

nominative pronoun “she”, likely with some degree of emphasis [since the subject could be expressed simply by the conjugated verb], so “she herself” [perhaps parallel to St. Paul’s “of me myself” at the end of the Greek clause]; next in the Greek clause is the noun for “patroness” or “protectress” [ultimately deriving from a compound of a Greek preposition “before” and a Greek verb for “stand”, the latter of which is also at the root of the words translated “commend” and “help”]; Sanday-Headlam says the word means “succourer” or “helper” and refers to a sense of a legal representative or wealthy patron]; next in the Greek clause is the genitive masculine plural adjective translated “of many”, followed by the third-person singular simple past tense aorist passive verb translated implicitly “she” “has been” [though I wonder about that translation of a verb that more usually is “to come into being” or “to happen” or “to become”]; Franzmann says, “It would be interesting to know just how this woman had been ‘a helper of many’ and continues, “One can conjecture, but guesses are not history”]; then in the Greek text is a coordinating copulative conjunction that could be “and” or “even” or “also” [Cranfield suggests the sense “including”; Grothe translates “indeed”], followed by the genitive first-person singular pronoun “of me” and another pronoun that intensifies the preceding one, giving us “myself” [or perhaps better “me myself” and perhaps parallel to “she herself” at the beginning of the Greek clause]; *TLSB* comments, “She may have given financial support or other assistance to Paul; Grothe refers to other generous women of the church carrying on the tradition of Joanna and Susanna in Luke 8:3 [and we might think of the LWML and other faithful women in our time]) ...

- 16:3-16 – Greetings to: As outlined on p.318, we are continuing the final chapter of Romans, what can be regarded as “Commendation and Greetings”. We have considered its first subdivision that we have given the subheading “Commendation” (16:1-2), and now we turn to its second subdivision that we have given the subheading “Greetings to” (16:3-16), before taking up “Warning and Promise” (16:17-20) and “Greetings From” (16:21-23) and concluding with “Benediction and Doxology” (16:24-27). While we certainly do not personally know the 26 people to whom the Divinely-inspired St. Paul extends greetings, and in some case we do not even know much about them beyond what St. Paul says, at least some of the original hearers/recipients of this letter presumably would have personally known at least some of the people greeted, even as at least some of the people greeted presumably would have been among the original hearers/recipients of this letter. Thus, the people greeted, who personally knew St. Paul, would have been able to in some sense “commend” St. Paul to the hearers/recipients of the letter who did not personally know him, acting as “references” for him (confer Middendorf and Schuler). As we might speak or write “say hi to” a third party in our personal communication with someone today, some such greetings were also normal in ancient times, although Guthrie says the number of greetings to others in Romans is “unparalleled” among St. Paul’s other Divinely-inspired letters. Many people are identified in some way beyond their names, although not all are. And, finally, note that the verse numbers inserted into the letter later are not consistent markers of the individual “greetings”: that is to say, some greetings extend beyond one verse, and some verses have more than

one command “greet”. ... **V.3 Greet Prisca and Aquila**, (the second-person plural aorist-middle imperative translated “greet” is used some sixteen times in this passage [after vv.3-4, in the Greek text it is used at least once in each verse [twice in vv.10-12]; the plural means “all y’all”, and the aorist form may indicate that no repetition of the greeting need be made; notably such greetings were often by embracing and kissing, which is relevant especially in regards to v.16 [Grothe discusses the indirect nature of the Greetings and how the greetings are in the context of their formal, liturgical, and sacramental fellowship in Christ; Luther says the question is properly raised how he lists names of people in Rome since he has not yet been there to visit them, and Luther answers with reference to 1:8 that he had heard of them]; the two compound objects of the greeting in this verse are both the couple Prisca and Aquila and “the according to the house of them church” mentioned at the start of v.5 [to some extent confer the construction of Rufus and his mother in v.13]; the couple named are perhaps more familiarly “Priscilla and Aquila” [KJV and NIV84, which perhaps makes at least Prisca’s sex as a woman more clear, though compare ASV and NASB95; there are variants in the manuscripts; Sanday-Headlam note that both are Roman names, “Priscilla” a diminutive for “Prisca”], and much might be said about the varying orders of their names [for example, that Prisca is the more important of the two, converted before him and perhaps leading to his conversion, not to her social superiority] and their connections to St. Paul and ministry in the Church [*TLSB* says, “Worked with Paul as fellow tentmakers in Corinth but are now back in Rome” {or maybe sail-makers}], though what follows clearly sufficed for the Divinely-inspired St. Paul’s purposes in this case [as with Phoebe above and Junia below, Prisca is often used as an example by those who argue for ordaining women as pastors, though, to be sure, the number of women mentioned is notable; Roehrs-Franzmann comments, “The number of women in the list is remarkable, and Paul’s characterization of them is no less remarkable; the apostle who enjoined silence on woman in the public worship of the church [1 Co 14:34] obviously was no smug belittler of womankind” {to some extent confer Cranfield}, and we might add that any pastor who has seen the good works that women do in individual congregations and in broader groups such as the LWML is likewise]; Grothe seems to favorably cite Käsemann, who discusses how a missionary’s wife could have access to women in a household who would not generally be accessible to her husband [and we might point out that such is true still today in certain cultures and countries]) ... **my fellow workers in Christ Jesus**, (the Greek word translated “fellow workers” is presumably a compound of a Greek prefix for “with” and a noun for “worker” [confer the use of the same word in v.9; Cranfield notes an emphasis on working as a characteristic of the greetings]; the first-person singular personal pronoun is used to refer to Prisca and Aquila as fellow-workers of St. Paul, which is to his point, but they just as easily could have been said to be fellow-workers of “us” or “all y’all” [confer what follows in v.4]; insofar as any individuals who are united “in Christ Jesus” labor, they might be said to be “fellow-workers”, whether they know each other and labor together in the same place or do not know each other and labor separately in different places, but Prisca and Aquila not only are in united with St. Paul “in

