

# THE PENTECOST

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*Cover photo taken at: Powell River*

*Above photo taken at: Tea Pot Hill, Cultus Lake*

Substance abuse has brought much grief to the hearts of individuals and families. Substance abuse is a part of the larger problem of temptation. In this May, 2014 issue of The Pentecost, we will look at the topics of substance abuse and temptation and finish our series on the Book of Romans. God bless you.

**Shawn Stevens**

Many people try to drown their sorrows or numb the pain with alcohol or drugs, only to find that it causes remorse. Yet, there is hope. If you or someone you know is in this battle, I pray that you would come to Jesus and find the strength and deliverance to set you free. God bless you.

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## SUBSTANCE ABUSE

From ancient to modern times, people have been abusing the use of drugs and alcohol in an effort to find happiness or to escape reality. Sadly, drugs and alcohol provide neither in any long-term way. More tragic, still, is the damage that such substances do to those who use them and the addictions that they cause. It is just as tragic as the damage that substance abuse does to families.

There is much confusion and misunderstanding about drugs and alcohol. What are some of these misunderstandings? Some untruths that are commonly believed today are: smoking calms your nerves; small amounts of alcohol make a person more alert; small amounts of alcohol will stimulate blood circulation and warm the body; drinking wine after childbirth helps replenish the blood supply; tea and coffee can sober a person up after alcohol consumption. These, and other, misconceptions are sometimes used as excuses for substance abuse.

A drug is simply any substance that creates mental, physical or psychological changes in the consumer. Many drugs are legitimately used to control physical or psychological conditions. Doctors prescribe a host of different medications which improve the quality of life for millions of people today. However, much substance use is not regulated by doctors and is simply taken at the wish of consumers. It does not take much for that substance use to become an addiction and be classified as substance abuse.

Is substance abuse a sin or a disease? It can be argued that it is both. Some people's chemical make-up genetically predisposes them to susceptibility to addiction. However, drug and alcohol use is something that the addict must take responsibility for. It is a choice. We are taught in Scripture; "but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death." (James 1.14, 15 ASV). Substance abuse is a result of being drawn away by your own lusts. It may have arisen out of pressure to be accepted, pressure for approval from others or even from pressure to perform at school, work or sports. Some use is just an attempt to avoid

pain but, in any of these cases, substance abuse will quickly lead to addiction if the use is not stopped.

How does substance addiction occur? It begins with experimentation. This may be done out of curiosity. This may involve what are called "gateway drugs," like marijuana, which can later lead to using harder drugs like cocaine. Next, experimentation moves to occasional use of a substance. This usually is done in some social context, among friends. The user has a need to feel good and chooses to do so with the use of some substance, in the company of friends. Next, occasional use moves to regular use. This is when the use is weekly and the user has a preoccupation with his substance. His use is above and beyond his own limits which he has set. Also, the user is more ashamed of his substance use and does most of it in private. He is likely experiencing many physical symptoms at this point such as blackouts, fainting and other health breakdowns. Next, the user moves to a dependency on the substance. He or she is addicted and needs professional counseling and help.

Drug and alcohol abuse affects people from every class of society and background. Substance abuse is a many-sided problem. It is spiritual, emotional, physical and psychological. There is help for those wanting to be free from addictions to substances. However, they must want help. If you are one of those who suffers from substance addiction, you can be made free. It will mean coming to Jesus and surrendering your life to Him. Jesus said; "If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John 8.36 ASV).

There is great hope for you but know that this is a journey to recovery and it will take some time. It begins with coming to Jesus Christ and committing your life to Him. It continues with taking responsibility for your addiction. It continues with repenting from your abuse of drugs or alcohol and committing to not using them again and coming to a Church or Christian recovery program. You will need others around you whom you will be open and honest with and who will hold you accountable. You will probably need to leave your present surroundings and even drop friendships with other users. You may even require 24-hour supervision for a while. However, if you will come to Christ,

surrender everything to Him and begin rehabilitation, there is great hope for you. Many others have come free from the very thing that you are struggling with now. Let your name and life be counted with them to the glory of God.

Friend, Jesus Christ died to set you free. Coming into this freedom means dealing with more than just substance abuse. It begins with understanding and believing what Jesus Christ has done for you and me.

