26-1108sc - Detailed Summary

26-1108sc - *The Book of Romans, Steve Cain*

See the transcript: Transcript HTML - Transcript PDF

26-1108 - The Book of Romans 16

Summary of Transcript (0:04 - 39:24), Teacher: Steve Cain

(0:04-1:18) Opening and Prayer

Steve begins the class by noting that they have reached the last chapter of Romans, chapter 16, and suggests they may finish it today. He asks the class if they have given any thought to what they would like to study next. He then leads in prayer to the Heavenly Father, thanking Him for the opportunity to come together as brothers and sisters with God as their Father. He expresses gratitude that they belong to God's family and that God extended that opportunity to them, which they took advantage of. Steve asks for God's blessings on their study, that the Holy Spirit will guide them as they read the conclusion of Paul's letter to the Romans. He prays for wisdom, understanding, and insight into the letter and the things Paul wants to impart, so they can make application in their lives, their understanding, and their relationship with God. The prayer concludes in Jesus' name.

(1:18-7:10) Reading of Romans 16

Steve explains that chapter 15 was basically the conclusion of the letter, and now Paul is giving his salutations and recommendations to the church as he wraps up the letter. Reading from the New International Version, he begins with the commendation of Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchrea, asking them to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of His people and to give her any help she may need, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including Paul. He continues with greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, his co-workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their lives for him, noting that not only he but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. He greets the church that meets at their house, and his dear friend Epenetus, the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.

Steve pauses to note that he is going to massacre some of the names because he does not have them in front of him in Greek, and even then he might not pronounce them correctly. He proceeds through the greetings: Mary, who worked very hard for them; Andronicus and Junia, his fellow Jews who have been in prison with him, outstanding among the apostles, and in Christ before he was; Ampliatus, his dear friend in the Lord; Urbanus, their co-worker in Christ, and his dear friend Stachys; Apelles, whose fidelity to Christ has stood the test; those who belong to the household of Aristobulus; Herodian, his fellow Jew; those in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord; Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord; his dear friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord; Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has

been a mother to him too; Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the other brothers and sisters with them; Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, Olympas, and all the Lord's people who are with them. He includes the instruction to greet one another with a holy kiss, and that all the churches of Christ send greetings.

Steve then reads the warning to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in their way contrary to the teaching they have learned, and to keep away from them, because such people are not serving our Lord Christ but their own appetites, deceiving the minds of naive people by smooth talk and flattery. He notes that everyone has heard about their obedience, so Paul rejoices because of them, but wants them to be wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under their feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with them. Further greetings come from Timothy, his co-worker, and from Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, his fellow Jews. Tertius, who wrote down the letter, greets them in the Lord. Gaius, whose hospitality Paul and the whole church there enjoy, sends greetings, as do Erastus, the city's director of public works, and their brother Quartus. The chapter concludes with the doxology to Him who is able to establish them in accordance with Paul's gospel, the message he proclaims about Jesus Christ, in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith. To the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ. Amen. Steve remarks that it is quite a finishing and asks for any observations or comments.

(7:10-9:17) Tertius and Recognition of Helpers

Someone observes that Paul is a name-dropper for sure. Joe asks about Tertius, and Steve acknowledges he knew the question would come. Steve says he does not know the answer himself but assumes Paul dictated it and Tertius wrote it for him as his secretary. Joe asks if that paragraph is his interjection, and Steve confirms it is his interjection. Joe wonders if the Holy Spirit inspired that one too. Steve explains that Tertius says he is writing this down, and by the way, so-and-so and so-and-so said hello; he is just greeting, like he is interjecting. Steve draws an analogy to someone receiving an Oscar Award who recognizes everybody that made it possible and then says he hopes he did not leave anybody out. Paul is giving all these credits for the people that helped him and made a big difference in his work. This is obviously true because he keeps adding names and telling how they aided him in his service. If they did not aid him in the service, they were really instrumental in establishing the church where they are worshiping. One of the names he gives is of someone whose house they are worshiping in, so it is a house church, and those are particular things recognized as house churches.

(9:17-14:32) House Churches, Benevolence, and Personal Illustration

Steve notes that the Corinthians definitely have house churches, and that is one of the reasons they are having such difficulty having cooperation among themselves, with divisions like "I am of Apollos" and "I am of Cephas," and Paul saying "Is Christ divided," just because they are worshiping in various individuals' houses. He observes that the church back in those days, the Christians oftentimes were recipients of great benevolence from the people in the community. They were not Jews; they just recognized how blessed they were having the Jewish people in their community. Steve gives an example of his son and his wife up in Michigan, who had two children that were born with palsy. The first one lived to be seven years old, and the second one was five years old.