Christ Jesus” [confer Cranfield on the inclusion of that aspect], but they also knew each other and labored together, often in the same place, though at times in separate places, given that both parties seemed to travel extensively, and, perhaps most importantly, they labored “in Christ Jesus”, that is, in the work of the Church reaching out with the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins for the sake of Jesus Christ, and Him crucified; Franzmann notes the passage’s repeated use of the phrases “in the Lord” and “in Christ” and comments that they were “no empty phrase for them” but “designates a power, a person, that welded them together”) ... **V.4 who risked their necks for my life**, (the masculine plural nominative indefinite relative pronoun translated “who” is appropriate for the female and male couple that is the subject of the verb at the end of the relative clause; next in the Greek text is what might be translated “for the life of me”, perhaps given some emphasis by its placement there; the Greek noun translated “life” is often “soul” and gives English all the “psych” cognates; juxtaposed in the Greek text is that “of me” with the “of themselves” that follows, modifying “neck”, accusative singular, perhaps viewing the couple as functioning together as a unit; the Greek verb is literally “they put under”, but the idea is that of their putting their neck under the axe of an executioner [the ESV obviously paraphrases a little but gets the sense right]; *TLSB* comments, “In danger because of their support for Paul”; *CSSB* comments, “There is no other record of this in the NT or elsewhere, but it must have been widely known, as the last part of the verse indicates”; Franzmann speculates “perhaps at Ephesus, where Paul’s ministry was marked by trials and dangers” [to some extent confer Sanday-Headlam; Cranfield acknowledges the possibility but rightly says “we cannot be certain”]) ... **to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well**. (the masculine plural dative relative pronoun translated “to whom” again is appropriate for the female and male company that in this case is the indirect object of the verb that follows shortly; the Greek negative particle translated “not” is followed by the Greek first-person singular nominative pronoun that in this case emphasizes St. Paul as the “I” subject [emphatic because the pronoun is unnecessary, since the subject is indicated in the verb conjugation]; the pronoun is followed by a Greek adjective translated “only” [or we might say “alone”]; next in the Greek text is the verb translated “I am giving thanks”, a form of the Greek verb that gives us the English word “Eucharist” due to the giving thanks of the Holy Supper; next in the Greek text is the strong adversative translated “but” and an adverb that can be translated “also” [apparently behind the ESV’s “as well” at the end of the verse as the ESV translates it]; finally is “all the churches of the Gentiles” [almost implying another use of the same verb “are giving thanks”], and we should think of the plurality of congregations of the one Church [confer the use of the noun in vv.1, 5, and 16], remembering that, although the Divinely-inspired St. Paul calls them “churches of the Gentiles”, there were some ethnic and formerly religious Jewish converts to Christianity among at least some of those congregations’ members; Sanday-Headlam refers to Prisca and Aquila’s nomadic life as perhaps why the churches of the Gentiles knew them well; Cranfield notes their placement at the beginning of this list, the fullness of what is said, and other references in the New Testament and concludes, “they were a couple for whom Paul and the