Dear reader, I wonder if you understand the cup from which Jesus Christ had to drink. For, remember, in the Garden of Gethsemane when His disciples, or at least Peter, would have fought for His freedom, He stopped them from doing any more than they did with these words; "... Put up the sword into the sheath: the cup which the Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" (John 18.11 ASV). The cup, which symbolizes the wrath of God, was made for us as a consequence of our many sins. Jesus drank it instead, to spare us from this fate. Remember, He could have prayed for twelve legions of angels to deliver Him. However, that would have left you and me holding the cup, leaving us without hope before the judgment throne of God.

He was despised and rejected by men. He was oppressed and afflicted. He was silent before His accusers, like a lamb before his shearers. He was cut off from the land of the living.

We read in Isaiah:

*4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.  
5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.  
6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.  
Isaiah 53.4-6 (KJV)*

Jesus' death was on behalf of each of us for our sins. Through His crucifixion, God has made a way for us to be saved. Oh, I pray that if you don't know this forgiveness that you will open your heart and come

to faith in Jesus today. God bless you.

Please pray something like this:

*God, I know that You exist and that You are holy. I am a sinner and Your word, the Bible, says that Jesus Christ died on account of my sins, that I might be forgiven and saved. Then He rose from the dead. God, take what I have learned and move it from my head to my heart. Please show me what I must do for this to be applied to me personally.  
In Jesus' name. Amen.*

The Bible tells of God's holiness, of God's laws and of the final day of judgment. It also tells us of God's Son, Jesus Christ, and of what He has done to deliver us from our sins and the terrible judgment of hell. But, dear reader, nothing of what Christ has done will be of any benefit to you *unless it is applied to you personally*. So that brings us now to discuss how we should respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ. We read Jesus' own words:

*14 Now after John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God,  
15 and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe in the gospel.  
Mark 1.14-15 (ASV)*

In this passage, Jesus calls for two responses. Firstly, He calls for repentance and secondly, He calls for believing, which could also be called faith. The Apostle Paul taught this also, as he says; "how I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20.20-21 ASV).

God commands all men everywhere to repent, as the Bible tells us; "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent:" (Acts 17.30 ASV). Jesus came to call sinners to repentance; "... I came not to call the righteous, but sinners." (Mark 2.17 ASV).

We must first define "repentance" and how it should

begin. The Scriptures speak of a type of sorrow that produces repentance; “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation ...” (2 Corinthians 7.10 KJV). This godly sorrow is a result of understanding that we have sinned individually and personally against God. Dear reader, you probably realize that your sins have hurt others but do you realize that your sins are directed primarily against God, causing Him much pain also? Joseph, of the Old Testament, when Potiphar's wife tried to tempt him into committing adultery with her, responded with these words; “... how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?” (Genesis 39.9 ASV). All sin is primarily against God. When we read through the Ten Commandments with an honest and humble heart, asking God to reveal to us where we have been disobedient to Him, He begins to show us and we experience godly sorrow. So repentance itself is a choice of the will to turn to God, to turn away from evil and to follow God no matter what the cost or consequence. The Bible instructs us:

*6 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:  
7 Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.  
Isaiah 55.6-7 (KJV)*

Turning to God is an acceptance of His supremacy and lordship over our lives. Again, this turning is two-fold, a turning away from sin and a turning toward God.

So, repentance is a repudiation of our old life and a surrendering of our whole self to Jesus Christ. It is a settled refusal to set any limits on His will for our lives.

Friend, God loves you and can set you free from any substance abuse and set your life in order. Being converted happens in a moment but recovery from substance abuse is a journey which may take time. If you do not know the Lord, commit yourself to Him. Next, inquire into a good Christian-based recovery program. God bless you.

**Shawn Stevens**

## **REFERENCES :**

Jake Balzer's Unpublished Study Notes

Graham, Billy and Charles G Ward. *The Billy Graham Christian Worker's Handbook*. Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1984.

Scalise, Dr. Eric. *Understanding Addictions. Courageous Living Series. DVD*. American Association of Christian Counselors, Inc., 2009.

Scripture references taken from the American Standard Version and the King James Version.

