

## **GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS FOR MAN FROM START TO FINISH**

### **Part VII: God's Righteousness Exemplified In Paul's Personal Messages, Romans 15:14-16:27**

#### **D. The Valued Ministries Of Other Believers In Paul's Exemplary Life And Ministry**

**(Romans 16:3-16)**

##### **I. Introduction**

- A. The Apostle Paul was the greatest missionary in Church History, and he was also an Apostle of Christ, one sent by the Lord Himself into the ministry of evangelizing primarily the Gentile world.
- B. It is thus easy for us "ordinary" Christians today to be tempted to compare our ministry efforts with Paul's work and conclude that we fail to make as important a contribution in our ministries for the Lord as did Paul, but that was not how the Apostle Paul himself viewed the work of fellow committed Christians in his day.
- C. We thus view his remarks on the ministries of other such believers for our insight and edification (as follows):

##### **II. The Valued Ministries Of Other Believers In Paul's Exemplary Life And Ministry, Romans 16:3-16 NIV.**

- A. Paul valued the ministry of Priscilla and Aquila, his fellowworkers, for they risked their lives for his sake, and thus for the edification of all the Gentile churches, Romans 16:3-4. Paul added that all the Gentile churches were grateful to this couple, and as we also should be: the epistles of Romans, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon and Hebrews (if Paul wrote Hebrews) were written after Priscilla and Aquila had risked their lives for Paul, so their brave act vastly enriched us and millions of others believers down through Church History! (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1593, 1672, 1682, 1690, 1708, 1716, 1723, 1727 and 1729)
- B. Paul valued his dear friend Epenetus for being the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia, what would have greatly encouraged the Apostle in view of his history of ministry in Asia (as follows), Romans 16:5b:
  - 1. When Paul first tried to minister in Asia, the Holy Spirit did not permit him to do so, Acts 16:6.
  - 2. Near the end of his second missionary journey, Paul finally arrived at Ephesus in Asia (Acts 18:18-22; Map 13: The Missionary Journeys of Paul) where he briefly ministered before leaving for a feast at Jerusalem. Apparently, Epenetus came to Christ at this time, and was among those who encouraged Paul to return again to Ephesus when he had time to do a more extensive ministry there, Acts 19:1-20:1.
  - 3. Thus, the encouragement of Epenetus and others motivated Paul to return for a far greater ministry there, leading to the establishment of the large Church of Ephesus that Timothy later pastored, 1 Timothy 1:3.
- C. Paul valued a woman named Mary for her very hard work for the Church at Rome, Romans 16:6.
- D. Paul valued Andronicus and Junias, human relatives of Paul who had suffered imprisonment for Christ with him and were well known by the other apostles and were converts to Christ before Paul, Romans 16:7 ESV.
- E. Paul valued Ampliatus, whom he loved in the Lord, Romans 16:8. This brother's relationship to Paul would have been a great encouragement to him amid trials he faced from his foes in the ministry.
- F. Paul valued Urbanus for his fellow work for Christ and his dear friend Stachys for his encouraging supportiveness that would have also greatly encouraged Paul, Romans 16:9.
- G. Paul valued Apelles who had been tested by trials in life and approved through them in Christ, Romans 16:10.
- H. Paul valued Tryphena and Tryphosa, women who work hard for the Lord, Romans 16:12a.
- I. Paul valued Persis, a dear woman in Christ who had worked very hard for the Lord, Romans 16:12b.
- J. Paul valued Rufus, a man chosen in the Lord, and his mother who had been like a mother to Paul as well, nurturing and caring for his material needs of housing and food, Romans 16:13.
- K. Paul valued other believers whom he named but whose attributes or accomplishments he did not name, acknowledging them as valuable saints in the Lord, Romans 16:5a, 10b, 11a,b, 14-16.

***Lesson:*** *Though Paul was the greatest missionary in Church History and Apostle to the Gentiles, he highly valued the lives and ministries of other believers who risked their lives for him and the edification of the churches, who encouraged him at key times in his life and ministry toward the great advance of Christ's Kingdom, who worked hard for the Lord, who suffered with Paul in imprisonments as mutual supporters, who had deep, loving relationships with Paul for his edification and hence the advance of the discipling of others, who mothered him as a ministry of encouragement and who were invaluable for unnamed benefits of ministry to the body of Christ.*

***Application:*** *(1) May we realize that there are no small or insignificant people in God's work, but that the entire Universal Body and Local Body of Christ is interactive and interdependent by divine design for mutual edification, Ephesians 4:11-16. (2) May we each then abound in God's assignments for us for the good of other believers.*