During the time of having to deal with taking care of a cerebral palsy child, trying to come up with enough money to buy this or buy that or to get them enough, they were reliant on a lot of donations and received a lot of help in taking care of their children. They recognized that they were being blessed this way with all kinds of help and were being directed towards various other organizations that would help them. When they would see other families struggling just like them with cerebral palsy children or children that needed special help, they would try to help them and be advisors to them too.

His son and his wife set up a place called God's Helping Hands, and from that came a huge source of clothes, food, furniture, and things like this that still exists. They had to go out and rent facilities, and they were being sponsored by the Church of Christ up there for a while. Just like anything else, the Church of Christ sometimes has to withdraw their help for various reasons, which he will not detail. People in the community recognized the things that his son and daughter were doing for the community, and it was open to anybody that needed help. A local car dealer donated to them a van just out of the clear blue sky, and they were also donated freezers because they needed refrigeration for the food. These people helped just because they recognized the fact that they were doing so much for the community and wanted to help and be a part of it. Steve says that is what was happening in the First Century Church. Cornelius was one of those individuals; his alms and his prayers have been received, so God sent an angel and said, Cornelius, ask for Peter who will come and speak to you. Cornelius was one of those individuals who were donators; there is a word for it, but he cannot recall it at the moment. He was a great donator to them. In the long time, these people would buy a building for them so they would not have to worship in a house; they could come to a building. Sometimes local community donors would provide a building for them. This is what is happening in Paul's day. Steve says to take all that out of their study time, but this is what is happening.

(14:32-16:33) Paul's Recognition of Helpers and Phoebe

Steve continues that Paul is recognizing the fact that he has received an awful lot of help from a lot of people. He is recognizing them and also pointing out how they helped him. He is being very specific and direct in saying these people really need to be recognized. That is why he says greet, greet, greet. He is saying give them special recognition, do something for them, give them applause, hug them, give them a kiss, treat them really special, because they definitely are worthy of it. Look at how they helped him, look at how they are helping you, look at how their lives made a difference in the way the church is received. That is what he is pointing out here. Of course, the fact that Paul recognizes the very first thing, Phoebe. How does he recognize Phoebe? Does he say she is? He recognizes her and calls her a deacon. Steve says they will wrestle with that some other day; he does not want to wrestle with that today. But he just wanted to point out that this is a source of conversation for the churches.

(16:33-20:06) The Restoration Movement

Steve notes that when they are dealing with this, they are dealing with the Restoration Movement and the individuals who are behind the Restoration Movement. He asks how familiar they are with the Restoration Movement. When you run across Mormons and they are sending their elders out, what do you recognize? They are young boys; they are elders. Then when you look at the Baptist Church or the Methodist Church or some of the other congregations and they have elders, what are the qualifications that they establish elders for? Usually popularity contests or how much money

they have and how much money they are donating to the church. Yeah, they are deacons, they are elders, and so they comprise the preacher's committee and figure out, oh, we do not need this. But a lot of the denominations, and Baptists and Methodists are one of them, the preachers are ordained to be elders.

And so the preachers then come in and more or less direct the work of the churches that they represent, whether it is Methodists or Baptists or other denominations, use their preachers as elders. The preachers are responsible for the growth or the livelihood of that congregation. And so they do not really have elders per se. They have deacons and they will also have committees, and the preacher search committee and so on. But anyway, the Restoration Movement is responsible. And the churches of Christ honor the Restoration Movement. And they are a big part of the Restoration Movement. And that is the reason why we have elders and deacons. And that is the reason why we have the Lord's Supper every Sunday. That is the reason why we do not have instrumental music. And various other reasons is because we are trying to restore and bring back the old, the worship service the way it was in Paul's day, first century day. The Restoration Movement is trying to bring back the worship that God ordained. So leave it at that. That is what the Restoration Movement is all about. And of course, we recognize it, do we not?

(20:07-21:18) Phoebe Called Servant Not Deaconess

Steve notes that one of the reasons they wrestle with Paul referring to Phoebe as a deacon is the discussion of deaconesses. He invites any observation or comment. A class member responds that you have to call her a servant. It does not mean that she is old, and it is also a specific group of men called the deacons. She is just a servant. That is what deaconess is. Steve agrees that is probably the point. He observes that the New American Standard calls it that, and they agree that she is a servant in the church. She is a servant. Whether she holds an office is another question, but they will leave it at that. He notes the Greek word is **diakonos**, and that is how you pronounce it. That is Greek.

