## Romans Chapter 16 v 25 - 27

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[0:00] in this book. So from verse 17 to the end of chapter 16. I urge you brothers to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you've learned. Keep away from them for such people are not serving our Lord Christ but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people. Everyone has heard about your obedience so I'm full of joy over you but I want you to be wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan and your feet.

The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you. Timothy my fellow worker sends his greetings to you as do Lucius, Jason and Sosipeta my relatives. I Tertius who wrote down this letter greet you in the Lord.

Gaius whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy sends you his greetings. Erastus who is the city's director of public works and our brother Quartus send you their greetings.

Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God so that all nations might believe and obey him.

To the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ. Amen. As we come to the word let's just commit it to the Lord. Let's just pray together.

[1:58] Dear Lord as we come now to your word we pray that it will be a word that speaks to our hearts. That it will be a word that comes direct from you. That will teach us, instruct us, guide us and lead us on in that righteous life that you've called us to for those who serve you.

We ask all these things in Jesus name. Amen. Well probably like me you've seen lots of adverts on television for various things which include a group of men sitting down watching a sporting event, usually a football match.

And then somebody scores. What usually happens? Well if the adverts that I see, they all jump up and go wild if it's their team.

And hop around the settee and clap each other on the back. And they generally whoop it up and have a wonderful time. And all because somebody has kicked a ball that's that big through a huge goal which any idiot could hit.

So why is it that people get so worked up about these things? I was reminded this weekend of one occasion when that happened to me.

[3:24] But in rather unfortunate circumstances. I've been invited to go to a Middlesbrough match by someone who was a fanatic Middlesbrough supporter.

And the only reason I went was they were playing my team, Manchester United. And so I went along reluctantly but hoping that it would be a good result.

Of course it was. And my team scored in the second half first. They eventually scored five goals I think.

And well I wonder if you can imagine what happened. Because I'm in the stand with 20 or 30,000 Middlesbrough supporters.

Because I was going with my friend who was a Middlesbrough supporter. He had a season ticket in the Middlesbrough end. And my team scored. And in the stand there's dead silence.

[4:26] Apart from the fact of going, yes, yes. And then I suddenly realised and looked round. And all these people were looking daggers at me.

I'm not quite sure how I got out alive. But it's one of those things. But the reason I mention that is because one of the things I've observed over time as I've got older.

Is that when you get older. You tend to get. How should I say it. More. Sort of amenable to.

Having things affect you. So that they move you. And it can be something quite simple. Something that perhaps when you were younger. You didn't even give a thought. You would never get upset about it.

You would never be tearful about it. Or the other extreme. So joyful. And yet. As you get older. You know. You see it. You've all known people who as they got older.

[5:29] You know. They started to talk about some incident in their life. And the tears perhaps began to well up. As they remembered what happened. And they began to. To cry.

Or perhaps they began to smile. Or laugh. Because of something. That they remembered. Well I think. Tonight. I want you to think about something.

That's in the passage. That we read. And if I say. All that I'm going to be speaking about tonight. Is connected. With every reading. And every song.

And every prayer. That's been made. I wonder. What theme. You would come up with. Well I'm going to read you. Two.

Quotations. These are of people who are Christians. Who. Were about. To go to be with the Lord. The first one is.

[6:26] Of a man called Daniel Webster. This is what he said. As he was about to die. The great mystery. Is Jesus Christ. The gospel.

What would the condition of any of us be. If we had not the hope. Of immortality. Thank God. The gospel of Jesus Christ. Brought life.

And immortality. To light. And actually. I was quite worried this morning. Because. Frederick had a very similar passage. About the mystery. Of Jesus Christ.

And I thought. For one awful moment. That he was going to. Preach on the same topic. Fortunately. That wasn't the case. The second one is from.

Somebody. Perhaps you'll find more familiar. Than Daniel Webster. This was. Augustus Toplady. The hymn writer. What he said was this. The consolations of God.

[7:21] To such an unworthy wretch. Are so abundant. That he leaves me. Nothing to pray for. But a continuance of them. I enjoy heaven. I enjoy heaven. Already.

