

Romans 16:1–2

Servant-Saints Serving a Servant-Saint

Monday, July 1, 2024 • Read Romans 16:1–2

Questions from the Scripture text: What does the apostle do for whom (v1)? What two things does he call her? In which church does she serve? What is the first thing that he tells them to do to her (v2)? In Whom? In what manner? What is the second thing that he tells them to do to her? In what business? For what additional reason?

Why should we serve each other? Romans 16:1–2 prepares us for the midweek sermon in the prayer meeting. In these two verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **saints have multiple reasons for serving each other.**

Having used his own travel plans to teach the church at Rome about desiring fruit and praying for fruit, the apostle now uses an introduction to the letter's carrier to teach them about reasons to serve one another.

Because she's a sister. In a family, sisters should be objects of special protection and assistance. And God has made us a family. "Our sister" isn't just an identity; it's an incentive to receive and assist her. If you're a believer, you have family, and you should serve them as sisters and brothers!

Because she's a servant. This is both incentive and example. A couple verses ago, the apostle referred to his service for Jerusalem (cf. 15:31), and now uses the same noun root to describe Phoebe as one who does service at Cenchrea. It's the root of the verb Jesus used to describe His example as a servant (cf. Lk 22:27). Just as Phoebe serves her church, the Romans should serve her. All Christians should be servants. If you received a note introduction from someone, it should be able to say "a servant of the church"!

Because she and they are in the Lord. He tells them to welcome her "in the Lord." The Lord has brought us into relation not only with each other but with Himself. She is in the Lord, and He receives as unto Himself even a cup of water given her (cf. Mk 9:41). And any good act of welcoming her glorifies the Lord, because it can be done only in Him, only by His grace (cf. 8:1–4; 1Cor 15:10). Don't just serve, dear reader. Serve in the Lord!

Because she and they are saints. The Lord has consecrated both Phoebe to Himself and the Roman Christians to Himself. Holy people serve others. And holy people are worth serving. So, their receiving her should be done in a way that responds properly to these glorious realities. If you are a Christian, God has consecrated you from among the world to Himself for serving. And every Christian He brings into your life is also consecrated to Him. How zealously, then, you should be serving the saints!

Because she has needs. The second command is to "assist her in whichever pragmatics she needs from you." The word "whichever" recognizes that whatever needs arise come in the providence of God, and the fact that they arise while she is among them also comes in the providence of God. In other words, those needs are providential assignments from God to help her. As needs arise among your congregation, and the out-of-town Christians who visit among you, they are providential assignments from God for you to help them.

Because she has helped others. As believers serve one another, they "indebt" one another. There is a virtuous cycle of strengthening their bond with one another. It's not just "after all I've done for you" but "after all we've done for each other." The apostle uses a double conjunction to say "for also" she has been a helper of many and of myself also. In Phoebe's case, it was almost, "after all she's done for everyone." The apostle makes sure to include himself, so that any esteem or affection they have for him will underscore the strength of the obligatory bond they have to serve her. Sometimes in the church, those who have served many others come into a time of need themselves. If that is you, let others serve you. And when it happens with someone else, see to it that you serve them!

Whom do you know that serves others in this way? How are you serving in this way?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for serving us, and for employing us to serve others. Help us by Your Spirit, so that we will respond to these many right motivations with much zealous service in Christ, through whom we ask it, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP197 "Christian Unity" or TPH534 "Fill Thou My Life, O Lord, My God"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 16 verses 1-2. These are God's words. I commend to you. Phoebe our sister. Who is a servant of the church in syncaea? That you may receive her in the Lord in a manner, worthy of the Saints. And assist her, in whatever business. She has need of you. For indeed, she has been a helper of many And of myself also.

So far the reading of gods inspired and inerrant word. Here's a woman who's coming to the church at Rome. Her name is Phoebe. And, it is perhaps. this woman who is actually carrying the letter. That Paul is sending and that is probably indicated by her being.

listed first. And not just with. greetings. But Commendation

So, this Lady Phoebe, who is coming to them? Is commending to them. endorsing them in the letter, so that when she carries it and they open it up and They see the letter in tertius's Hand, which Probably known to them. with all of these greetings.

On behalf of Paul, authenticating it? So Paul also, now authenticates Phoebe as it. as the carrier of the letter. But he also tells them to assist her in whatever business she has need of he gives many reasons for their assistance. first she is our sister. I commend to you, Phoebe our sister, one of the reasons we help one another is because of The relationship that God has brought us into one.

