26-1108sc Transcript

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

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26-1108 - The Book of Romans 16

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

(0:04) Well, we're in the last chapter of Romans 16. Romans 16. We may get done today.

(0:13) Have you given any thought to what you'd like to study next? Okay, let's go to our Heavenly (0:22) Father in prayer. Most gracious Heavenly Father, we thank you so much for the opportunity we have (0:28) to come together as brothers and sisters and you as our Father. We're so grateful to recognize the (0:36) fact that we belong to your family and that you extended that opportunity to us and we (0:42) took advantage of it.

We've come to you at this time asking your blessings on our study, (0:48) that the Holy Spirit will guide us in this study as Paul writes and we're reading the (0:56) conclusion of his letter to Romans. We pray that you give us wisdom, understanding, and insight (1:05) to this letter and the things that he would like to impart to us, help us to be able to (1:13) make application in our lives and our understanding and our relationship with you. (1:18) This is a prayer in Jesus' name.

Amen. Chapter 15 basically was the conclusion of his letter (1:27) and so now he's giving his salutations and recommendations to the church and he's (1:37) concluding his letter, wrapping it up for us. Reading from the New International Version, (1:50) I commend to you our sisters Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchrea.

I ask you to receive her (2:00) in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, (2:08) for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me. Greet Priscilla and Aquila, (2:17) my co-workers in Christ Jesus, they risk their lives for me. Not only I, but all the churches (2:24) of the Gentiles are grateful for them or to them.

Greet also the church that meets at their house. (2:35) Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia. I'm (2:45) going to massacre some of these names.

I don't have them in front of me in Greek. (2:51) If I had them in front of me in Greek, I wouldn't guarantee I could pronounce them even then. (2:59) Six, greet Mary, who worked very hard for you.

Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow (3:11) Jews, who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, (3:18) and they were in Christ before I was. Greet Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord.

(3:26) Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my dear friend Stachys. Greet Apelles, (3:35) whose fidelity to Christ has stood the test. Greet those who belong to the household of (3:44)

Aristobulus.

Greet Herodian, my fellow Jew. Greet those in the household of Narcissus, (3:54) who are in the Lord. Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord.

(4:06) Greet, my dear friend, Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord. (4:16) Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me too. (4:26) Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the other brothers and sisters with them.

(4:36) Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, Olympas, and all the Lord's people who are with (4:46) them, greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ send greetings. (4:55) I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put (5:03) obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teachings you have learned.

Keep away (5:10) from them, for such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. (5:18) By smooth talk and flattery, they deceive the minds of naive people. Everyone has heard (5:26) about your obedience, so I rejoice because of you, but I want you to be wise about what (5:34) is good and innocent about what is evil.

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under (5:45) your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. Timothy, my co-worker, sends his (5:52) greetings to you, as do Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my fellow Jews.

I, Tertius, who (6:02) wrote down this letter, greet you in the Lord. Gaius, whose hospitality I and the whole (6:10) church here enjoy, sends you his greetings. Erastus, who is the city's director of public (6:16) works, and our brother, Quartus, send you their greetings.

Now, to him who is able to (6:27) establish you in accordance with my gospel, the message I proclaim about Jesus Christ, (6:34) in keeping with the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed (6:42) and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that (6:49) all the Gentiles might come to the obedience that comes from faith. To the only wise God (6:57) be glory forever, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Wow. That is quite a finishing. So, any observations? (7:16) Any comments that you'd like to share with us? He's a name-dropper for sure.

Yeah, Joe? (7:31) I knew you would ask that question. I don't know the answer myself, but I'm going to assume that (7:40) Paul dictated it, and he wrote it for him. He was his secretary.

So that paragraph there is his [interjection]? (7:50) Yes, it's his [interjection]. Do you suppose the Holy Spirit inquired that one too? (7:57) I say, I wrote, I'm writing this down, and by the way, so-and-so and so-and-so said hello. (8:05) He's just greeting, like he's interjecting.

(8:13) Right. Right. Can you imagine some guy up there getting a prize like the Oscar Award, and he's saying, (8:28) I got to recognize everybody that made this possible.

And then he says, I hope I didn't leave anybody out. (8:40) And so Paul's giving all these credits for the people that helped him and made a big difference in his work. (8:50) And obviously that's true, because he keeps adding names and telling how they aided him in his service and so on.

