



## #43: ONWARD, (ROMANS 16:19-24)

In the Beatles seminal final album “Abbey Road”, they knew full well it was their last statement to the listening world. The fab four concluded the amazing work of pop music with a drum solo by Ringo, then dueling guitar solos between the other members- John, Paul and George.<sup>1</sup> After that wondrous cacophony of sound, the full band abruptly cut out with the sound of a piano plunking eighth notes. Then the final words of the album were sang:

*And in the end  
The love you take  
Is equal to the love you make*

A lush melody of guitars, bass, drums, and orchestra thanks to George Martin swept in as the words “you make” were sang, and harmoniously played the final, musical passage of the album.

Then- after many seconds of silence, a corny little ditty “Her Majesty” sang by Paul McCartney while playing acoustic guitar quickly closed the whole work. That was just

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<sup>1</sup> \*Little known fact- though Paul was the bass player of the band he also played many of the guitar parts in Beatles studio albums- including the lead guitar part for “Good Morning, Good Morning”

the Beatles' great sense of humor once again shining through. Again, can you tell I'm a Beatles fan?

Last words are significant. They have a powerful impact. Just take a look at some of these last words of people that they were recorded to say on their deathbeds;

*"I must go in, the fog is rising."*  
– Emily Dickinson (1830-1886)

*"Either that wallpaper goes, or I do."*  
– Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)

*"I should have never switched from Scotch to Martinis."*  
– Actor Humphrey Bogart (1899-1957)

*"A woman who can fart is not dead."*  
– French nun Louise-Marie-Thérèse (1664-1732)<sup>2</sup>

When Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple was dying, apparently he just repeated the words "Oh Wow, Oh Wow, Oh Wow..."

I don't know what my last words will be. Do you? I can hope they'll be impactful but I just don't know. Maybe I'll talk about farting.

Paul's last words in his letter to the Romans contained central, vital theology centered on Jesus Christ. They also contained powerful encouragement to give the Roman Christ followers hope in their struggles, and they contained more greetings to Paul's fellow co-workers. Paul began in v. 19:

*<sup>19</sup> The report of your obedience has reached everyone. Therefore I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise about what is good, and yet innocent about what is evil. <sup>20</sup> The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. (Romans 16:19-20)*

Paul hastened to assure the Romans that he did not consider them naive. Their obedience (to Christ; cf. Rom. 1:5; 15:18; 1 Peter 1:2) was well known and Paul was glad for them.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.trinityfuneralchapel.com/the-19-most-famous-last-words-of-all-time>

<sup>3</sup> Witmer, J. A. (1985). [Romans](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 2, p. 501). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

When I'm having a bad day, I also parent badly. Really, I parent void of the Spirit in my flesh.

Yesterday, I was tired and worn out. Every time one of my kids bounced a ball in the house, thumped around doing every day gymnastics, talked at too high of a volume, or bickered with one another (our older daughters do that often now), I would bark out a critique;

*"Be quiet."*

*"You guys are really annoying me."*

*"Stop fighting."*

*"Stop bouncing that ball or I'm going to deflate it and throw it in the trash."*

When I'm having a good day, I parent better. I have less of a tendency to get irritable. I lead my kids led by the Spirit in the love of God. I speak encouragement and life to them. I laugh when they make a mistake or are a little annoying. I inspire them with gracious truth. It's not me, it's Christ. The Holy Spirit is a much better parent than me!

Being a person who can struggle with being cynical, I sure love that Paul always puts encouragement at the introduction of his statements! We oughta let Christ strive by His power in us to do the same. When we encourage and speak the truth in love, it lands in the hearts of those around us in a deeper, more meaningful place every time!

Paul was concerned that the Roman Christ followers be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil (kakos). The word for "innocent" was akeraios, "unmixed, simple, pure." In Greek it was used of wine that was not diluted and of metal that was not weakened in any way. The word was used in the New Testament in only two other places: Matthew 10:16 ("innocent") and Philippians 2:15 ("pure"). Christ followers needed to be innocent about evil, not following the ways of the world (Rom. 12:2).<sup>4</sup>

Friends, in our world and culture today, we tend to be "ignorant about what is good, yet well-informed about what is evil". We live in a social media-driven, entertainment-driven, self-driven, consumer-driven world where we have so much of what we want put on display before our eyes, hearts and minds constantly. We think that our definition of morality usurps all absolutes. We simply don't desire to be called out where we're in the wrong.