## TEMPTATION

Just as a compass' needle feels the pull towards the magnetic poles, so, too, man feels the pull towards many things that he knows are not right; we call this temptation. It is important to remember some things about temptation. First, temptation is common to all Christians. We read; "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it." (1 Corinthians 10.13 ASV). Even Christ was tempted (see Matthew 4.1-11). How much more are we? Jesus, even though He was tempted, did not sin. The Bible says; "For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4.15 ASV). Temptation is from the devil. God does not tempt anyone. Again, we read in the Bible; "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempteth no man:" (James 1.13 ASV). God does not tempt us but He allows us to be tempted. Job endured incredible testing and temptation. We read:

*6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.*  
*7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.*  
*8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*  
*9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?*  
*10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.*  
*11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.*  
*12 And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.*  
*Job 1.6-12 (KJV)*

Lastly, temptation is not sin; giving in to it is.

Temptation gives us the opportunity to overcome. We read:

*I have written unto you, fathers, because ye know him who is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the evil one.*  
*1 John 2.14 (ASV)*

A Christian can claim the promise that no temptation is greater than we can bear. I repeat what the Bible says; "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that ye may be able to endure it." (1 Corinthians 10.13 ASV). Overcoming temptation relates to two things, resisting the enemy and submitting to God. We read; "Be subject therefore unto God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4.7 ASV).

Christian, in your hour of temptation, remember that you are not alone. Jesus has endured temptation, and overcome it, and He is with you to help you overcome as well. Lean on Him. Draw strength from Him. Pray to Him. What a friend we have in Jesus.

**Shawn Stevens**

### REFERENCES :

Graham, Billy and Charles G Ward. *The Billy Graham Christian Worker's Handbook*. Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1984.

Scripture references taken from the American Standard Version and the King James Version.

# ROMANS CHAPTER 14

## OUTLINE :

### I Why Should All Believers Receive All Other Believers? 14.1-4

- 1) Because God receives them 14.1-3
- 2) Because the Lord sustains them 14.4
- 3) Because the Lord is sovereign over each believer 14.4

### II How Can We Learn To Fellowship With Each Other In Harmony? 14.1-12

- 1) By learning to respect each other's conscience 14.1-4

The natural and unspiritual tendencies are

A) For the strong in faith to be contemptuous towards those who are weaker

B) For the weaker in faith to be judgmental towards the stronger

- 2) By learning how to accept our own accountability towards God 14.5-12

A) For our own conscience and actions towards those who are weaker 14.1-7

B) For our submission to the lordship of Jesus Christ 14.8

C) For our own accountability at the judgment seat of Christ 14.12

### III What Are Our Responsibilities Towards Other Believers Regarding Christian Freedom? 14.13-22

- 1) Don't put a stumbling block in their way 14.13
- 2) Determine to use your freedom within the context of love 14.14-15
- 3) Try to walk so that we are living in peace and mutual edification 14.17, 19

## I Why Should All Believers Receive All Other Believers?

Why should all believers receive all other believers? Firstly, believers should receive other believers because God receives them. We read; "Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him." (Romans 14.3).

The New Covenant seems to not include dietary restrictions on food. (See 1 Timothy 4.1-3). The Apostle Peter, early in the post-ascension of Christ period, saw a vision of God offering him food which was not kosher under Old Covenant laws. Peter objected, but heard God say, "... What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." (Acts 10.15). The lesson in this is that God had, or would, cleanse Gentiles who receive Him and Peter should accept them since God had.

Secondly, believers should receive other believers because the Lord sustains them. We read; "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand." (Romans 14.4).

Thirdly, believers should receive other believers because the Lord is sovereign over each believer. We read further:

*5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.*

*6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.*

*7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.*

*8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.*

*9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.*

*Romans 14.5-9*

## II How Can We Learn To Fellowship With Each Other In Harmony?

How can we learn to fellowship with each other in harmony? Firstly, we can find this harmony by learning to respect each other's conscience. We read:

*1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.*

*2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.*

*3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.*

*4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.*

*Romans 14.1-4*

The natural and unspiritual tendencies are for the strong in faith to be contemptuous towards those who are weaker and for the weaker to judge the stronger, and vice versa. The word “judge” is “krino” in the Greek and basically means “separating” or “isolating”.<sup>1</sup> The weak one in this passage is the legalistic one who restricts himself from eating certain foods for religious reasons. The strong one in this passage is the one who knows his freedom before the Lord. Also, one observes Sabbath ceremonial days and one does not. (Also see Colossians 2.16-17; Galatians 4.9-10). Those who know their freedom are likely to use it but this is not necessarily good in all situations.