churches of the Gentiles had also many other reasons for being profoundly thankful”) ... **V.5 Greet also the church in their house.** (as noted above, the command to “greet” at the beginning of v.3 has as its compound object both the couple and the church that presumably meets in their house [more-literally, “the according to the house of them church”]; in this list of greetings, only Prisca and Aquila are explicitly said to have a congregation associated with their house [confer v.14 and v.15 {confer Roehrs-Franzmann and Sanday-Headlam}], and their having a house big enough to accommodate a congregation’s meeting there is consistent with what we know of them [*TLSB* comments, “Prior to the fourth century, Christians generally gathered in homes like those of Prisca and Aquila”, Sanday-Headlam gives the example of the house of Mary in Acts 12:12, and we might note the “legalization” of Christianity in the fourth century]; confer the other uses of “church” in vv.1, 9, and 16; Cranfield notes that their family was no doubt included in the church and that the church was not limited to their family) ... **Greet my beloved Epaenetus,** (Sanday-Headlam notes that the name is not uncommon but says of him in particular nothing is known [confer Cranfield]; the Greek word translated “beloved” comes from the Greek verb for God’s self-sacrificial love, what is called from its Greek word “agape” love [*TLSB* comments, “denotes a beloved brother in Christ”; the same adjective is used again in vv.8, 9, and 12 of others, not always with “my”, as here and in vv.8 and 9, or with “in the Lord” as in v.8; Cranfield says the description “beloved” “is not to be taken to imply that he was more beloved than those who are not so described” [confer Grothe]; Grothe repeats Käsemann’s hypothesis that Epaenetus was an associate of Prisca and Aquila) ... **who was the first convert to Christ in Asia.** (the masculine singular nominative relative pronoun translated “who “ is predicated with a Greek verb in the present tense [“is”, not “was”] of the Greek nominative noun that could be translated “beginning of a sacrifice” or “first-fruit” [which in a sense “guarantees” the following fruit]; the genitive “of Asia” is followed by the prepositional phrase “for Christ” [fitting for a first-fruit sacrifice, though perhaps “to” Christ; the ESV does some perhaps unfortunate paraphrasing]; we remember that St. Paul likely is writing from the Roman province of Achaia, west to the Roman capital city, so perhaps somewhat surprising is that he sends a greeting to someone in that Roman capital who is described as the first convert to Christ in the Roman province of Asia [modern-day Turkey] to the east [though perhaps confer Onesimus who as Philemon’s runaway slave from Asia made it to Rome; Roehrs-Franzmann comments, “The mobility of the first Christians is documented here too; men and women from all over the Mediterranean world are met in Rome”]; *TLSB* somewhat oddly refers to Acts 16:6, which refers to Paul and those with him’s being forbidden to speak the Word in Asia; Sanday-Headlam refers to 1 Corinthians 16:15, where Stephanas’s household is identified as the first converts in Achaia) ... **V.6 Greet Mary,** (for all of the women in the New Testament named “Mary”, perhaps influenced by Moses’s sister Miriam’s name, this “Mary” is not thought to be one whom we otherwise know [*TLSB* comments, “One of six Marys in the NT; probably unknown”; *CSSB* is similar; Sanday-Headlam refers to Roman influence for the name Mary [confer Cranfield] and says that if she were Jewish St. Paul likely

would have said so here as he did with others]; how St. Paul and she know each other is not said) ... **who has worked hard for you.** (the feminine singular nominative indefinite relative pronoun translated “who” agrees with “Mary”; next in the Greek text is neuter plural accusative adjective that could be translated “many things” [essentially paraphrased out by the ESV], the Greek verb could be “she has grown weary” or “toiled” or “worked with effort” [confer the same verb twice in v.12, one with a similar “many things”]; and last is the prepositional phrase “to or “for” “all y’all”; just what those many things are is not said) ... **V.7 Greet Andronicus and Junia,** (Sanday-Headlam says Andronicus is “a Greek name found among members of imperial household”, and Cranfield points to a Jew so named; the ESV apparently correctly puts the feminine name “Junia” in its text and the masculine name “Junias” in its margin [the KJV also has “Junia” in the text, while the ASV, NIV84, and NASB95 have “Junias” in the text; confer *TLSB* p.1942], as Greek accenting since the seventh century reportedly supports the feminine rendering of the name, while the masculine form is said to be unknown from any other literary or inscriptional sources [we might suppose that a male and female couple makes sense, like v.3’s Prisca and Aquila {confer Grothe}, though compare v.12’s Tryphaena and Tryphosa, which are both feminine forms]; the appositive that follows uses two masculine plural forms, which would be appropriate as the “generic” for one man and one woman or two men [but not two women]; note that preconceptions about the rest of the related issues can influence which name is taken as belonging to the text) ... **my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners.** (the Greek word translated “kinsmen” can refer to closer relations of blood or wider relations of “race” or “countryman” [*CSSB*’s CPH editors comment, “No doubt a reference to their being Jews” and refers to vv.11 and 21; Sanday-Headlam says “almost certainly” means “fellow-countrymen” {that is, Jews} and not “relations”; confer the use of the same word in v.11; this Greek word is also used in Luke 1:36 where it is spoken by Gabriel to Mary about Elizabeth and rendered “relative” by the ESV; I often use “kinsmen” to render a different Greek word, more usually translated “brother”, when referring to Jesus’s so-called “brothers”, which at the most were half-brothers but more-likely were step-brothers or first-cousins]; the Greek word translated “fellow-prisoners” [an apparent compound of words for “with” and “spear” and “taken”] could have a literal sense, if the pair had been imprisoned before, either with St. Paul or on their own, or the word could have a figurative sense, if the Divinely-inspired St. Paul is simply referring to their somehow being prisoners of the Lord [*TLSB* comments, “They had been under arrest with Paul; the apostle was detained numerous times”]; Sanday-Headlam rules out metaphorical explanations and says they may simply have been imprisoned for Christ’s sake, not necessarily at the same time as St. Paul [and presumably in the same place; confer Cranfield]; Grothe is willing to understand a metaphorical imprisonment, in part because it more-readily accounts for the imprisonment of men and women together) ... **They are well known to the apostles,** (the Greek text begins with the masculine plural nominative indefinite relative pronoun that would normally be translated “who”, followed by the Greek verb normally translated “are” and a masculine plural nominative adjective that could be translated “bearing a mark”

