

The Vincennes Voice

"...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight..." (Matt. 3:3)

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ROMANS 16 NAMES

Larry R. Ping II

Names are important. People like to hear their names. In the future, instead of saying, "Hello" to Steve, say "Hello Steve!" This is especially true with young children. So learn peoples' names and use them.

Paul was a master at this. Nearly every letter Paul authored, he issued a list of names for various reasons. This is particularly true in his epistle to the Romans. Consider some of the names he used, why they were mentioned, and the lessons we can learn in the end.

1) Phoebe. She is referred to as "our sister" and a "servant of the church" (Rom. 16:1). The church was instructed to "receive her" and "assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you." She was not only a "succorer of many," but of Paul "also" (Rom. 16:2). May we learn to be tried and true servants of the Lord who heal and comfort others, who others clamor to aid and assist. Will you be a Phoebe?

2) Priscilla and Aquila. Paul referred to these good people as "my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks." Paul offered "thanks" to these individuals and noted the "churches of the Gentiles" were doing the same (Rom. 16:3-4). Priscilla and Aquila were fellow "tentmakers" (Acts 18:2-3). If at the end of our life we can merely be described as a "helper in Christ Jesus," we have done well. May we be the friend who is willing to lay down our necks for our brethren. After all, John penned, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (I Jn. 3:16). Will you be a Priscilla and Aquila?

3) Epanenetus. This individual was "well-beloved" of Paul and described as "the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ" (Rom. 16:5). This man was an early convert, most likely of the family of Stephanas, who was also said

to have been "the firstfruits of Achaia" and "addicted...to the ministry of the saints" (I Cor. 16:15). May we be of such type we are "well-beloved." May we be "addicted" to the work of Jesus. Will you be an Epanenetus?

4) Mary. This lady was said to have "bestowed much labor" (Rom. 16:6). It is not known who this particular Mary was, or her exact work, but Paul and the Holy Spirit saw to it she was memorialized in this way. We are to "be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:58). In many areas of the Lord's Kingdom, work is now considered a four-letter dirty word. Too many folks are causal about their attendance and are never involved in the local work. Many opportunities are lost because it shows up looking like work. Mean it when you sing, "I Want To Be A Worker For The Lord." Will you be a Mary?

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5) Andronicus and Junia. Rom. 16:7 states, *“Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.”* These early converts evidently shared a prison with Paul on occasion as a result of being faithful children of God. But more than this, they owned a good reputation among the apostles. Paul earlier told the Romans, *“For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself”* (Rom. 14:7). That is, it is impossible to be in this world without having some type of influence, be it good or bad. These individuals (possibly husband and wife) were an excellent example. Will you be an Andronicus and Junia?

6) Apelles. The text says of this individual he was *“approved in Christ”* (Rom. 16:10). We continually strive to be approved of and by God, not man. Paul reminded the Galatians of this when asking, *“For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I*

should not be the servant of Christ” (Gal. 1:10). One way to obtain this approval is to investigate God’s Word. Paul noted, *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”* (II Tim. 2:15). From whom do you seek approval? Will you be an Apelles?

7) Timotheus. Here, Paul refers to him as his *“workfellow”* (Rom. 16:21). Paul met this man when visiting Derbe and Lystra (Acts 16:1). He had a Greek *“father,”* and a super-caring, super-faithful mother and grandmother, Eunice, and Lois (II Tim. 1:5). Later in life, Paul referred to Timothy as his *“son in the faith”* (I Tim. 1:2). Paul begged Timothy to stay in Ephesus and *“charge some that they teach no other doctrine”* (I Tim. 1:3). What is very clear, though, about Timothy, was his ability to not only work hard, but to work well with others. The prophet penned, *“It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth”* (Lam. 3:27). Do you work hard and well with others? Will you be a Timothy?

8) Tertius. This man said he *“wrote this epistle”* (Rom. 16:22). This simply means Paul, as guided by the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 2:10-12; II Pet. 1:20-21), dictated these words to Tertius, who subsequently put pen to paper and had it sent to Rome. There is no telling how many valuable men assisted Paul in his work. It is very difficult to do good work alone. It is possible, but is made much simpler and more efficient when others are involved. The wise man uttered, *“Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken”* (Eccl. 4:9-12). May we be a worker and a helper not in need of any fanfare, praise, or flattery. Men may not know of your work, but God does! Will you be a Tertius?

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MEETING TIMES (EST)

SUNDAY

Bible Study – 10:00 am

Worship – 11:00 am & 3:00 pm

WEDNESDAY

Bible Study – 7:00 pm