In my soul. And. I'm going to preach on what the Bible says. But. I really like that last phrase. That Augustus Toplady used.

I enjoy heaven. Already. In my soul. That's really. What connects. All of the readings.

All of the hymns. That. We've already sung. Tonight. Because. What I want to. Concentrate on. Is. The last. Two verses. Of.

Romans. Chapter 16. Well. Actually. Three verses. 25 to 27. Let's just read them. It says.

[8:17] Now to him. Who's able to establish you. By my gospel. And the proclamation. Of Jesus Christ. According to the revelation. Of the mystery. Hidden for long ages past.

But now revealed. And made known. Through the prophetic writings. By the command of the eternal God. So that all nations. Might believe and obey him. To the only wise God.

Be glory. Forever. Through Jesus Christ. Amen. Now you might think. When we read. Romans 16. That.

There are bits of this passage. That you didn't know really. Well. About all these people. That. Paul. Was greeting. And some of the things. Maybe that he said. But those. Three verses.

That I've just read. You will definitely. Have heard before. If you think about it. If you think for a moment. Where you would have heard them. It's because.

[9:12] Virtually. Every service. In every church. Around the country. Ends. With a verse. Similar to that. And the name. That's given.

To all of those verses. Is a doxology. Doxology. And. This one. Doesn't have the title. In that passage. In that passage. But others do. If you read through.

The scriptures. But a doxology. If you look it up. In the dictionary. It's. This is the definition. It gives. A doxology. Is a hymn. Or liturgy. Ascribing.

Glory to God. In other words. It's an outflowing. Of praise to God. An outflowing. Of praise to God. And all of the songs.

And all of the readings. That we've. Had tonight. Within them. Have had a form of doxology. In other words. This sense. Of an outflowing.

[10:08] Of praise. To God. God. And. Just thinking of it. Just comparing it.

It's a. Ridiculous. Comparison. But imagine. That. Supporter. Of a team. Who when his team scores. Jumps up.

And shouts. And goes and. Claps everybody on the back. With. A Christian. Who. Is in the company of others.

Perhaps who aren't Christians. Or sometimes even who are. And. You're singing a great hymn. Or reading. A great passage. And there's nothing.

There's no sign. Of. This. Sense. Of. An outflowing. Of praise. To God. Now you will say.

[11:08] Incorrectly. Well. There are times like that. Many people. When they're singing. Wesley's. Great hymn. And they sing. My chains fell off. My heart was free. Often you get a lump.

In your throat. You can barely sing it. And similarly. With some of the songs. That we sing. Written by Stuart Townend. And Keith Getty. But those.

Things. Are comparatively. Rare. Rare. And this is why this. Sort of statement. That Augusta's top lady made. Seemed to me.

To have the essence. Of what I want to talk about now. I enjoy heaven. Already. In my soul. I enjoy heaven.

Already. In my soul. In other words. While he was still on earth. He was experiencing. Heaven. In his soul. Well.

[12:02] Let me remind you. Of a few doxologies. That are in the Bible. This is just to show you. That you might have thought. There weren't many of them. But they are in fact.

All the way. Through the scriptures. We'll do it chronologically. I'll start with. One Chronicles. Yours O Lord is the kingdom.

You're exalted. As head over all. Wealth and honour. Come from you. You are the ruler. Of all things. In your hands. The strength. And power. To exalt. And give strength.

To all. And then. Of course. One of the greatest. Areas. Where you'll find. Lots of. These outflowings. Of praise. Of course. Is in the Psalms.

I'll just read you. A couple. I've got lots. Written down. But I'll just read two. I will bless the Lord. At all times. His praise. Shall continually be. My mouth.

[12:56] My soul. Will make its boast. In the Lord. The humble. Will hear it. And rejoice. Oh magnify. The Lord with me. And let us exalt. His name together.

That's Psalm. 34. And then. Psalm 148. Right at the end. Of the Psalms. Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. From the heavens.