or “notable” [the ESV does not reflect St. Paul’s consistent pattern of greeting someone who is then modified in a relative clause but changes the relative dependent clause to an independent clause]; last is the prepositional phrase that could “in” or “by” or “with” or “among” the apostles [as an alternate reading for “apostles”, the ESV puts “messengers” in the margin; more at issue may be the ESV’s rendering of the preposition as “to”, as the *Comparative Study of Bible Translations* done in preparation for *Lutheran Service Book* says only the ESV uses that rendering, but the *Comparative Study* claims strong support for the rendering by considering parallel examples of the same construction in 1 Corinthians 14:11; Galatians 1:16; and Romans 1:19, all related to a subject’s perception of an object, as in this verse where the apostles’ perception of Andronicus and Junia seems to be what St. Paul is emphasizing, which sense the *Comparative Study* paraphrases as “they are well known, even to the apostles” [confer Grothe, “notable in the eyes of the apostles”], a sense consistent with St. Paul’s not naming other people than the familiar circle of Jesus’s disciples and himself as “apostles” and St. Paul’s appealing to the familiar apostles for support as he in a sense does in this case; the *Comparative Study* notes that this verse is significant for some who advocate women serving in church leadership positions and that the ESV rendering of the verse does not allow the misunderstanding that the pair were “among” in the sense of “part of” the apostles]; perhaps somewhat surprisingly, *CSSB*’s CPH editors discuss the possibility that only the twelve apostles are meant and that the two people are outstanding among the twelve apostles, but the editors prefer the possibility that a wider group of the apostles are meant and includes the two individuals named [confer Franzmann]; Sanday-Headlam thinks the pair was distinguished as apostles) ... **and they were in Christ before me.** (the ESV paraphrases in “and” where the Greek text simply has another masculine plural nominative relative pronoun normally translated “who”, followed by an adverb that would be translated “also”; next is the prepositional phrase translated “before me”, the pluperfect verb “had become”, and finally the prepositional phrase “in Christ”; *TLSB* refers to the narration of St. Paul’s conversion in Acts 9, which account he repeats in other places on other occasions; Franzmann refers to the pair as “probably charter members of the Jerusalem church”, and Sanday-Headlam conjectures a role for the pair dispersed after the death of Stephen working in Cyprus and Syria; Grothe discusses the possibility that the pair were “the chief gainsayers”, that is opponents, of Paul in Rome, and that [we would say by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit] Paul includes them in the list of greetings where he does for rhetorical purposes) ... **V.8 Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord.** (*TLSB* says Ampliatus is a “Common Latin name for a slave” [*CSSB* says the same of Urbanus, Stachys, and Apelles; confer Sanday-Headlam]; confer the uses of “beloved” in vv.5, 9, and 12; Cranfield discusses “a real possibility” that a tomb in a catacomb is his and that through him the Gospel may have made its way into a noble household to which an emperor’s niece belonged [confer Grothe]) ... **V.9 Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ,** (confer the use of “fellow worker” in v.3; Sanday-Headlam suggests “of us” since more than a personal friend “of me” Urbanus “was a fellow-workers with all those who worked for Christ”, though Cranfield suggests that Urbanus

had not been a colleague of Paul personally [yet apparently still enough of an acquaintance to serve as a “reference”?] ... **and my beloved Stachys.** (Sanday-Headlam says Stachys is a rare Greek name but found among members of the imperial household; confer the uses of “beloved” in vv.5, 8, and 12) ... **V.10 Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ.** (Sanday-Headlam says, “Again a name borne by members of the household and by Jews”; the Greek adjective translated “approved” has the sense of being approved after trial [*TLSB* comments, “Tested as metals in fire, refined and genuine”]; the preposition could be “in” or “by” Christ; Cranfield says Paul may have know of some particular trial under which Apelles proved faithful or that he was simply varying his observations and used one that could describe any faithful Christian) ... **Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus.** (the Greek might be rendered more-literally, “the ones of Aristobulus” [confer v.11; presumably Aristobulus’s whole family is “in the Lord”? except Aristobulus himself if he is alive {so Cranfield}); *CSSB* comments, “Perhaps refers to the grandson of Herod the Great and brother of Herod Agrippa I”, and Franzmann explains that while that Aristobulus, who spent his life in Rome, was probably already dead when St. Paul wrote Romans, his slaves and freedmen would continue to be identified by his name [confer Sanday-Headlam and Cranfield]) ... **V.11 Greet my kinsman Herodion.** (Sanday-Headlam notes another name connected to the Herod family and sees it as support for the understanding of the preceding name; confer the use of “kinsman” in v.7; *CSSB* here says, “Perhaps a reference to his being a Jew” [Herod’s status as an appointed Jewish King was questionable, which is partly why Jesus’s being born king of the Jews was such a threat to him]) ... **Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus.** (again the Greek is more-literally “the ones of Narcissus” [confer v.10], though in this case followed by “the ones being in the Lord” [Cranfield in this case says Narcissus is more probably a pagan]; *CSSB* comments, “Sometimes identified with Tiberius Claudius Narcissus, a wealthy freedman of the Roman emperor Tiberius”, and Franzmann says that that Narcissus was executed by Nero in A.D. 54 but that his salves probably became a part of the emperor’s household [confer Sanday-Headlam]) ... **V.12 Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa.** (the ESV breaks St. Paul’s pattern of naming those to be greeted first and then modifying them in some way; as noted above, this is a pair of women, though we should not read anything untoward in their being named together [*CSSB* comments, “Perhaps sisters, even twins, because it was common for such persons to be given names from the same root”]; confer the use of the same verb for “toiling” in v.6 and v.12b; Cranfield notes the irony of the contrast between the meaning of their names as such things as “soft” and their hard work) ... **Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord.** (*CSSB* notes that “Persis” means “Persian woman”, and Sanday-Headlam says, “The name appears as that of a freedwoman”; confer the uses of “beloved” in vv.5, 8, and 9; note that Persis is a woman; confer the same “who many things toiled” in v.6 and the same verb in v.12a; Grothe notes her “double commendation”)... **V.13 Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord;** (*TLSB* notes that Mark 15:21, likely written to Rome, refers to a Rufus who is the son of Simon of Cyrene [confer *CSSB* and others]; despite