Secondly, we can learn to fellowship in harmony by learning how to accept our own accountability towards God. It is also a natural tendency for the weaker in faith to be judgmental toward the stronger. However, who are we to judge another's servant? (See vs 14.4). We are asked again; “But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.” (Romans 14.10). Here the American Standard Version agrees with most translations in ascribing the judgement seat to God. The King James Bible, as well as some others, ascribes the judgement seat to Christ. (Of course, we know that Christ is God). We should accept accountability for our own conscience and accountability for our actions towards those who are

weaker.

We read further; “But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. Let not then your good be evil spoken of:” (Romans 14.15-16).

Let us consider the word “destroy” in verse 15. Some say that this means ruining the walk or testimony of a weaker brother but the word is used frequently in Scripture to mean perishing without salvation. “Apollymi” is the Greek word here.<sup>2</sup> We should accept accountability for our submission to the lordship of Jesus Christ. (See vs 8). We should accept responsibility for our own accountability at the judgment seat of Christ. (See vss 9-10).

## III What Are Our Responsibilities Towards Other Believers Regarding Christian Freedom?

What are our responsibilities towards other believers regarding Christian freedom? We are not to put a stumbling block in the way of others. We read:

*13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.*

*Romans 14.13*

We should try to understand the other's point of view. We should determine to use our freedom within the context of love: We read further:

*15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.*

*16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:*

*17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

*18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.*

*Romans 14.15-18*

We should try to walk so that we are living in peace and mutual edification. We read further:

*19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.*



*20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.*

*21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.*  
*Romans 14.19-21*

We should live to please God and not to parade our freedoms. In God's kingdom, love and acceptance of each other is crucially important. It keeps us away from judgmentalism which is destructive to others. The Apostle Paul is not saying that all judgment is wrong but he is saying that false judgment, or judgment wrongfully applied, does damage in the body. With this admonition comes also the call to not flaunt freedom and lay stumbling blocks for other believers. Instead, let us walk in love and peace.

**Shawn Stevens**

## **ENDNOTES :**

1. John MacArthur, Jr. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : Romans 9-16* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1994), 278.

2. Ralph Earle, Th. D., *Word Meanings in The New Testament, Vol. 3* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1974), 248.

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MacArthur, John, Jr. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : Romans 9-16*. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1994. (Copyright held by John MacArthur Jr.)

Stamps, Donald C., M.A., et al. *Full Life Study Bible. The New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. 1990.

Scripture references taken from the King James Version.

# ROMANS CHAPTER 15

## OUTLINE :

I Determine To Express Building Up Your Neighbour 15.1-3

II Determine To Express Unity And, Thereby, Bring Glory To God 15.4-6

III Determine To Accept Others As Jesus Has Accepted Us 15.7-13

- 1) So that they may glorify God for His mercy
- 2) Be filled with all joy and peace and abound in hope

IV Purpose For Writing 15.14-21

V Paul's Plans To Visit Them 15.22-31

- 1) Invites the Church to assist him as he goes to minister in Spain
- 2) Sharing how believers financially helped Church at Jerusalem
- 3) Invites the Church to pray for him

## I Determine To Express Building Up Your Neighbour

We are called to build up our neighbour. We read:

*1 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.  
2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.  
3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.  
Romans 15.1-3*

The strong and weak are carry-overs from Chapter 14. In our study of that chapter, the weak were those who did not understand their freedom in Christ to not have to hold to Old Covenant ritual days and eating requirements. The strong were those who understood their freedom in Christ. Here, the Apostle Paul says that the strong ought to bear with the “scruplos” or

“infirmities” of the weak. <sup>1</sup> We are not to merely please ourselves but, rather, we must please our neighbour. God does not just give us freedoms so that we can use them for self-pleasure but, rather, for helping others. (See Romans 14.19). Jesus is our example. Jesus did not live to please Himself. (See Philippians 2.5-8; John 4.34).