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<sup>4</sup> Witmer, J. A. (1985). [Romans](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 2, p. 501). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

But Paul wrote to the Romans to be filled with the wisdom of God. Paul wrote to them that Christ would guide them to pursue His heart, His goodness, and His ways! Paul wrote that we could be “unmixed, simple, and pure” in regard to evil. The Holy Spirit through him urged us that we wouldn’t have to be hypocritical or duplicitous in our inner being, but could instead be one, whole, unified, saved, sanctified person through the power of Christ!

The 2016 NBA Finals was the championship series of the National Basketball Association's (NBA) 2015–16 season and conclusion of the 2016 playoffs. The Eastern Conference champion Cleveland Cavaliers defeated the defending NBA champion and Western Conference champion Golden State Warriors four games to three in a rematch of the previous year's Finals. It was the 14th rematch of the previous NBA Finals in history, and the second straight rematch in back-to-back years, as the Miami Heat and San Antonio Spurs played each other in 2013 and 2014. The series was played from June 2 to 19.

The Golden State Warriors gained home-court advantage based on their record-breaking league-best record (73–9). At one point, the Warriors led 3–1 but the Cavaliers won the next three games to win their first championship in franchise history and end the Cleveland sports curse. They were also the first team in Finals history to overcome a 3–1 deficit and the fourth team in NBA history to win the series after losing the first two games. This also marked the first time since 1978 that Game 7 was won by the road team.

LeBron James was named the Finals MVP (MVP), receiving all 11 Finals MVP votes, and was also the first player in NBA history to lead all players in a playoff series in points, rebounds, assists, steals and blocks.<sup>5</sup> That’s our kid from Akron y’all- my home city!

Now I wasn’t a fly on the wall while the Cavs were having intense conversations with coach Tyronn Lue. I wasn’t in on the team meetings while they were down three games, up only one, and needed three wins in a row to achieve one of the biggest comebacks in NBA Finals history. But I could imagine him saying, “Listen up y’all- the Cavs are going to crush the Golden State Warriors under their feet!” Sure they had to run their plays right, make shots, assists, rebounds, steals, and blocks. But man, they had to hold on to impossible hope to make a comeback like that! They had to believe and know and trust to move forward through the difficulty!

Paul wrote in Romans 16:20;

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<sup>5</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016\\_NBA\\_Finals](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2016_NBA_Finals)

*The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.*

My friend, my fellow Jesus follower- Bigger than a basketball victory- God is going to crush satan once and for all when Christ returns as a conquering King and send him to eternal torment in the lake of fire where he belongs! Violence ain't gonna reign forever, hatred ain't gonna reign forever, addiction ain't gonna reign forever, depression ain't gonna reign forever, worry ain't gonna reign forever, division ain't gonna reign forever, death ain't gonna reign forever, sin ain't gonna reign forever, poverty ain't gonna reign forever, war ain't gonna reign forever, satan ain't gonna reign forever, JESUS IS! HALLELUJAH!

Romans 16:20 should be closely connected with vs 17–19. It may be that Paul was hinting at a quick 'crushing' of these false teachers, perceived as minions of Satan. But it is more likely that he was thinking of the great climax of the end times when, in fulfillment of Gn. 3:15, God would win the climactic victory over Satan. The peace (20) that God will ultimately create is the result both of deliverance of his people and of judgment of his enemies.<sup>6</sup>

However, in this life, Satan and false teachers, both legalistic and immoral, will always assail the church (Ac 20:28–29; 2Co 11:13–15; Gl 5:10–12; Php 3:2, 18–20; Col 2:16–19).<sup>7</sup> Satan has always been the enemy of God's people. Like the false teachers that do his bidding, he tries to disrupt the unity of believers using junk of the world to divide (2 Cor 2:5–11).<sup>8</sup> Paul warned believers at Rome to be alert and avoid false teachers. Illustrating the familiar both/and relation between divine sovereignty and human responsibility to choose, we must be diligent in the battle against darkness, but ultimate victory is assured!<sup>9</sup>