the ESV's odd punctuation, we again would seem to have a compound of two extended objects for the one command to greet [confer vv.3-5]; the Greek adjective translated "chosen" is the usual one that also could be translated "elect"; the preposition again could be "in" or "by" Christ [we might think of Ephesians 1:4, where God the Father is said to have chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world; *TLSB* comments that the Romans verse "May refer to common calling of all the 'elect' or to a special calling given to him", Sanday-Headlam thinks not the usual calling but something like "eminent as a Christian" [compare Cranfield, who notes the general applicability of many of the commendatory expressions to any and all faithful Christians) ... **also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well.** (the Greek conjunction is arguably a simple "and", followed by, more-literally, "the mother of him and of me" [the ESV paraphrases in the whole "who has been a mother" and "as well"]; *TLSB* comments, "Cared for and perhaps housed Paul at some time"; Franzmann speculates that St. Paul "was a frequent guest in her house"; Grothe says that would have been in the East; Sanday-Headlam refers to her showing St. Paul "all the care of a mother" and that so he felt for her "all the affection of a son"; Luther remarks, "Perhaps he was his brother according to the law, born of the same father, but of another mother according to nature") ... **V.14 Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them.** (of those named in vv.14-15, *CSSB* comments, "None of these persons can be further identified, except that they were slaves or freedmen in the Roman church" [confer Cranfield]; Sanday-Headlam and Cranfield specifically rule out Origen's idea that Hermas is to be identified with the author of an early church writing known as "the Shepherd of Hermas"; "brothers" here as the generic term for male and female fellow-believers; referring to another house-church as in v.5 and v.15 [confer Roehrs-Franzmann]) ... **V.15 Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.** (Julia is the only feminine name in this group; the saints are the "holy ones"; referring to another house-church as in v.5 and v.14 [confer Roehrs-Franzmann]; Sanday-Headlam says Philologus is generally supposed to be the brother or husband of Julia, and, if the husband, then Nereus, his sister, and Olympas may be their children [Cranfield does not seem to think Olympas would be one of their children; I did not see anyone suggest why the sister of Nereus is not named, though there seem to be possibly-relevant variants in some manuscripts]) ... **V.16 Greet one another with a holy kiss.** (presumably this is a reference to the Kiss of Peace [for other Biblical examples, Franzmann points to 1 Thessalonians 5:26; 2 Corinthians 13:12; and especially 1 Corinthians 16:20-22, the anathema of which Franzmann connects with vv.17-20 that follow in Romans], which followed the sermon and came before the Service of the Sacrament, with those present indicating their being at peace with one another [often much-abused when attempted in Lutheran circles in our time {see the option on *LSB* 159, 175, and 207}]; Grothe connects baptism to the relationship of brothers and sisters in Christ and the not fleshly but holy kiss as evidence of belonging to the same family) ... **All the churches of Christ greet you.** (perhaps significantly the Greek word order is "are greeting you-all the-churches all of Christ"; confer the other uses of the word for "church"

- in vv.1, 4, and 5 [*TLSB* comments, While there is one true Church, the plural is natural for Paul, who generally uses ‘church’ to refer to a local congregation”]; Roehrs-Franzmann comments, “the churches know of Paul’s plans, all accompany him with their prayers, all bespeak a welcome for him in Rome”; other “greetings from” come in vv.21-23, but in between is what might be called a warning who not to greet [confer Franzmann’s reference to 1 Corinthians 16:20-22 above]) ...
- 16:17-20 – Warning and Promise: As outlined on p.318, we are considering the final chapter of Romans, what can be regarded as St. Paul’s “Commendation and Greetings” (16:1-27), which are integrally related to the preceding content of the letter. At this point, we have considered two subsections, “Commendation” (16:1-2) and “Greetings to” (16:3-16); we are about to consider “Warning and Promise” (16:17-20); and then we will consider “Greetings From” (16:21-23) and “Benediction and Doxology” (16:24-27). Our subheading “Warning and Promise” is different from other subheadings given in various ways, such as by including the mention of the promise that accompanies the warning (Sanday-Headlam, for example, subhead 16:17-20 simply “A warning” and Franzmann’s 1968 outline similarly subheads the verses “The Apostle’s Warning”). Guthrie summarizes verses 17-19 (seemingly omitting v.20) by writing, “the apostle gives a parting warning against false teachers who cause dissensions”, which comment perhaps provides some reminder of the preceding greetings as “references” for St. Paul’s teaching. Franzmann’s 1961 outline refers to “Warning Against Makers of Divisions and Offenses”, and Grothe subheads vv.17-20 “Warning and Promise About Threats to the Fellowship”, helpfully reminding us of the broader context of fellowship not only in the content of the letter but also in the liturgical context in which the letter is being read. Finally here, we note the critical edition of the Greek text that I usually use puts extra spacing after v.20a and before v.20b, though we are keeping v.20b in this subsection, especially as it could be read as part of the promise that in some sense comforts those who take the warning to heart. ... **V.17 I appeal to you**, (the Greek text has a simple conjunction that could be translated “and” or “but”, and either is arguably appropriate given the continued context of fellowship but the turn to a warning of those whom should not be greeted with the kiss of peace [the ESV obviously omits it; Grother prefers the continuative “and”; the CPH editors of *CSSB*, perhaps drawing on Roehrs-Franzmann, refer to the warning as being “abrupt”, which seems to ignore the close connection suggested by the Greek conjunction and the fellowship “fit”; Cranfield considers the abruptness to be exaggerated]; the verb translated “appeal” is often “encourage” or “exhort”, sometimes closely connected with a sermon, arguably as in the use in this verse; the present-tense form of the verb makes sense not only for this particular warning and promise but for the continuation of the letter as a whole; while the verb is first-person singular of St. Paul, the apostle is Divinely-inspired and so the appeal or encouragement ultimately is God’s; the plural “you-all”, or “all you-all”, object of the appeal or encouragement is first those to whom St. Paul originally dictated/wrote and second all of the rest of the Christian Church down through time to us and beyond us with those who follow us; the thought of the appeal or encouragement is completed with an infinitive after St. Paul directly addresses the “you-all”) ...

