

Romans 16 Study Guide - Dealing with Division

Summary

In Paul's final chapter to the Romans, he highlights the beauty of Christian unity by naming and honoring nearly 30 people who had been faithful partners in the Gospel. He stresses that the church is made up of diverse people with different perspectives, yet united in Christ. Immediately after celebrating unity, Paul warns about the dangers of division. Division doesn't come from God; it comes from Satan and leads to destruction. Paul instructs believers to identify divisive people, warn them, and if necessary, avoid them for the sake of unity. Ultimately, God promises victory over division and over Satan himself.

Key Scriptures

- Romans 16:16–20 – Greet one another with affection; beware of those who cause division.
- Proverbs 6:16–19 – The Lord hates those who sow discord among brothers.
- Matthew 12:25 – A house divided against itself cannot stand.
- Titus 3:10–11 – Warn a divisive person; then have nothing to do with them if they refuse correction.

Questions

1. **Why does Paul emphasize greeting so many individuals by name in this chapter?**

To show that the family of God is diverse and deeply connected. It reminds us that differences in background or perspective should strengthen unity, not cause division.

2. **What's the difference between "different" and "divisive"?**

Being different means having unique perspectives and personalities, which God uses for balance. Being divisive means creating unnecessary factions and discord that harm the unity of the church.

3. Why does God detest division so strongly (Proverbs 6:16–19)?

Because division works against love, unity, and His family. It causes destruction and pulls people away from His purposes.

4. How does Satan use division in families, churches, and even nations?

Satan was the first divider, rebelling in heaven and then sowing division between Adam, Eve, and God. He still uses the same tactic today—tearing apart relationships, marriages, and churches.

5. According to Jesus in Matthew 12:25, what happens to a house or kingdom divided against itself?

It cannot stand. Division weakens and eventually destroys the vision and mission of any group.

6. How can we discern a divisive spirit in someone?

By their spirit (angry vs. peaceful), their talk (critical vs. constructive), their attitude (self-serving vs. humble), and their actions (sowing discord instead of building unity).

7. What steps does Paul outline for dealing with divisive people (Romans 16:17–20, Titus 3:10–11)?

Identify them, warn them, and if they remain unrepentant, avoid them. This protects the unity of the body while leaving room for God to deal with their heart.

8. Life Application: How can you personally guard against becoming divisive in your family, workplace, or church?

Family Spotlight

Activity:

Take a rope or long string and have everyone in the family grab hold of it. Try pulling in different directions—it creates tension and division. Then, have everyone pull in the same direction. Talk about how division weakens families and churches, but unity makes us stronger. End by reading Romans 16:20 together: “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.”

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