don't have to hold an office or be publicly recognized to be great in God's kingdom! Mt. 20:25-26

III. Greet one another. v. 3-16, 21-23

- A. Paul greets many individuals in Rome. v. 3-15
1. How does Paul know so many people in a place he has never visited?
 2. Paul cares deeply about people.
 3. Paul honors women. v. 1-2, 3-4,5,6?,12, 13b,15 Lu. 8:2-3 Phil. 4:1f
 4. Prisca and Aquila are a great team! v. 3-5a Acts 18:2,18,26 I Co. 16:19 II Ti. 4:19 Was Prisca the leader?
 5. Most of the others are only mentioned here. v. 5b-16 Mark 15:21
 6. Who appears to be missing from this list of greetings?
- B. Other greetings. v. 16b, 21-23
1. Greetings from all the churches. v. 16b Acts 20:4
 2. Greetings from those with Paul in Corinth. v. 21-23 Phi. 2:22 I Co. 16:10 4:17 1:14 Why did Paul use a secretary? Ga. 6:11 II Th. 3:17 I Co. 16:21 Co. 4:18

- C. Greet one another (with a holy kiss). v. 16a**
- 1. Why are greetings so important? Mt. 5:47 23:7**
 - 2. Should we follow this command literally? I Co. 16:20 II Co. 13:12 I Th. 5:26 I Pe. 5:14 Acts 20:37**
 - 3. The point is that we should love each other deeply and express mutual affection.**

D. Appreciate one another.

- 1. Paul heaps affectionate commendation on the faithful saints in Rome.**
- 2. Lovingly appreciate those who faithfully serve the Lord and His people.**
- 3. This is how God sees (and appreciates) you! Heb. 6:10**

E. Romans 16 opens a window into the life of the early church. v. 16b

- 1. Unity in diversity (gender, race, status). Gal. 3:26-28**
- 2. The church is people, not a building. v. 5,15 I Co. 16:19 Phm. 1:2**
- 3. There is mutual love and concern among the churches. John 13:34-35**
- 4. You don't have to be in full time ministry to play a vital part in church planting.**

IV. Concluding applications.

- A. Are you a people person?**
- B. You have a significant place in God's kingdom.**
- C. In Christ you are immortalized. Luke 10:20 Rev. 13:8 Isa. 43:1-7 45:3**

Discussion questions

- 1. Do you think Pheobe was a deaconess? Why or why not?**
- 2. What kinds of work should women do in the church?**
- 3. Why should our church give and receive letters of commendation?**
- 4. What opportunities do we have to welcome and help visitors?**
- 5. How did Paul know all of those people in Rome since he had never been there?**
- 6. Why is it important that we greet one another?
How should we greet one another?**
- 7. Which Christians are worthy of commendation?**
- 8. What do we learn about the early church from Paul's greetings?**
- 9. Is there a biblical basis for home fellowship groups?**
- 10. Is it wrong for churches to meet in buildings?**