(9:00) And if they didn't aid him in the service, they were really instrumental in establishing the

church where they're worshiping. (9:09) And so one of these names he gives, he says, we're worshiping in his house. (9:17) So it's a house church, and those are particular things that we recognize as being house churches.

(9:25) And the Corinthians definitely has house churches. (9:34) And that's one of the reasons why they're having such difficulty having cooperation among themselves, (9:40) because one thing, I'm of Apollos, and I'm of Cephas, and then Paul says, "Is Christ divided", (9:49) just because you're worshiping in various individual's houses. (9:57) And the church back in those days, the Christians oftentimes were recipients of great benevolence from the people in the community.

(10:11) They weren't Jews. They just recognized how blessed they were having the Jewish people in their community. (10:22) I'll give you an example, and I hate to do this, but I'm proud to do it.

(10:27) My son and his wife up in Michigan, they had two children that were born [with] palsy. (10:39) And the first one lived to be seven years old, and the second one was five years old. (10:45) And during the time of having to deal with taking care of a cerebral palsy child, (10:54) trying to come up with enough money to buy this or buy that or to get them enough, (10:59) they were reliant on a lot of donations.

(11:04) And so they received a lot of help in taking care of their children. (11:11) Well, in the meantime, they recognized the fact that they were being blessed this way with all kinds of help, (11:20) and they were being directed towards various other organizations that would help them. (11:26) So when they would see other families struggling just like them with cerebral palsy children or children that needed special help, (11:37) they would try to help them and be advisors to them, too.

(11:45) So my son and his wife set up a place called God's Helping Hands. (11:53) And from that came a huge, and it still exists, huge source of clothes, food, furniture, things like this. (12:08) And so they had to go out and rent facilities, and they were being sponsored by the Church of Christ up there for a while.

(12:16) Just like anything else, the Church of Christ sometimes have to withdraw their help for various reasons. (12:25) I won't tell you what they were withdrawn from. (12:30) But anyway, people in the community recognized the things that my son and daughter were doing for the community, (12:42) and it was open to anybody that needed help.

(12:46) And so they had all these various things. (12:49) Well, a local car dealer donated to them a van just out of the clear blue sky. (12:58) Here's a van.

We want to help you in this. (13:03) And then all of a sudden, they recognized the fact that they needed refrigeration for the food and so on. (13:10) And I don't know who did, but they were donated freezers.

(13:16) And so these people, you know, they're helping just because they can recognize the fact that you are doing this community so much. (13:27) We want to help you. We want to be a part of it.

(13:30) And so that's what was happening in the First Century Church. (13:34) Cornelius was one of those individuals. (13:37) Do you recognize his alms and his prayers have been received? (13:43) So God sent an angel and said, Cornelius, ask for Peter who will come and speak to you.

(13:51) So Cornelius was one of those individuals who were donators. (13:59) They got a word for it, but I can't tell you what it is. (14:02) It will come to me one of these days.

(14:05) But he was a great donator to them. (14:08) And in the long time, these people would buy a building for them so they wouldn't have to worship in a house. (14:16) They could come to a building.

(14:18) And so sometimes local community donors would provide a building for them. (14:27) So this is what is happening in Paul's day. (14:32) So take all that out of our study time.

(14:37) But this is what is happening. (14:40) And so Paul is recognizing the fact that he's received an awful lot of help from a lot of people. (14:47) And so he's recognizing them, and he's also pointing out how they helped him.

(14:54) And he's being very specific and direct in saying these people, they really need to be recognized. (15:02) And that's why he says greet, greet, greet. (15:06) Greet them, greet them.

(15:07) He's saying give them special recognition. (15:13) Do something for them. (15:15) Give them applause.

(15:18) Hug them. (15:19) Give them a kiss. (15:21) Treat them really special, okay? (15:24) Because they definitely are worthy of doing it because they, look at how they helped me.

(15:32) Look at how they are helping you. (15:34) Look at how their lives made a difference in the way the church is received. (15:42) So that's what he's pointing out here.

(15:45) And, of course, the fact that Paul recognizes the very first thing, Phoebe. (15:56) How does he recognize Phoebe? (16:06) Does he say she is? (16:13) He recognizes her and calls her a deacon. (16:20) And so, we'll wrestle with that some other day.