Paul was also drawing on the OT Scriptures (Psa 110:1) to comfort his audience with a message of hope: the word was that God would soon defeat Satan and their enemies. The NT frequently quoted Psa 110:1 to depict all things being placed under the feet of Christ (e.g., Luke 20:43; Acts 2:35; Heb 10:13). Here Paul referred to all things being

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<sup>6</sup> Moo, D. J. (1994). [Romans](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), New Bible commentary: 21st century edition (4th ed., p. 1159). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>7</sup> Patterson, P. (2017). [Salvation in the Old Testament](#). In E. A. Blum & T. Wax (Eds.), CSB Study Bible: Notes (p. 1805). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

<sup>8</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Ro 16:20). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>9</sup> Patterson, P. (2017). [Salvation in the Old Testament](#). In E. A. Blum & T. Wax (Eds.), CSB Study Bible: Notes (p. 1805). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

placed under the feet of disciples of Christ to emphasize their participation in God's victory.<sup>10</sup>

Oh may the grace of Jesus be with us in all that we do! In our work, rest, and play.

Paul continued;

*<sup>21</sup> Timothy, my coworker, and Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my fellow countrymen, greet you. <sup>22</sup> I, Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord. <sup>23</sup> Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus greet you. (Romans 16:21-23)*

Now let's just take a journey through this list of men. It's important to say that some complementarian commentators are very detailed on Romans 16:21-23, and yet stunningly silent on Romans 16:1-16. Paul, on the other hand, empowered both men and women to live into the fullness of who God called them to be!

Some egalitarians may want to emphasize Romans 16:1-16 and then ignore the fact that Paul mentions strong male leaders both there and in vv. 21-23. Again, we all want to emphasize the parts of the Bible that back our points instead of looking at the whole! But that's not faithful exegesis y'all.

Let's take a look at some of what we can ascertain from the men in these verses;

## Timothy

Timothy was Paul's close friend and coworker since the second missionary journey. (Acts 16:3)<sup>11</sup> He had been a regular companion of Paul's since then and was now with Paul in Corinth where this letter to the Romans was being written.<sup>12</sup> Obviously we have the books of 1 & 2 Timothy written by Paul to Timothy, one of Paul's most well known apprentices in the faith.

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<sup>10</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Ro 16:20). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>11</sup> Patterson, P. (2017). [Salvation in the Old Testament](#). In E. A. Blum & T. Wax (Eds.), CSB Study Bible: Notes (p. 1806). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

<sup>12</sup> Moo, D. J. (1994). [Romans](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), New Bible commentary: 21st century edition (4th ed., pp. 1159–1160). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

## Lucius

Lucius has occasionally been identified with Luke, ‘the beloved physician’, or with Lucius of Cyrene (Acts 13:1), but neither is likely.<sup>13</sup> It’s far more likely that Lucius was simply unknown.<sup>14</sup>

## Jason

Jason could well have been the Jason who hosted Paul on his initial visit to Thessalonica. Perhaps he had to flee to Corinth because of persecution.<sup>15</sup> He was probably the one who gave Paul hospitality there.<sup>16</sup> Here’s the passage that talks of him;

*<sup>5</sup> But the Jews became jealous, and they brought together some wicked men from the marketplace, formed a mob, and started a riot in the city. Attacking Jason’s house, they searched for them to bring them out to the public assembly. <sup>6</sup> When they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some of the brothers before the city officials, shouting, “These men who have turned the world upside down have come here too, <sup>7</sup> and Jason has welcomed them. They are all acting contrary to Caesar’s decrees, saying that there is another king—Jesus.” <sup>8</sup> The crowd and city officials who heard these things were upset. <sup>9</sup> After taking a security bond from Jason and the others, they released them. (Ac 17:5–9)*

## Sosipater

Sosipater was probably the Sopater from Berea who accompanied Paul for a while (Ac 20:4).<sup>17</sup>

## Tertius

For one- scholars debate the role of the scribe (in this case, Tertius) in ancient writings. Did they typically take dictation word-for-word, or was their composition taken down in

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<sup>13</sup> Moo, D. J. (1994). [Romans](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), New Bible commentary: 21st century edition (4th ed., pp. 1159–1160). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>14</sup> Patterson, P. (2017). [Salvation in the Old Testament](#). In E. A. Blum & T. Wax (Eds.), CSB Study Bible: Notes (p. 1806). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