## II Determine To Express Unity And, Thereby, Bring Glory To God

The believer should determine to express unity and, thereby, bring glory to God. Paul says:

*4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.  
5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:  
6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
Romans 15.4-6*

## III Determine To Accept Others As Jesus Has Accepted Us

The believer should, to some degree, determine to accept others, as Jesus has accepted us. We read:

*7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.  
8 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers:  
9 And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name.  
10 And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.  
11 And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him all ye people.  
12 And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.  
13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.  
Romans 15.7-13*

The word “proslambano” in the Greek means

“accept” and means receiving someone or something to yourself with special consideration. <sup>2</sup>

#### IV Purpose For Writing

What was Paul's purpose for writing? He tells us in these words:

*14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.*

*15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God,*

*16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*

*17 I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.*

*18 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed,*

*19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.*

*20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:*

*21 But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.*

*Romans 15.14-21*

Paul is trying to affirm and encourage the Christians so that they can admonish each other. (See vs 14).

Paul affirms his ministry to the Gentiles. Paul

affirms his faithfulness to speak fully the gospel.

Paul divides his ministry into two types. Firstly, he ministers in word and deed. Secondly, he ministers in signs and wonders by the power of the Spirit of God. The phrase, “by the power” is in the Greek “en dymamei” and means “in power.” <sup>3</sup>

#### V Paul's Plans To Visit Them

Paul plans to visit them. He said to the Roman Church:

*22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.*

*23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to*

*come unto you;*

*24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.*

*Romans 15.22-24*

Paul invites the Church to assist him as he goes to minister in Spain. Paul is sharing how believers financially helped the Church at Jerusalem. The American Standard Version and the King James Version render the word for “material” as “carnal” in verse 27 but material is more correct. Lastly, Paul invites the Church to pray for him and expresses his desire that God would be with them.

Paul calls us to love our neighbour, be united with other believers and to glorify God. This requires a fair share of acceptance of others in the body. Believers should admonish one another in a godly way. May the God of peace be with you.

**Shawn Stevens**

#### ENDNOTES :

1. Ralph Earle, Th. D., *Word Meanings in The New Testament, Vol. 3* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1974), 252.

2. John MacArthur, Jr., *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary : Romans 9-16*. (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1994), 318. (Copyright held by John MacArthur, Jr.)

3. Ralph Earle, Th. D., *Word Meanings in The New Testament, Vol. 3* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1974), 255.

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Scripture references taken from the King James Version.

# ROMANS CHAPTER 16

## OUTLINE :

I Affirming And Greeting 16.1-16

II A Word On False Teachers 16.17-19

III Doxology 16.25-27

## I Affirming And Greeting

The Apostle Paul starts this chapter with affirming and greeting the saints. (See 16.1-16). Because we recognize this book as Scripture, it is hard for us to also think of it as a personal letter to friends. This letter is both and, at the close of this great letter, Paul is commending a saint, named Phoebe, and sending greetings to personal friends at Rome. It is curious how Paul knows so many people in the Church of Rome when, to our knowledge, he had never been there. It probably is a testament to how much movement there was of Christians in the empire.

## II A Word On False Teachers

Paul gives a word on false teachers. We read:

*17 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.*

*18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.*

*19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.*

*20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*

*Romans 16.17-20*

This is a strong warning against false teachers. False teachers are not just nice guys in the Church who are a little confused on doctrine. Paul warns us to avoid them. False teachers are dangerous. Avoid them. Avoid them. Avoid them. Reject their teaching. This is not splitting hairs. False teachers serve their own belly. They are self-serving. They engage in self-promotion. A false teacher may come in many disguises, such as a reformer, a scholar, an orator, a writer, a celebrity or a religious leader. However, he is not drawing his or her teaching from God. The right response towards them is avoidance.

## III Doxology

Paul ends the Book of Romans with this beautiful doxology or benediction. We read:

*25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began,*

*26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith:*

*27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.*

*Romans 16.25-27*

It would be an honour to be affirmed by the Apostle Paul and many at Rome received this affirmation. Some leaders do not deserve affirmation and I am referring to false teachers. They can be found today, in our times, promoting themselves and spreading error and lies. Avoid them.

We have worked our way through sixteen chapters of the Book of Romans. Readers and friends, I would like to pray the same prayer for you, that you would be established and that God would be glorified.

God bless you.

**Shawn Stevens**

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