(16:31) I don't want to wrestle with that today. (16:33) But I just wanted to point out that this is a source of conversation for the churches. (16:43) And, of course, when we are dealing with this, we're dealing with the Restoration Movement (16:50) and the individuals who are behind the Restoration Movement.

(16:55) And I don't know just how familiar you are with the Restoration Movement. (17:01) But when you run across Mormons and they're sending their elders out, what do you recognize? (17:17) They're young boys. (17:19) They're elders.

(17:22) And then when you look at the Baptist Church or when you look at the Methodist Church (17:26) or some of the other congregations and they have elders, (17:30) what are the qualifications that they establish elders for? (17:37) Usually popularity contests or how much money they have and how much money they're donating to the church. (17:45) Yeah, they're deacons. (17:47) They're elders.

(17:50) And so they comprise the preacher's committee. (17:56) And figure out, oh, we don't need this. (18:00) But a lot of the denominations and Baptists and Methodists are one of them.

(18:08) I don't know. (18:09) What is that? (18:11) But anyway, the preachers are ordained to be elders. (18:24) And so the preachers then come in and more or less direct the work of the churches that they represent, (18:32) whether it's Methodists or Baptists or I don't know how many other

denominations, (18:41) use their preachers as elders.

(18:44) The preachers are responsible for the growth or the livelihood of that congregation. (18:52) And so they don't really have elders per se. (18:55) They have deacons and they will also have committees.

(19:00) And the preacher search committee and so on. (19:07) But anyway, the Restoration Movement is responsible. (19:12) And the churches of Christ honor the Restoration Movement.

(19:19) And they're a big part of the Restoration Movement. (19:22) And that's the reason why we have elders and deacons. (19:25) And that's the reason why we have the Lord's Supper every Sunday.

(19:29) That's the reason why we don't have instrumental music. (19:32) And various other reasons is because we're trying to restore and bring back the old, (19:41) the worship service the way it was in Paul's day, first century day. (19:47) The Restoration Movement is trying to bring back the worship that God ordained.

(19:58) So leave it at that. (20:01) That's what the Restoration Movement is all about. (20:04) And, of course, we recognize it, don't we? (20:06)

(20:07) So this is one of the reasons why we wrestle with the fact that Paul refers to Phoebe as a deacon (20:15) and deaconesses.

(20:18) Any observation or comment concerning that? (20:22) Yes. (20:24) You've got to call her a servant. (20:26) It doesn't mean that she's old.

(20:29) It's also a specific group of men called the deacons. (20:34) She's just a servant. (20:35) That's what deaconess is.

(20:37) Right. (20:38) Yeah. (20:39) That's probably the point.

(20:40) New American standards call it, and we agree that, that she's a servant in the church. (20:48) Right. (20:48) She's a servant.

(20:51) And does she hold an office? (20:54) That's another question. (20:55) But anyway, we'll just leave it at that. (20:59) Diakonos.

(21:00) That's how you pronounce it. (21:01) Diakonos. (21:04) That's Greek.

(21:05) That's Greek. (21:18) So anyway, so he says, all the churches of Christ send greetings. (21:26) And then one more observation.

(21:29) Notice the word churches. (21:34) Is that capitalized or small letter? (21:40) It makes a difference. (21:44) Right.

(21:47) It makes a difference, though, because the small letter means international, worldwide. (21:57) Capital says it's basically a denomination. (22:02) So when you see the churches, or the Baptist churches, when they write church, it'll be a capital C. (22:10) Catholics are basically that way, too.

(22:13) Capital C. (22:14) The small letter reflects it as being universal. (22:20) So it's one of the reasons why when you're writing out your check, and you say churches of Christ, it should be a small letter to Christ. (22:30) Church of Christ.

(22:33) It's not a title. (22:41) Nitpicking. (22:46) That's English.

(22:50) That's English. (22:51) Right. (22:53) Right.

(22:56) Right. (22:58) Right. (22:59) Right.

(23:00) But I'm bringing that out because, you know, what is the typical way to refer to the church of Christ? (23:09) Capital C-H-U-R. (23:11) And it should be a small letter. (23:14) C-H-U-R-C-H.