<sup>15</sup> Moo, D. J. (1994). [Romans](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), New Bible commentary: 21st century edition (4th ed., pp. 1159–1160). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>16</sup> Patterson, P. (2017). [Salvation in the Old Testament](#). In E. A. Blum & T. Wax (Eds.), CSB Study Bible: Notes (p. 1806). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

<sup>17</sup> Patterson, P. (2017). [Salvation in the Old Testament](#). In E. A. Blum & T. Wax (Eds.), CSB Study Bible: Notes (p. 1806). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

shorthand or perhaps a summary manner? Biblical teaching about divine inspiration of the biblical author commends the first suggestion.<sup>18</sup> Tertius was probably a professional scribe who took Paul's dictation.<sup>19</sup> He was mentioned nowhere else in the NT.<sup>20</sup>

It's very likely that Paul carefully chose believers to write down his letters rather than public secretaries. We also may be sure that people like Tertius would undertake that task as work for the Lord.<sup>21</sup>

## Gaius

Gaius could've been one of several people: a man from Derbe who accompanied Paul on a missionary journey (Acts 20:4) a Corinthian whom Paul baptized (1 Cor 1:14), or a leader of a church in Asia Minor (3 John 1).<sup>22</sup>

He was Paul's host in Corinth, who apparently had a church meeting in his home.<sup>23</sup>

Many think he was the "Gaius" mentioned in 1 Cor. 1:14, and perhaps was to be identified also with Titius Justus (Acts 18:7).<sup>24</sup>

## Erastus

Erastus had a responsible position as city treasurer. This was also known as the position of city's director of public works (lit., "the city's steward," a high position in Corinth).<sup>25</sup> In Greek, this was translated "oikonomos tēs poleōs", raising the question whether he might be the same Erastus mentioned as an 'aedile', or 'commissioner for public works' on an inscription from first-century Corinth. But the word Paul uses is not a

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<sup>18</sup> Patterson, P. (2017). [Salvation in the Old Testament](#). In E. A. Blum & T. Wax (Eds.), CSB Study Bible: Notes (p. 1806). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

<sup>19</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Ro 16:22–23). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>20</sup> Moo, D. J. (1994). [Romans](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), New Bible commentary: 21st century edition (4th ed., pp. 1159–1160). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>21</sup> Expositor's Bible Commentary (Abridged Edition): New Testament Copyright 2004.

<sup>22</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Ro 16:22–23). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>23</sup> Witmer, J. A. (1985). [Romans](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 2, pp. 501–502). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>24</sup> Moo, D. J. (1994). [Romans](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), New Bible commentary: 21st century edition (4th ed., pp. 1159–1160). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>25</sup> Witmer, J. A. (1985). [Romans](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 2, pp. 501–502). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

natural equivalent to the Latin ‘aedile,’ so the identification is not certain.<sup>26</sup> He may’ve been the same as that whom Paul sent to Macedonia in Ac 19:22, and the one who remained at Corinth in 2 Tim 4:20,<sup>27</sup> but that’s not 100% clear, since his name was a common one.<sup>28</sup>

## Quartus

Paul called Quartus “our brother”, undoubtedly meaning a spiritual brother, not a physical one.<sup>29</sup>

Additional Note: some of these men mentioned were not literally members of Paul’s family, but fellow countrymen (cf. vv. 7, 10).<sup>30</sup> Relatives again translates as “syngeneis”, which referred to Paul’s fellow-Jews, not to his blood relatives.<sup>31</sup>

English versions do not print a v 24, because its content is almost certainly a later addition to the text of Romans.<sup>32</sup>

With that, we’ll head into Paul’s powerful benediction in v. 25;

*<sup>25</sup> Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation about Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept silent for long ages <sup>26</sup> but now revealed and made known through the prophetic Scriptures, according to the command of the eternal God to advance the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles—<sup>27</sup> to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ—to him be the glory forever! Amen. (Romans 16:25-27)*

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<sup>26</sup> Moo, D. J. (1994). [Romans](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), New Bible commentary: 21st century edition (4th ed., pp. 1159–1160). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>27</sup> Patterson, P. (2017). [Salvation in the Old Testament](#). In E. A. Blum & T. Wax (Eds.), CSB Study Bible: Notes (p. 1806). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.