(21:18-23:35) Capitalization of Churches of Christ

Steve points out that Paul says all the churches of Christ send greetings, and he makes one more observation. Notice the word churches. Is that capitalized or small letter? It makes a difference. The small letter means international, worldwide. Capital says it is basically a denomination. So when you see the churches, or the Baptist churches, when they write church, it will be a capital C. Catholics are basically that way too. Capital C. The small letter reflects it as being universal. So one of the reasons why when you are writing out your check and you say churches of Christ, it should be a small letter to Christ. Church of Christ. It is not a title. Someone calls it nitpicking. Steve says that is English. But he is bringing that out because, you know, what is the typical way to refer to the church of Christ? Capital C-H-U-R. And it should be a small letter. C-H-U-R-C-H. That is the reason why here in the scriptures, the churches of Christ reach here. Again, just an observation to bring it up. Someone notes that this book is about Peter and Christ, and Steve agrees. He observes that they have got 15 minutes left, and he guarantees it is going to take more than 15 minutes for them to answer this. So if it is all right with them, let them pick up with verse 17.

(23:35-26:17) Obstacles Contrary to Teaching Learned

Steve reads that he urges them, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in their way that are contrary to the teaching they have learned. There is a primary one, is there not? Trying to get them to go back to the Old Testament or the Mosaic law. Trying to get them to recognize law versus faith. So, obstacles who cause divisions and put obstacles in their way. So, what do they believe about Jesus? There is a lot of people who do not believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. And so, there are those out there. Obstacles in their way. How about baptism? How about the Lord's Supper? Those would be... But in his particular case, he is referring to the fact that circumcision and some of the carryover of the Jewish traditions. What do they see would be the obstacles? Anything other than what he has already shared? So, they have a person come in and talk to them about the Holy Spirit. What do they believe about the Holy Spirit? And various other things too. So, how are they supposed to deal with them?

(26:17-30:09) Dealing with Divisive People and Examples

Steve notes that suppose they come to that conclusion of what is the truth and he or they do not want to deviate. Churches split up over various things, do they not? And so, they are using this particular scripture or advice by Paul by splitting, leaving the fellowship or asking them to leave. Have they ever asked anybody to leave? They have. This congregation, when he was here preaching on a regular basis, there was an individual who would show up and he would want to press his particular thoughts and his faith and trying to convert them. They asked him, why do they not go somewhere else? Someone asks if there are some comments. And so, they were right. If they remember, years back, God used him himself. They had a meeting with a homosexual from this congregation who wanted them to accept his partner and their lifestyle. And he tried to justify it by saying, is not God the God of love? And so, they were bending scripture and hoping that they would speak upon that and tickle their itchy ears and echo back to them what they wanted to hear. And they can only answer what scripture says about that behavior. Yes, they did. They left. They left. But they encouraged them to leave. Embrace that. They are not going to embrace it. And so, he is encouraging them to keep their distance from them. Do not encourage them to want to force their beliefs on them. Watch out for those who cause division. It is part of the group. It is not outsiders. It is not denominational. As a Jew, he is honored to be talking about those groups that are causing division. And yeah, in other letters, he actually talks about who they are and that they created a hardship in the brotherhood. Definitely. So, he is talking about that.

(30:09-33:12) Wise About Good Innocent About Evil

Steve rereads that he urges them, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in their way that are contrary to the teachings they have learned. Keep away from them, for such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery, they deceive the minds of naive people. Everyone has heard about their obedience, so he rejoices because of them, but he wants them to be wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil. There are two different thoughts there. He wants them to be wise about what is good, and he wants them to be innocent about what is evil. So, they will leave it at that. As they would say when he was growing up, it means what it says, and it says what it means. He mentions Popeye, that he cannot remember what Popeye says. He was a Popeye fan. Brutus. And a little can of spinach. Someone says that God's wisdom has helped set up congregations for all of them. That is why every congregation is supposed to have elders and teachers. And they lead the flock, like a

shepherd leading the sheep. And that way, if one of those congregations falls into the latest cultural trend and prays, it does not affect all the others. Whereas, like the Baptist, they have a world council of Baptists. Well, how easy it is for Satan to influence just a few who are over the many to make them all false. Whereas, it is a much harder job for Satan to get individual congregations of all. Where is the wisdom of God? Even how he sets his church up.