(23:16) That's the reason why here in the Old Testament, or in the scriptures, the churches of Christ reach here. (23:27) Again, just an observation to bring it up. (23:34) All right? (23:35) This book is about Peter and Christ.

(23:41) That's right. (23:44) That's right. (23:45) Okay.

(23:47) We've got 15 minutes left. (23:54) And I guarantee you it's going to take more than 15 minutes for you to answer this. (23:59) So if it's all right with you, let's pick up with verse 17.

(24:13) I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. (24:34) There is a primary one, isn't there? (24:38) Trying to get us to go back to the Old Testament or the Mosaic law. (24:44) Trying to get us to recognize law versus faith.

(24:50) So, obstacles who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way. (24:58) So, what do you believe about Jesus? (25:04) There's a lot of people who do not believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. (25:12) And so, there are those out there.

(25:19) Obstacles in our way. (25:25) How about baptism? (25:28) How about [the Lord's] supper? (25:36) Those would be… (25:38) But in his particular case, he's referring to the fact that circumcision and some of the carryover of the Jewish traditions. (25:53) What do you see would be the obstacles? Anything other than what I've already shared? (26:01) So, we have a person come in and talk to us about the Holy Spirit.

(26:09) What do you believe about the Holy Spirit? (26:14) And various other things, too. (26:17) So, how are we supposed to deal with them? (26:28) Right. (26:30) Suppose you come to that conclusion of what is the truth and he or they do not want to deviate.

(26:39) Churches split up over various things, don't they? (26:44) And so, they're using this particular scripture or advice by Paul by splitting, leaving the fellowship or asking you to leave. (26:56) Have we ever asked anybody to leave? (26:59) We have. (27:02) This congregation, when I was here, preaching on a regular basis, there was an individual who would show up (27:08) and he would want to press his particular thoughts and his faith and trying to convert us.

(27:16) We asked him, why don't you go somewhere else? (27:24) Do you have some comments? (27:26) And so, you were right. (27:29) If you remember, years back, God used me, myself. (27:36) We had a meeting with a homosexual from this congregation who wanted us to accept his partner and their lifestyle.

(27:50) And he tried to justify it by saying, isn't God the God of love? (27:56) And so, they were bending scripture and hoping that we would speak upon that and tickle their itchy ears and echo back to them what they wanted to hear. (28:11) And we can only answer what scripture says about that behavior. (28:16) Right.

(28:19) Yes, they did. (28:21) They left. (28:23) They left.

(28:24) But we encouraged them to leave. (28:43) Embrace that. (28:45) We're not going to embrace it.

(28:53) Right. (28:57) And so, he's encouraging us to keep our distance from them. (29:03) Don't encourage them to want to force their beliefs on us.

(29:18) Watch out for those who cause division. (29:22) It's part of the group. (29:25) It's not outsiders.

(29:27) It's not denominational. (29:30) As a Jew, I'm honored to be talking about those groups that are causing division. (29:45) And, yeah, in other letters, he actually talks about who they are and that they created a hardship in the brotherhood.

(30:01) Definitely. (30:02) So, he's talking about that. (30:09) So, I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teachings you have learned.

(30:19) Keep away from them, for such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. (30:28) By smooth talk and flattery, they deceive the minds of naive people. (30:34) Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I rejoice because of you, but I want you to be wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil.

(30:51) There's two different thoughts there. (30:52) I want you to be wise about what is good, and I want you to be innocent about what is evil. (31:04) So, we'll leave it at that.

(31:08) As they would say when I was growing up, it means what it says, and it says what it means. (31:16) Popeye says, I can't remember what Popeye says. (31:27) I was a Popeye fan.

(31:30) Brutus. (31:33) And a little can of spinach. (31:38) I just want to say that God's wisdom has helped me set up congregations for all of us.

(31:47) That's why every congregation is supposed to have elders and teachers. (31:54) And they lead the flock, like a shepherd leading the sheep. (32:00) And that way, if one of those congregations finds into the latest cultural trend and pray, it doesn't affect all the others.

(32:14) Whereas, like the Baptist, they have a world council of Baptists. (32:21) Well, how easy it is for Satan to influence just a few who are over the many to make them all false. (32:33) Whereas, it's a much harder job for Satan to get individual congregations of all.