<sup>28</sup> Moo, D. J. (1994). [Romans](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), New Bible commentary: 21st century edition (4th ed., pp. 1159–1160). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>29</sup> Witmer, J. A. (1985). [Romans](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 2, pp. 501–502). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>30</sup> Witmer, J. A. (1985). [Romans](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 2, pp. 501–502). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>31</sup> Moo, D. J. (1994). [Romans](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), New Bible commentary: 21st century edition (4th ed., pp. 1159–1160). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

<sup>32</sup> Moo, D. J. (1994). [Romans](#). In D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham (Eds.), New Bible commentary: 21st century edition (4th ed., p. 1160). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

Some ancient manuscripts placed Rom 16:25–27 after 14:23 or 15:33, while others omitted the verses entirely.

These verses contain a doxology—a hymn to God—using several of the key themes of the letter (e.g., mystery, Gentiles, and obedience).<sup>33</sup> They summed up this massive letter with a grand conclusion!

*Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation about Jesus Christ...*

When Paul stated that Jesus could strengthen the Roman disciples “according to my gospel”, he did not mean his preaching did not reflect God’s direct revelation (see Gl 1:11–12). He was using a term of endearment. The gospel had saved his life. He meant the gospel was as he had faithfully preached it: and was a gospel of grace for all people.

The truth of this message is the means of spiritual life and stability, as Paul expressed his praise to God who is able to establish us (1 Peter 5:10).<sup>34</sup>

We don’t find our strength in politics, self care, consumption, wealth, comfort, physical exercise, hard work, self-confidence, self-image, self-promotion, or brand. We are strengthened through the gospel of Jesus Christ y’all!

*According to the revelation of the mystery kept silent for long ages but now revealed and made known through the prophetic Scriptures according to the command of the eternal God to advance the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles...*

In ages past this gospel was a mystery kept silent as God directed history until “the time came to completion” (Gl 4:4). Again, in Christ the “mystery” was revealed to the world.

Paul said that aspects of this message (e.g., Rom. 11:25; 1 Cor. 15:51; Eph. 5:32) and in a sense the total message (cf. Eph. 3:3–9; Col. 1:26–27) were the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known. The message of the gospel of Christ was “hidden” in the Old Testament, but was revealed in the New. In the prophetic writings (of the OT; cf. Rom. 1:2), given by the command of the eternal God (1 Tim. 1:17), Christ was referred to (Luke 24:44–45), but even the prophets themselves were

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<sup>33</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Ro 16:25–27). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>34</sup> Witmer, J. A. (1985). [Romans](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 502). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

not fully aware of all they wrote (1 Peter 1:10–12). But now in the Church Age their writings were understood.

The goal of this “revelation of the mystery” (Rom. 16:25) was that people of all nations might believe and obey Christ (cf. 1:5; 15:18; 1 Peter 1:2). Paul’s concern for the geographical spread of the gospel was evident here (cf. Matt. 28:19), appropriate in view of his writing to the Christ followers at the empire’s capital city.<sup>35</sup>

Again, the summary of the whole point of the Book of Romans was that God wanted to bring people together through the loving, salvific power of the gospel of Christ! There was culture clash in the flesh but there could be redemption through the cross. Gentiles and Israelites could dwell in love and community together, and all other disparate people groups could meet Christ, have salvation, then grow in love towards one another as well.

To close, Paul identified specifically the object of his benediction: To the only wise God. In the Greek this phrase was followed immediately by the words “through Jesus Christ”. This indicates that the wisdom of God was displayed supremely through Christ (cf. Col. 2:3). According to the Greek text the benediction then ended, “to whom be glory forever! Amen” (cf. Rom. 11:36). God the Father ultimately was the One to be praised and to whom glory belonged (cf. 1 Cor. 15:24–28).<sup>36</sup>

God deserves *all* of the glory! We obsess over ourselves. We obsess over our differences. God in Christ obsesses over us. We need the forgiveness and love of Christ to overtake our entire beings, our entire culture, our entire world, and our entire universe. We need credit given where it is due- for the Creator and sustainer of us, our culture, our world, and all the galaxies beyond, is the same One who can live and breathe in us by the power of the Holy Spirit! Amen!

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<sup>35</sup> Witmer, J. A. (1985). [Romans](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 2, p. 502). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

<sup>36</sup> Witmer, J. A. (1985). [Romans](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 2, p. 502). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.