

Paul's Final Instructions (Romans 15:17-20; 25-27)

Note that just because we did not interact with some verses in this chapter does not mean they are less important or not God's Holy Word. In these verses, Paul is giving personal instructions to the Romans regarding specific people within his circle of influence. We can learn a lot about the practical applications of what Paul has been teaching through these verses.

Verse 16 says believers are to greet each other with a kiss. This was common practice for first century men. It is still common in some middle eastern cultures. Please Note: None of you better try to kiss me. Thank you for your cooperation.

I. Pay Attention to Those Causing Divisions (Rom. 15:17-20)

A. Watch Out (v. 17)

1. Paul has just told us the benefits of fellowship in the previous chapter
2. Yet he wants to make sure we know there are limits
 - a. Those who cause divisions among the body
 - these are people who teach differently than what Paul has been teaching them in Romans.
 - notice it says that the divisions they cause are "contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned"
 - Doctrine is just another word for teaching. Anytime you open your mouth to answer the question, "Who is Jesus?" or "How can you be saved?" You are expressing doctrine.
 - Those who teach contrary to the doctrines Paul has taught the Romans are to be avoided.
 - Try to remember some of these doctrines we learned – we will try to list them in class
 - b. Those who cause offense among the body
 - These are people who hinder the teaching of the gospel
 - People can hinder the gospel in a number of ways
 - Maybe they are trying to cause people to rebel
 - Maybe they are planting the seeds of dissention
 - they cause offenses to people's being taught properly

B. Why Do these People cause division? (v. 18)

1. They do not serve Christ but their own appetites
 - a. They are out to have the authority of teacher
 - b. They are out to have others look up to them
 - c. They are out to seem closer to God and draw followers
 - d. They are only wanting to feed their ego rather than see people grow in Christ.
2. They Readily Deceive those who are young in Christ.
 - a. "The simple" here doesn't mean feeble minded

- b. It means those who are new to the faith
- c. It means those who are not discerning about false teaching yet
- d. They are easily deceived because they are not yet steeped in the word of God
- e. Part of the church's duty is to protect those who are young in the faith
- f. The strong are to help the weak

C. Why Do they try to cause division among Strong Churches (v. 19)

1. Because of the strong reputation of Believers

- a. Paul says the whole world has heard of the Roman Christians
 - this makes them a prime target for Satan's minions
 - False teachers must attack those teaching and living the truth.

- Those not teaching truth are of no concern to them

- b. If we seek to live and teach God's Word we must expect to be infiltrated by the enemy.

- He comes to sow seeds of untruth
- He comes to divide the believers
- He comes to mar their testimony

- c. Paul is glad they are so strong in faith

- but because of this they must be extra careful
- they must be wise in what is good
wise in truth and God's word
- they must be "simple" or innocent concerning evil
they must stay away from those teaching
contrary doctrine

D. Satan will Soon be defeated (20)

1. Why does Paul put this exhortation here?

- a. Because the false teachers and those causing division are sent from Satan

- we watch and be diligent in combating this division
- but ultimately God will bring victory to the church over them.

- b. Notice Paul references Gen. 3:15 here. The 1st promise of the Gospel in Scripture. Paul tells them that it is through the gospel and the preaching of Christ that the promise of the destruction of Satan will be accomplished

II. The Gospel Power to Protect (25-27)

A. The Power to Establish You (v. 25)

1. Where does this power come from?

- a. Notice God has the power but the power comes "according to the gospel"

- Remember in chapter 1 of Romans Paul said the gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16) – here Paul ends the same way he started.

b. This power to establish you is through “the preaching of Jesus Christ.”

c. This power is according to the revelation of the mystery
- the mystery is continually referenced in Romans as being the unknown work of God in bringing the Gentiles into His people.

d. Now the mystery has been revealed in the Scriptures of the prophets

e. The point of the mystery – to make “known to all nations for the obedience of faith” – to bring all nations into His people.