Praise him. In the heights. Praise him. All his angels. Praise him. All his hosts. Praise him. Sun and moon. Praise him. All stars of light. Praise him. Highest heavens.

And the waters. That are above the heavens. Let them praise. The name of the Lord. For he commanded. And they were created. Then into.

Jeremiah. Oh sovereign Lord. You have made the heavens. And the earth. By your great power. Nothing. Is too hard for you. And then.

[13:51] Finally. In another of Paul's letters. In Ephesians. Chapter 1. Blessed be the God and Father. Of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who has blessed us. With every spiritual blessing.

In the heavenly places. In Christ. So there are just a few. Doxologies. But I want us. This evening. To focus. On that one.

That's. Just been read. In Romans. Chapter 16. And I'm using. Three headings. Taken. From the words. That are used. In those particular verses.

And these are my headings. First one. A work established. By God. Second. A mystery revealed. Through Christ. And the third.

A wise God's. Command. So let's look at these. To focus. Our thoughts. First is a work. Established. By God.

[14:49] It says. In. The first of those verses. That we read. Now to him. Who is able to establish you. By my gospel. And the proclamation.

Of Jesus. According to the revelation. Of the mystery. Hidden. Long ages past. You must have seen. Shops. Perhaps in a. An old market town.

Where above the door. It's got. Established. 1863. And still trading. Because. If something is established.

It has the sense. Of permanence. I won't ask you. To put your hands up. Could get quite emotional. But. When.

I think about that. I think about. Woolworths. In Whitby closing. Woolworths. Was never. Ever. Going to close. I thought. Woolworths. Was there forever.

[15:44] It was established. It was firm. It was Woolworths. It would never close down. But of course. It did. Because of the economic climate. But. What.

This passage is saying. Is exactly. What. We would have thought. Maybe about. Some of the so-called. Institutions. That. We thought of.

As being. Permanent. Fixed. Immovable. Kath and I. Were just thinking about. One the other day. We were driving around. Teesside. And we were passing. Where ICI was.

ICI was the greatest. Success story. In the history of. British. You know. Chemical industry. It's gone. It's gone.

And so many. That we could think of. They're now gone. But here's the point. Any work. Established by God. The word says.

[16:42] Is established. And firm. It has that. Sense of. Permanence. Not just for. Now. Now. But for. Eternity. Here's a question for you.

I'll answer. You don't need to answer. But. What is this work. That God. Has established. If you had to.

Explain to somebody. Who never. Heard about. The Christian life. Heard about. The gospel. Read anything. From the Bible. What is God's work.

What would you say. Well. Surely. God's work. As it starts. The word of God with.

Is. The creation. God. God. Created the world. And we just had a bit of a clip. From Wayne Gruden. The other day. Which said. When God. Finally made man.

[17:40] That was the pinnacle. Of his creative work. He made. Men. And women. In his own image. He made people.

Who were capable. Of thought. And understanding. And being able to make decisions. And plan. And do things. Is that no animal. No other created being.

Could. Because we were made. In God's image. Some people interpreted that. As Wayne Gruden. Saying that. We're all. Like God. He didn't say that.

He just said. There were similarities. Very pale. Very faded. Similarities. Compared with what God is. But nevertheless. God.

Is. A creator. God is the one. Who created the world. God is the one. Who created us. And. He established. His work. Let's just see that.

[18:37] In a few other. Places. Psalm 93. In describing. The world. The physical creation. Our planet. Says this. The world is.

Firmly established. It cannot be moved. Your throne. Referring to. The Lord Jesus. Ultimately. Was established. Long ago. You are from.

All eternity. That's what this word. Firm. And established. Means. When he was. Explaining to Noah.

The significance. Of the rainbow. That appeared. At the time of the flood. He said. This is a sign. Of the covenant. I've established. Between me.

And all life. On the earth. So when God. Makes a covenant. With his people. When he makes. Any promise. To his people.

[19:32] It's firm. It's established. And it's established. For eternity. God never. Goes back. On his covenant. God never.

