



Quick Backdrop

If you've ever watched the trophy ceremony at the end of a Super Bowl, or an awards show like the Grammys or Oscars, you may have picked up on a theme as you listened to "thank you" speeches: no one got to that highest level of achievement without the support of family and friends. The same is true in our spiritual walk. We need all the support we can get as we seek to live the gospel message in a non-gospel world.

The apostle Paul, a major leader in the New Testament church, gave a big "thank you" speech as he closed out what's considered his *tour de force* letter, the book of Romans. This excerpt will give great insight into his spiritual support network.

1 Digging In (God, Show Me!)

At the close of the book of Romans, Paul launches into a long list of folks he asks his readers to greet. As you read the list below, do two things:

1. Circle any names you see.
2. Underline anything that describes each person.



Romans 16:3-15

³ Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my co-workers in Christ Jesus. ⁴ They risked their lives for me. Not only I but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them.

⁵ Greet also the church that meets at their house.

Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.

⁶ Greet Mary, who worked very hard for you.

⁷ Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Jews who have been in prison with me. They are outstanding among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was.

⁸ Greet Ampliatus, my dear friend in the Lord.

⁹ Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my dear friend Stachys.

¹⁰ Greet Apelles, whose fidelity to Christ has stood the test.

Greet those who belong to the household of Aristobulus.

¹¹ Greet Herodion, my fellow Jew. Greet those in the household of Narcissus who are in the Lord.



Romans 16:3-15—cont'd.

¹² Greet Tryphena and Tryphosa, those women who work hard in the Lord.

Greet my dear friend Persis, another woman who has worked very hard in the Lord.

¹³ Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too.

¹⁴ Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas and the other brothers and sisters with them.

¹⁵ Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the Lord's people who are with them.

2 Taking It Inward (God, Teach Me!)

Which descriptions stand out the most to you? Write down three or four.

How many people are named? Take a minute to count the names and write the number below.

What does this list say to you about Paul's spiritual journey?

Paul had something insightful to say about each person. What does that say to you about his relationships?

What does this list say to you about your spiritual journey?

3 Putting Into Practice (God, Change Me!)

Take a minute to make a similar list as Paul's. Who are the people in your life who build you up spiritually? Write names down and then write a brief description as to how or why each person builds you up.

As you feel led over the next few days, take a moment to drop a note to people on your list. Thank them for their support in your faith journey.

Fold or Cut