

August 2, 2020

Speaker: Eric Naus **Series:** This I Believe – The Book of Romans

Passage: Romans 16:17-27

Community Group Questions: “Strengthened by the Gospel”

Read Romans 16:17-27 aloud as a group and then work through the following questions:

1. Of the many things Paul could bring up in these parting words of Romans, he warns against divisive people who create stumbling blocks contrary to true doctrine. Paul insists that we must “watch out” for them and “avoid them.” In your opinion, what false teachers or movements is our church most susceptible to, and how can we be on guard?
2. In verses 17-19, Paul gives us three “tests” by which we can locate false teaching when we see it. First, there is a doctrinal test: does this teaching square with biblical teaching (Vs. 17)? Secondly, there is a Christological test: does this teaching rightly recognize the person and work of Christ (Vs. 18)? Thirdly, there is a moral test: does this teaching promote a Biblical lifestyle (Vs. 19)? Can you think of examples of false teaching that you have encountered? How did they fail some or all these tests?
3. Verse 20 is a reference to Genesis 3:15, the first gospel promise in Scripture. Take a moment to flip back and read the promise in Genesis. In that passage, God promises that a coming descendent of Eve will bruise the head of Satan. How does Paul apply this promise to Christians today, as we await the return of Christ? Do you find this promise encouraging considering the many frustrations and trials we face in today? How so?
4. In verses 21-23, Paul sends several greetings to the Roman Christians from his ministry colleagues and Christian friends in Corinth, from where he writes. This list is quite diverse: Timothy was a long-time missionary associate and mentee (see Philippians 2:19-24); Tertius was the scribe to whom Paul dictated the letter of Romans (see vs. 2); Gaius was the host for the church at Corinth, as well as for Christians passing through the city, and therefore, he would have been a man of means who used them for hospitality (see vs. 23). Erastus was a public official, described here as the “city treasurer,” and very likely the same Erastus who is mentioned on a 1st century Latin inscription discovered in the ruins of ancient Corinth. The inscription identifies Erastus as a public official who paved a public square “at his own expense.” Looking at this greeting list, we see a very diverse range of “ordinary Christians” who have extraordinary purpose in Christ! Were it not for the ministry companionship of Timothy, and the penmanship of Tertius, and the hospitality of Gaius, and the generosity of Erastus, we wouldn’t have the book of Romans today! Does this encourage you as you think about your “ordinary” life as a Christian? How so?
5. Verses 25-27 are a “doxology” – a word of praise to God. Paul concludes the rich teaching of the book of Romans with a word of praise to God. In other words, theology leads to doxology! Do you believe that

that best theology should always lead us, ultimately, to praise? What would that look like in practical terms for your life?