brothers, (all of the original recipients and the rest of us would seem to be included as “brothers” here, regardless of ethnic origin or biological sex, though the ESV surprisingly does not indicate the inclusion of “and sisters” in this place, as it does in other places; Grothe comments, “For one last and significant time, Paul addresses all the Christians in Rome as *brethren*”) ... **to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught**; (the present infinitive that the ESV translates “to watch out for” could be translated “to scope out” [the Greek root is the same as for the words for the oversight of a bishop and for the bishop himself], but regardless it completes the thought of the appeal or encouragement at the beginning of the verse; the present tense of the infinitive would seem to suggest ongoing or repeated action; the Greek text has a masculine plural accusative article next, translated “those”, which article corresponds to a masculine plural accusative present-active participle at the end of the clause, perhaps better translated “making” or “doing” [the present-tense suggesting ongoing or continued action], with two definite direct objects of their making or doing, perhaps both modified by one prepositional phrase in between [the ESV at a minimum somewhat misleadingly provides two separate verbs, “cause” and “create”, where the Greek text has only one verb]; that the direct objects are definite Grothe says means that they are conceivable in the Roman context; the particular Greek word translated “divisions” is used only here and in Galatians 5:20 [one of the works of the flesh] and in a variant reading of 1 Corinthians 3:3, hardly enough to get a good sense of why the Divinely-inspired St. Paul might have used this particular Greek word for “divisions” and not one of the others, such as that Greek word for divisions over doctrine that break communion fellowship used in 1 Corinthians 11:19 [the ESV translates “factions”], which Greek word gives us our English word “heresies”; worth noting is that the “divisions” and “obstacles” are connected with the usual conjunction translated “and” and share a common verb “making/doing” [we might reflect on whether the conjunction in this case could be translated “even” or “that is” and what the precise relationship between the “divisions” and “obstacles” is {Roehrs-Franzmann talks about disrupting the church and endangering her faith, which may suggest a relationship; Sanday-Headlam says the divisions cause the obstacles}]; the Greek word translated “obstacles” is the perhaps more-usual word for causes of offense, stumbling blocks that can lead one into sin and away from the faith; as noted above, the prepositional phrase “from the teaching which you-all yourselves learned” could modify both divisions and obstacles [Grothe suggests the phrase “characterizes the dissensions and stumbling blocks, and so also the activity of creating them”]; the ESV perhaps over-translates the simple Greek preposition usually translated “from” with “contrary to” and in the process loses any sense of literal separation; we note that the ESV’s “doctrine” is simply “teaching”, coming from one of the Greek verbs for “teaching”, and is not in any sense inherently a “dirty” word; that teaching is immediately modified by a relative phrase “you-all yourselves learned”, using an otherwise unnecessary pronoun “you-all” apparently for emphasis and a simple-past-tense aorist indicative form of a different Greek verb for their having learned the teaching [again the ESV somewhat mistranslates, in this case rendering an