Into with one another. as Christians we are brothers and sisters. of course, you ought to do anything. for your sister in particular. sisters or particular Treasures of a family. again, as a family with five sisters, we have many Treasures, but they are ones who are to be cared for and protected and helped.

And, that extends now to the family of God. So one, she's a sister. second. A servant. Of the church in synca. This is a feminine form, diaconon The. The word that when it's used of the Deacon office, Used in the masculine. but it's also generic word for service.

Or Ministry. or in this case, a servant or Minister. And the most recent place that it was used just versus a go up in verse 31 of chapter 15, Was of, Paul's service. There it was the noun form. Or sorry. The verb form. his serving. for Jerusalem.

That he was asking them to pray would be acceptable to the Saints. But whether it is the Apostle, Paul or an unordained woman Phoebe. Everyone should be a servant of the church. Someone who is writing a note for you to carry with you as you visit a new church ought to be able to say of you.

They're a servant of the Church of Hopewell. Not. There should not be such a thing as peripheral members. every member should be a servant. And those who have late have tried to make this. and And ordained. Office. Actually take away from this parallel between verse 31 and verse.

Of chapter 15 and verse 1 of chapter 16. And the fact that we should all be Servants of the church where we are. So she's not just a sister in name, she's a sister. Also in

character she serves third. we're not just in relation to one another.

as brother and sister in the church. And She's not only a servant of the church. But we are also joined to one another in the Lord. And if she's a servant to the church, she's a servant of the Lord. And so they're receiving her is not only receiving her as a sister and receiving her as a servant, but receiving her in the Lord, and so here's another reason, we should help one another because of our Union with Christ Jesus says Even a cup of cold water given to one who belongs to him.

in his name will not be forgotten. will be rewarded by him. Fourth. Because of who they are and who she is as far as distinction from the world and consecration unto God, he says That you may receive her in the Lord in a manner, worthy of the Saints.

remember who you are? Remember the Holiness? Of who you are, and who she is. The way that we receive one another, the way that we help one another, Should take into account that we are holy and we should serve people in a way that shows the Holiness of our calling.

And if it's a Believer, they are holy and you should serve and help that believer. in a way that demonstrates, their Holiness. Here is a holy person, we should We should receive them and serve them as a holy person. And then, finally, as a repayment as we continually, increase Our obligations to one another and others.

Continually increase our obligation to them in the church as we keep paying back. Says a sister and whatever business she has need of you. Oh actually, we should probably I have a fifth one there. She has need if God gives her need, this is providentially. Provided by God as an opportunity for others to meet that need neediness is a call to help because we don't see neediness merely as a consequence of whatever, instrumental means the need came from.

Which sometimes the need comes from persons. Laziness or wastefulness in this case. the need is because she's gonna be out of town. She's gonna be not with Not with her home. not with her home people and she will have need well. need can arise through.

All sorts of various Providence, but they all arise through Providence. And so, in the fifth place. Her need is a providential assignment. And when some business that she has Causes a need to arise. They are to assist her in that. So, finally, sixth this idea of repayment.

She has been a helper of many. And she is coming, of course, and giving them carrying the letter. to the church. And so she used to help to them, but even she has been a help to The Apostle Paul as well and so taking care of her helps to repay as it where Paul's death.

As we help one another and are helped by one another, we increase this. Being bound to one another. giving back and forth. So that

The application feels. Increased over time, the connection has increased over time. And so many reasons. To serve one, another to help one another to receive welcome. one another This little two-verse passage and how we should desire. that we would heed this passage so that we would end up being able to be described the way the Apostle describes Phoebe.

And of course, bring glory to our Lord. So, may the Lord give you not to be. resentful of service or Reluctant. to serve. but may Give you eagerness to serve others. So, for these six reasons, That we find here. In this little passage may he make us all servants.

Of our church and family in the Lord. And United to him and responding rightly to our consecration and other believers consecration. Responding rightly to needs that arise in God's Providence. And we're paying one another. for the help that the Lord has given us and others. Through them. Let's pray.

Father, thank you for this portion of your word. And for how sweetly and thoroughly and richly, it instructs us in our life of service. With one another, we pray that by your spirit writing the truths of These two verses on our hearts, we would become a family, a household.

Of those who are full of service to one another and to others especially in your church. And we do pray for the preaching. the coming in the coming midweek meeting. That you would use. that preaching to do this in our congregation as a whole, even more than you have already done.

We thank you, Lord. for the various servants. Even one by the example name. we bless your name. O God. For the way you have worked in us and Among Us and we pray that it might continue into the glory of Christ and your glory in him. In his name we pray.

Amen.