Goes back. On his promises. He always. Carries them. Through. So why should we. Praise God.

The Father. The Son. And the Holy Spirit. Why should we. Praise God. Why should we. Present this.

Doxology. Before him. This outpouring. Of praise. Well if it's not. Evident. By now. In all that we've said. Then it's unlikely. That we're going to get it.

Any clearer. For the rest. Of this evening. But surely. It's because. This passage. Tells us. That God is the only. One. Who can establish.

[20:26] Us. He's the only one. Who can save us. We're his creation. He's the only one. Who can do anything. With us. In there.

In our heart. That's surely. Why. Top lady said. That what. God has. Work. That if you like. The completion. Of the work. In his heart. Was that.

He was enjoying heaven. Already. In his soul. What a wonderful. Proclamation. About. What his thoughts were.

As he came. To join God's kingdom. But there's another aspect. To this. Because it says. That this. Establishment. It says.

Is established. By the gospel. In accordance. With the gospel. So it's not just. That we're established. That we're fixed.

[21:23] That we're firm. And that. For eternity. But it's all. In accordance. With the gospel. Well let me just. Remind you. What Paul says. Is the gospel.

According to him. And he says. It in different ways. In different letters. I've picked. The one. That comes from. Colossians chapter one. Here's what Paul says.

As a summary. Of this gospel. That he says. He's been proclaiming. And that others. Also. Have been proclaiming. The son. Is the image.

Of the invisible God. The firstborn. Over all creation. For in him. All things were created. Things in heaven. And on earth.

Visible. And invisible. Whether thrones. Or powers. Or rulers. Or authorities. All things. Have been created. Through him.

[22:17] Through him. And for him. He is before all things. And in him. All things hold together. And he's the head of the body. The church. He's the beginning.

And the firstborn. From among the dead. So that in everything. He might have the supremacy. For God was pleased. To have all his fullness. Dwell in him. And through him.

To reconcile to himself. All things. Whether things on earth. Or things in heaven. By making peace. Through his blood. Shed on the cross. Once you were alienated from God.

And were enemies. In your minds. Because of your evil behavior. But now. He's reconciled you. By Christ's physical body. Through death. To present you. Holy in his sight.

Without blemish. And free from all accusation. If you continue your faith. Established. And firm. And do not move from the hope.

[23:15] Held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard. And that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven. And of which I Paul. Have become.

A servant. Surely. This was the work of God. The work. That necessitated Christ. Coming into this world for. That we could be reconciled.

To a God. Who. Tells us that. Before we become Christians. We were at enmity with him. We hated him. We hated God. We hated. Everything that he stood for.

Because. In our eyes. Perhaps. He sought to control our lives. We didn't realize. That we were so trapped by sin. That we actually needed to escape from that.

And to be saved. And yet despite that. God enabled. This. Way of salvation. To be made. And so.

[24:15] This is summarized. In Romans. But a bit early. In chapter 9. Verse 16. Paul is reminding. The people of. All these things. And he says this.

Slightly out of context. But. It does nevertheless. Talk to the same issue. It says. It does not therefore depend. On man's desire. Or effort.

But on God's. Mercy. No one. Can save themselves. Only God can do it. Many people in this world.

Say they don't need God. Because. They're good people. The Bible says. No. That's wrong. We're all sinful people. Some people say. Well if I do that.

If I do this. Good work. If I do that. Good work. That will save me. The Bible says. No. Good works. Don't save you. The Bible says. There is only one way.

[25:12] Of being saved. And that is through. Trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ. As Savior. And it's God. As part of his. Work. In establishing the world.

And establishing his kingdom. That he puts. In the heart. Of men and women. That. Faith. That is needed. To turn. And be saved.

So this first element. Then. Of a doxology. And the reason why. Men and women. Can cry out. This wonderful. Sort of outpouring.

Of praise. And glory to God. Is the fact. That they have understood. For the first time. What God. Has done. In sending his son.