active-voice Greek verb with the passive-voice “been taught”]; notably St. Paul does not refer to from whom the Romans learned the doctrine, much less does he claim that he himself taught them [compare 2 Thessalonians 3:14]; *TLSB* suggests these unnamed people were dividing the Church “from within, probably along Jew/Gentiles lines”, though no basis is given for that statement [Sanday-Headlam also thinks the false teachers are of a Jewish character, as does Luther]; somewhat similarly, the CPH editors of *CSSB* suggest the warning is “against factions, which plagued the church at Corinth, from where Paul wrote Romans”, though the same words expressing the schisms are not used; more helpfully, the CPH editors of *CSSB* draw attention to the divisions and obstacles being contrary to the teaching that the Romans had learned; Franzmann refers to issues in Galatia and Corinth and suggests that they had not yet appeared in Rome or Paul would have dealt with them sooner in the letter and that the warning here would not be so general; Cranfield helpfully reminds, “Sometimes divisions have to be cause for the sake of the truth” and “in certain circumstances the truth itself is a stumbling block”) ... **avoid them.** (the Greek text has a conjunction that is usually translated as “and”, which the ESV does not translated in this case [admittedly, the thought of the appeal or encouragement is completed with the infinitive translated “to watch out for”, but in some sense the two actions are connected in that those who cause divisions and create obstacles must first be identified and then be avoided [confer Franzmann]; the present-tense imperative command translated “avoid” by its tense refers to repeated or continued action, and at its root suggests more than a simple “shunning” or “avoiding” but also a declining that would mean not having communion fellowship, that is, not sharing the Lord’s Supper [the Greek word is a compound of the words for “out of, from” and “lay oneself”, the latter of which word is part of the arguably opposite word “reclining” used in reference to reclining at a table as in communion fellowship; confer Roehrs-Franzmann, who talk about exclusion from communion and liken it to the anathema of 1 Corinthians 16:22, and we might mention also the anathemas in Galatians and the excommunication of 1 Corinthians 5 {not to mention Matthew 7:6’s statement about not giving dogs what is holy or casting pearls before swine}, all obviously with repentance and restoration as ultimate goals, and, as Grothe notes, we pray for those who persecute us and love our enemies]; “them” simply refers back to those just described somewhat at length, that is “the ones” making or doing the divisions and obstacles, who are further described in what follows; we should readily grant that we cannot absolutely avoid false teachers without withdrawing from the world, which is not what St. Paul suggests; *TLSB* comments, “As in Galatians, believers are to reject any false teachings and refuse to associate with those who advocate them. Some have applied this to any and every different teaching, but here it refers specifically to issues that strike at the heart of the Gospel”, and, again, no basis is given for that limiting statement, especially misleading since false teaching and practice on seeming peripheral aspects of the faith can and do affect cut to the central teaching of salvation by grace through faith [Grothe quotes Franzmann saying that “there is nothing in the context to restrict the meaning to a particular teaching or doctrine”]; we might discuss the extent to which the false teachings can be distinguished from the false teachers, if

they can be distinguished at all [Grothe, for example, refers to distinguishing “between the issues, where truth rules, and the people, where love rules”]) ...

V.18 For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, (the Greek clause essentially begins with the coordinating explanatory conjunction translated “for”, which can be used to express cause, explanation, inference, or continuation [in this case perhaps giving additional reason why such persons should be cut off from fellowship or, in some sense, their motivation for making or doing the divisions and obstacles; with reference to a Franzmann article, Grothe suggests 16:18 is “a basis for 16:17, not a further description of those about whom the earning of 16:17 is given”]; the following demonstrative adjectival Greek pronoun that the ESV translates “such persons” emphasizes the nature of those described [there is no separately-expressed subject for the verb in the clause that follows {the ESV’s “they” is certainly included in the verbal form}, so “such persons” here could be the subject of a compound construction]; next in the Greek text is “the Lord of us Christ”, followed by the negative particle translated “not” and the present-tense active-voice verb perhaps better translated “are serving”, and we note at its root the lowest form of servant or slave [ideally those making or doing the divisions and obstacles would be slaves of our Lord Christ]; next in the Greek text is the strong adversative “but” providing the contrast between Whom such persons are not serving and what they are serving; “the of themselves belly” [confer the ESV text note] or “stomach”, in an extended sense the innermost part of a person as the seat of thought, feeling, and choice [perhaps with some intentional contrast to the “hearts” in the next clause, and we would note the influence of the sinful nature, if the people are even still regenerated {confer *TLSB* on sinful human desires}]; the CPH editors of *CSSB* suggest that v.18 “states the evil results of such false teachers—self-service rather than serving Christ”, though the text itself does not explicitly give that as the result) ... **and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.** (the Greek conjunction is the usual word translated “and”; the Greek preposition that follows in this case is used with the genitive case and is usually translated “through” or “on account of” or “because of”, though sometimes “by”; the first Greek object of the preposition is more-literally “smooth words” but “smooth talk” captures the sense of plausible and insinuating speech; the second Greek object of the preposition is more-literally “good-words” [we get our English “eulogy” from this Greek word], and it might normally be translated “blessing” or “praise” but here means well-chosen but untrue words, false eloquency, or flattery, as the ESV renders it; next in the Greek construction is the present-tense verb perhaps better translated “they are deceiving”, with the tense again suggesting ongoing or repeated action and the subject, as noted above, perhaps going back to the “such persons” of the first clause; next is the Greek construction is “the hearts”, which like “stomach” in the preceding clause, can be taken more broadly as the seat of seat of all thoughts, passions, desires, or appetites, good or bad, or can be taken more narrowly as the soul and perhaps that soul as regenerated; last in the Greek construction, perhaps with implications for the transition to the next verse, is “of the ones without evil” or “the innocent” [confer/compare the Greek word translated “evil” in the next verse], which

