

*Phoebe, commended by God for her service*

**A. WHY IS THIS SECTION IMPORTANT TO US TODAY:**

In chapter 16, Paul concludes his great theological treatise by giving us a glimpse of what the gospel is **to look like**,

**B. WHAT THE GOSPEL IS TO LOOK LIKE IN THE CHURCH:**

*It is to look like God's kind of love=***John 13:34-35**

Practically, what does this kind of love look like?

**IT LOOKS LIKE THE LIFE OF JESUS:**

***On the inside it looks like***

***On the outside it looks:***

**Gal. 5:22-23; 1 Cor. 13:4-8a**

**Matt. 20:28; Matt. 23:11**

Whenever the *love of God* captures a heart, serving is **always** the result=**1 Peter 4:10**

**B. WHAT CAN WE LEARN ABOUT SERVING FROM Romans 16:1-2**

He begins chapter 16 by commending a woman to the church in Rome.

For Paul to mention Phoebe in such a glowing way is highly instructive

it tells us about the significant place of women in the church  
 it tells us about the way men and women were to relate  
 it tells us about the value of women to God and to the gospel.  
 it tells us about the need for women's service in the church

**What does Paul say about Phoebe?**

*he highlights* her position in Christ and her practice in Christ.

**FIRST**, Phoebe is introduced as "our sister."

**Gal. 3:26-28;  
 James 2:1-4**

**SECOND**, she is a gentile convert to Christ

**THIRD**, she is called "a servant of the church..."

She was not just a servant in the general sense, but one whose service was in

particular areas of need.

*All who are **in Christ** are servants and our service is not to be generic, but specific in deeds in and out of the church.*

She served the poor, strangers, the leadership, children, man and women and her family with generous acts of love

**FOURTH**, she is from Cenchrea, the eastern harbor for Corinth where Paul stayed for 18 months.

**FIFTH**, she is a benefactor of many in her local church and also of Paul himself.

A benefactor was one who cared for and gave aid to others **at her own personal expense**

Her service to the brethren cost her something=

time, energy, money, sacrifice, and perhaps more.

*What did her help look like?*

she aided foreigners through her hospitality and financial help, even representing them with local officials when necessary.

She ministered to the poor and needy

Her heart was to serve whomever and however

Phoebe's service echos the words of **1 Peter 4** and **Eph.4** and **Heb. 13:1**

**SIXTH**, Phoebe carried Paul's letter to Rome.

She was completely trustworthy

In **VERSE TWO**, Paul makes a request of the church in Rome.

**FIRST**, Paul asks them to welcome Phoebe into their fellowship making her as welcome as their own members.

*Why should they receive someone they did not know="...in the Lord"*

**SECOND**, Paul asks them to assist her.

*Why should they assist her="...in the Lord" and she" has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well."*

Her acts of love for the church are to be "rewarded" =**2 Cor. 9:6; Matt. 5:7**

**C. WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO US THIS MORNING ABOUT BEING SERVANTS?**

Why is being a servant so important?

It shows the very heart of the Lord Jesus to serve the purposes of God:

**John 4:34**

*Being a servant is the highest form of service to God*

**James 4:10**

**IN THIS WAY WE SERVE THE LORD JESUS HIMSELF.**

**Matt. 25:34-40**

**Col. 3:24**

Phoebe could receive no greater honor or tribute than this commendation.

Why is Paul's commendation significant?

because the very heart of God is reflected in Paul's commendation.

This commendation is really God's statement of

what pleases Him,

what honors Him,

what glorifies Him.

Being a servant of the church and others, is our greatest calling and challenge.

**D. DO WE WANT TO RECEIVE GOD'S COMMENDATION?**

This morning I believe that the Lord desires us to recognize some Phoebe's in our midst,

I believe that the Lord desires to encourage all of us to strive for His commendation as we grow in our service to one another.

Who are some of the Phoebe's in this church?

Will we be commended by God?