To be our Savior. In dying on the cross. And being raised. From the dead. They perhaps see. For the first time. What God's.

[26:11] Mercy. Is. And they realize. That they contributed. Absolutely nothing. To that. God. We've touched on the second.

Already. A mystery revealed. Through Christ. The mystery. That he's talking about. Of course. Is this one. That God.

Would redeem his people. Who constantly. Sin against him. By sending his own son. To die on the cross. For our sin. And be raised from the dead. To restore our relationship. With God.

Our father. That's amazing. It's awesome. Sometimes. When people use the word. Amazing and awesome. These days. It's not really that amazing.

It's not really that awesome. But that is. Isn't it. That we. Who are enemies of God. We're actually fighting against God. Resisting him. Not believing in him.

[27:07] Not accepting that he was our creator. Even though he made us. And yet. God. Was still. Desiring. To restore the relationship.

That he once had. With those. Whom he created. That is. Awesome. And yet. It was an open secret. Anybody. Anybody. Has read through the Old Testament.

Can find countless examples. Of descriptions. Of the Christ. Who was to come. The Messiah. The one who would come. Is described in. Perfect detail.

Even in terms of. How his clothes would be. Shared out. Amongst the people afterwards. Even how he would enter. Jerusalem. Coming on a donkey. And all of the details.

That led into the story. They were all there. It was an open secret. Anybody can read these things. And yet. As we know. People. Said.

[28:05] We don't understand. Where is this Christ? Where is this Messiah? And to this day. The Jews are still waiting. Even though. We know that the Lord.

Has already come. This is what the Lord says about it. In Isaiah 45. I have not spoken in secret. From somewhere in the land of darkness. In other words.

It's been proclaimed by the prophets. It's been proclaimed by. Some of the kings. Like David and others. And it's there for all to see. It's nothing that's been done in secret.

It's completely open. But in Isaiah it also says. A bit later in chapter 52. For what they were not told. They will see.

What they've not heard. They will understand. The Bible tells us that one day. When the Lord comes again. Everyone.

[29:03] Not Christians this time. Everyone. Will realize. That God is God. Everyone will realize. That the Lord Jesus Christ.

Was the one who came to save. But sadly. For some. That will be too late. One of the saddest things I've found. That in. Looking up some of these. Statements that men.

Made. On their deathbeds. It also gave some. Who were people who were atheists. And many of them were saying. Well I now realize. That God is God.

And that I'm a sinner. But it was too late. And they're crying out in anguish. Knowing. That they don't have. That relationship. With God.

And that whole passage. In Isaiah 52. Is all about Christ. The servant who would come. The fact that. People would look on him. And not account him anything.

[30:01] The fact that he would be. A sacrifice. A sacrifice. But the amazing thing. Is that what the world. Doesn't understand. The Lord.

Has revealed. To those who are Christians. In their heart. The Lord has planted. That seed of faith. Which then. Blossoms.

And they understand. That Jesus Christ. Is their saviour. And they turn. To him. So there's another aspect. Of a doxology.

That we praise God. Because our hearts. And minds. Have been opened by God. So that we can. Praise him. Can you actually praise God.

Without believing. And knowing him. Surely. Not. And we know that. People. Don't.

[30:58] This is why it was described. As a mystery. And yet. The Bible tells us. That that mystery. Has been revealed. To us. By God. And the final aspect.

Of this particular doxology. And many others. I've got a wise God's. Command. Look at that last. Verse.

That we read. Now reveal the main note. Through the prophetic writing. The command of the eternal God. So that all nations might believe. And obey him. To the only wise God.

Be glory. Forever. Through Jesus Christ. Amen. If you were. Talking to someone.

Who just. Become a new Christian. And you were trying to give them. Advice. On how to go on. In the Christian life. There might be.

[31:54] All sorts of things. That you tell them. But here. In this particular verse. This wise God. The one who knows all things.

The one who knows. Every hair on our head. The one who knows. Every thought that we think. The one. Who understands. More about us. Than we understand.

About ourselves. Gives us just two things. Here. That if we. Obey them. Then. We'll find. That the Christian.