standing of innocence arguably could be by God’s justification for Christ’s sake through faith) ... **V.19 For your obedience is known to all**, (again the Greek clause essentially begins with the coordinating explanatory conjunction translated “for”, which can be used to express cause, explanation, inference, or continuation [precisely which of those may depend on your interpretation]; next is “the of you-all obedience”, and not seeing a connection between the preceding “of the innocent” and this “of you-all” is difficult; we might ask what “obedience” is in view, and I might suggest the obedience “of faith” as found only in Romans 1:5 and again Romans 1:26 [confer Grothe; or, if of the Commandments, then as observable fruit of faith; *TLSB* refers back to the Greek word’s literal sense of “hearing under” and comments, “They heard the Word, believed, and responded appropriately in their lives”; Roehrs-Franzmann comments that especially the Roman church with its record of fidelity should not tolerate or compromise with the teachers described earlier]; next is “to all”, which is masculine plural but surely used generically of all men and women; last in the Greek construction is the simple-past-tense aorist verb translated “is known”, though maybe better would be “reached” or “arrived”, with the implication being that reports of the Romans faith have reached all, including St. Paul, as he goes on to say) ... **so that I rejoice over you**, (the Greek text essentially begins with the coordinating inferential conjunction normally translated “therefore” [there would be other perhaps more specific ways of indicating a result?]; next in the Greek word order is “one” or “upon you-all”, followed by “I am rejoicing” [there could be some emphasis on the particular joy of the Messianic era]; there is no emphasis on St. Paul as the subject of the verb; of course, St. Paul really knows the majority of the Romans to whom he is writing only by reputation; ending the Greek construction with the verb for rejoicing contrasts with the verb for willing or wishing that immediately follows in the Greek text) ... **but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil**. (the Greek text has a conjunction that can be translated “and” or “but”, and either translation arguably could work in this case [Franzmann discusses Rome’s prominence and reputation’s relating to St. Paul’s concern for them]; the verb that the ESV translates “want” is present-tense and so perhaps better at least “wanting”; next in the Greek construction is “you-all”, in a sense working out in mirror image from the center of the two contrasting verbs; then is “wise to be to the good” [the CPH editors of *CSSB* comment, “Christians are to be adequate judges of false doctrine”, which is certainly true, even if not what is said here]; essentially next is the conjunction that again could be translated “and” or “but”; and last is “innocent to the evil” [regarding “innocent”, this is a different word than that translated “naïve” in the preceding verse, and this word can be “unmixed”, simple”, unsophisticated”, or “innocent”, as the ESV renders it; regarding “evil”, confer/compare the Greek word translated “naïve” in the preceding verse]; Franzmann hears an echo of Jesus’s word in Matthew 10:16 concerning the wisdom of serpents and innocence of doves, and Sanday-Headlam refer also to Philippians 2:15; Luther explains, “prudent in regard to evil, so that they are not deceived; guileless in regard to good, so that they do not deceive”; how will the Romans as St. Paul describes wanting them to be? presumably by their following his/God’s appeal or exhortation and by God’s

doing the one or two things that the Holy Spirit inspired St. Paul to dictate/write next) ... **V.20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.** (the description of God as “The God of peace” [confer 15:33] is all the more striking given the following somewhat violent but peace-achieving image of crushing Satan underfoot; the future-tense indicative-mood statement about the crushing is perhaps surprising given what may be a usual tendency to locate the crushing as taking place on the cross, which has happened by the time St. Paul was inspired to write these words [if not then, when? the Parousia? Grothe refers to “the final consummation of the victory”]; there seems to be a reference to Genesis 3:15 {Grothe includes the idea of the serpent as the “craftiest” of all the creatures and the man and the woman’s naked innocence}, the so-called “proto-Gospel”, though that makes “your feet” all the more surprising [Sanday-Headlam says that Satan will be thrown under their feet that they may trample upon him {or perhaps they do it ultimately in Christ, on which confer Grothe}]; despite the ESV’s mid-construction placement of “soon”, last in the Greek construction, arguably with emphasis, is the prepositional phrase “in” or :with” “speed” [confer our discussion in Midweek Bible Study of Jesus’s coming “quickly” in Revelation; *TLSB* says the phrase can mean “suddenly” or “quickly”, if that helps]; the CPH editors of *CSSB* comment, “Satan, the father of lies, is behind all false teachings”; we noted above that the critical edition of the Greek text that I usually use puts extra spacing at this point, suggesting something less than a paragraph break between v.20a and v.20b, but we are keeping v.20b with 20a, in part because they can be read together as the promise that in some sense comforts those who take the preceding warning to heart [confer Grothe with reference to Schlatter], though the usual view is that the following was the greeting St. Paul wrote in his own hand) ... **The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.** (the Greek text simply predicates “the grace of our Lord Jesus ” [the inclusion of “Christ” is textually disputed in this place] with “with-you-all” without a verb to indicate past, present, or future tense or any sort of indicative or optative mood; arguably, after the preceding future tense indicative verb, a parallel future tense indicative verb, “will be”, would make sense [Grothe supplies “is”]; notably there is no “Amen” in the text but likely would have been supplied by the hearers/readers [confer/compare 15:33]; for his part, Franzmann sees the grace of the Lord Jesus being with the Romans until the Day that the God of peace crushes Satan under their feet; Grothe perhaps similarly comments that the blessing “pours the divine gift of grace over the struggling, tempted pilgrim band, assuring them of rich and daily forgiveness as they plod—imperfectly—on their pilgrim trek”) ...