(33:12-37:08) Reformation Versus Restoration Movement

Steve discusses the autonomous concept and being restored, because the Catholic Church had their diocese. And then, of course, the Methodists were a spinoff from the Catholic Church. The Baptists were a spinoff from the Catholic Church. The Mennonites were basically a spinoff from the Baptist Church too. Well, Amish spinoff of the Baptist Church. So, being a spinoff just means they are making corrections that they are not restoring. They are making adjustments. It is in the name. Yes. That is the word he was looking for. The Reformation is the word he was looking for. But the Reformation, they are reforming the Catholic Church. So, the Lutheran Church was a Reformation. The Methodist Church, obviously, was a Reformation. The Baptist Church is a Reformation. And they are extending off from each other. And one step, one step, one step. But the Restoration Movement says, wait a minute. Let them go back to the way the Bible talks about it. They want to restore. And so that is the whole effort of the Restoration Movement.

So, he likens it to being a person who is restoring cars or who is restoring furniture. And the furniture or the car oftentimes has been customized. And the customized car no longer looks like the car it originally started out to be. And so the person who gets a hold of that car or wants to restore it, he has to go get the picture of what the car used to look like, and he has to get the blueprints of what the car used to be, and then he tries to restore it. And that is what the Bible is all about. The Bible is the blueprint. The Bible is the Restoration. And so the Bible is what brings them back to the leadership and then autonomy and so on. So the Bible is the course. He uses that as an illustration too. Boy Scouts. When he was growing up, the Boy Scout had a manual about that thick. It covered everything. What a meeting ought to be, how to go about getting merit badges, how the structure of the troop needs to be. He has to have a leader. He has to have various units and so on. It was all in that. And suppose that the Boy Scout has gone defunct and is no longer around. But they come across this Boy Scout manual and they read it, and they say, oh, wow, this is neat. They can reconstruct the Boy Scout just with that manual alone. They can do the same thing with the Bible.

(37:08-39:24) Josiah's Discovery of the Law and Closing

Steve says that is exactly what King Josiah and the high priest Hilkiah did. Israel and Judah both strayed so far from the word of God. The people lost. The people lost. They were conducting all these pagan rituals right in the temple. And one day while Hilkiah was having his guys clean the temple, they discovered the law. And so Hilkiah set about reading it, and tore his clothes because they were not doing any of that stuff. And so from that point on, they followed that law, and once again became, in that generation, the people of God. So yeah, the word of God always gives them back on track. And of course, the main thing that Hezekiah or Josiah was really concerned about was whether or not they were in favor of God, because the one thing that God wanted them to honor and remember and observe every year was what? The Feast of the Passover. Never observed that. And he was concerned about whether God was going to bring His wrath down on them because they had not been observing it. And so that is one of the reasons why they are so concerned

about how they worship. They are worshiping and they are concerned about how they worship God because they want to worship Him the way He wants to be worshiped. And that is what they would call the restoration of the law of Moses, or the law of God. That is what they were going to do. And to do what God wanted them to do. Well, his time is up, and they did not finish chapter 16. They will finish 16, though. Okay, thank you so much for their attention.

Verses Steve Covered in this class

Steve covered all of Romans 16 in this class (November 8, 2026).

Reading

He read the **entire chapter** from the NIV, from verse 1 through the closing doxology (vv. 25–27). This included: - Commendation of Phoebe (16:1–2) - The long list of greetings (16:3–16) - Warning against those who cause divisions (16:17–20) - Additional greetings from Timothy, Lucius, Jason, Sosipater, Tertius, Gaius, Erastus, and Quartus (16:21–23) - The final doxology (16:25–27)

Focused discussion

After the full reading, discussion centered especially on: - **Romans 16:1–2** — Phoebe as a **diakonos**/servant (and the related Restoration Movement points about deacons) - **Romans 16:3–16** — The greetings, house churches, and Paul's recognition of helpers - **Romans 16:22** — Tertius as the secretary who wrote the letter - **Romans 16:17–19** — Watching out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles contrary to the teaching learned (with examples of circumcision/law vs. faith, and practical application about keeping distance from divisive people) - Brief comments on the doxology and the phrase "all the churches of Christ"

At the end he noted that time ran out and they "didn't finish 16," meaning they didn't get as deep into the later verses as he had hoped, but the full chapter had already been read and the major sections discussed.