(32:41) Where is the wisdom of God? (32:44) Even how he sets his church up. (33:12) The autonomous concept and being restored, because the Catholic Church had their diocese. (33:21) And then, of course, the Methodists were a spinoff from the Catholic Church.

(33:25) The Baptists were a spinoff from the Catholic Church. (33:28) The Mennonites were basically

a spinoff from the Baptist Church, too. (33:36) Well, Amish spinoff of the Baptist Church.

(33:40) So, being a spinoff just means you're making corrections that you're not restoring. (33:50) You're making adjustments. (33:53) It's in the name.

(33:55) Yes. (33:57) That's the word I was looking for. (34:01) Right.

(34:03) Right. (34:04) Right. (34:09) Right.

(34:15) Mm-hmm. (34:34) Right. (34:37) Yeah.

(34:39) The Reformation is the word I was looking for. (34:42) But the Reformation, they're reforming the Catholic Church. (34:46) So, the Lutheran Church was a Reformation.

(34:50) The Methodist Church, obviously, was a Reformation. (34:53) The Baptist Church is a Reformation. (34:56) And they're extending off from each other.

(34:58) And one step, one step, one step. (35:00) But the Restoration Movement says, wait a minute. (35:04) Let's go back to the way the Bible talks about it.

(35:08) They want to restore. (35:10) And so that's the whole effort of the Restoration Movement. (35:14) So, I liken it to being a person who is restoring cars or who is restoring furniture.

(35:24) And the furniture or the car oftentimes has been customized. (35:32) And the customized car no longer looks like the car it originally started out to be. (35:39) And so the person who gets a hold of that car or wants to restore it, (35:43) he has to go get the picture of what the car used to look like, (35:47) and he has to get the blueprints of what the car used to be, (35:51) and then he tries to restore it.

(35:53) And that's what the Bible is all about. (35:55) The Bible is the blueprint. (35:57) The Bible is the Restoration.

(35:59) And so the Bible is what brings us back to the leadership and then autonomy and so on. (36:08) So the Bible is the course. (36:10) I use that as an illustration, too.

(36:13) Boy Scouts. (36:15) When I was growing up, the Boy Scout had a manual about that thick. (36:21) It covered everything.

(36:24) What a meeting ought to be, how to go about getting merit badges, (36:30) how the structure of the troop needs to be. (36:36) He has to have a leader. (36:38) He has to have various units and so on.

(36:41) It was all in that. (36:43) And suppose that the Boy Scout has gone defunct and is no longer around. (36:50) But you come across this Boy Scout manual and you read it, (36:54) and you say, oh, wow, this is neat.

(36:58) You can reconstruct the Boy Scout just with that manual alone. (37:06) We can do the same thing with the Bible.

(37:08) That's exactly what King Josiah [and high priest Hilkiah — 2 Kings 22] did.

(37:20) Israel and Judah both strayed so far from the word of God. (37:27) The people lost. (37:28)

The people lost.

(37:31) They were conducting all these pagan rituals right in the temple. (37:36) And one day while [Hilkiah] was having his guys clean the temple, (37:44) they discovered the law. (37:46) And so [Hilkiah] set about reading it, (37:49) and tore his clothes because they weren't doing any of that stuff.

(37:54) And so from that point on, they followed that law, (37:58) and once again became, in that generation, the people of God. (38:03) So yeah, the word of God always gives you back on track.

(38:09) And of course, the main thing that Hezekiah or Josiah was really concerned about (38:16) was whether or not they were in favor of God, (38:18) because the one thing that God wanted them to honor and remember and observe every year was what? (38:28) The Feast of the Passover.

(38:31) Never observed that. (38:32) And he was concerned about whether God was going to bring His wrath down on them (38:39) because they hadn't been observing it. (38:43) And so that's one of the reasons why we're so concerned about how we worship.

(38:48) We're worshiping and we're concerned about how we worship God (38:52) because we want to worship Him the way He wants to be worshiped. (38:56) And that's what you would call the restoration of the law of Moses, or the law of God. (39:06) That's what they were going to do.

(39:09) And to do what God wanted them to do. (39:12) Well, my time is up, and we didn't finish [16]. (39:18) We will finish [16], though.

(39:21) Okay, thank you so much for your attention. (39:24)