Walk. Is made so much easier. And those two things. Are. That we should. Believe. And that we should. Obey him.

Believe. And obey him. So this is. Something. Which. Is open to every believer. Something which we're all.

[32:50] Commanded to do. By God. Romans. In this passage. Tells us. That this mystery. Has now been revealed. So these things. Have been. Revealed to us. And when. We become Christians.

We understand. That we're to obey God. And we understand. That in order to. Obey him. We need to. Believe in him.

How simple it is. To explain. But how complicated. To live out. In our lives. Believe in God.

And obey him. We know that the world. Is always coming up. With new laws. With new systems. In theory.

To create. A better world. Let me just read you. What. God's already done. And Psalm 19 reports. The law.

[33:46] The law. The law. Is perfect. It doesn't need. Any new laws. God's law. Is perfect. Refreshing. The soul. The statutes.

Of the law. Are trustworthy. Making wise. The simple. The precepts. Of the law. Are right. Giving joy. To the heart. The commands. Of the law. Are radiant. Giving light.

To the eyes. The fear. Of the Lord. Is pure. Enduring forever. The decrees. Of the Lord. Affirm. And all of them. Are righteous.

So it's helpful. To know. What God. Has commanded us. To do. So that we can. Be obedient. And again. It can be summed up.

In so many different ways. We're just going to focus. On one. This evening. John chapter 13. Verses 34 and 35. This was.

[34:42] The new. Covenant. If you like. That began when Jesus. Came into this world. And here's what. Jesus said. A new command. I give you.

Love one another. As I have loved you. So you must love. One another. By this. Everyone will know. That you are my disciples. If you love.

One another. Come on. Be honest. Look round. Do we really. Love one another. As God.

Has loved us. As Christ. Has loved us. Well if we. We're honest with one another. We might like one another. From time to time.

We might demonstrate love. Love to one another. But. God is asking. For more. He's saying. As I have loved you. So you must love.

[35:41] One another. What a perfect church. It would be. When the Christians. Went across. To America. And they founded. Philadelphia. It was a city. Of brotherly love. Philadelphia.

Philadelphia. And if we look back. On. The old. Testament. Going into the new. Testament. Particularly when we get to. Acts. It said. All the believers.

Were together. In all things. And that they were. First called Christians. Remember. Antioch. Why? Because people knew.

By their love. For one another. That they were. Followers. Of Christ. So the Lord's life. His death. His resurrection. Is a demonstration.

Of the depth. Of God's love. For us. And this is the final element. In a doxology. That we praise God. For his everlasting love. Because the Bible tells us.

[36:37] That we can never. Be separated. From the love of God. Whatever humanly. We might feel. And however far away. From God. We might feel. From time to time.

The Bible. Is clear. We can never be separated. From the love of God. And you remember. That when the Lord. Left his disciples. He commissioned them.

To go out. And tell people. About himself. And this is what he said to them. I'll be with you always. To the very end. Of the age.

Well. Just think about it. For a moment. And think about that. Quote. From. Top lady.

That we had at the start. I enjoy heaven. Already. In my soul. Surely. If we. Trust in Christ.

[37:33] If we understand. What he's done for us. In saving us. From all the ravages. Of sin. And saved us. To be a part of his eternal kingdom.

Firmly established. Forever. Then you can understand. Why. He would say those things. That he. It was in his heart.

God. And you know something. Always. If it's in your heart. Whatever it is. You can look at people.

And you just know it. Because it can't be contained. Because it can't be contained. Our love. For God. Can't be contained. It has to burst out.

In praise. It comes through our prayers. It comes as we sing. Our hymns. It comes as we read the word. Because in every word.

[38:30] That we read. In the scriptures. It's reminding us. Of all that God. Has done for us. And surely. The culmination of that. Is when we. Come to the Lord's table.

When we have. Communion. Where we. Told to remember. What happened on the cross. And how. Christ gave his life. For us. Surely.

That would stimulate us. To cry out. In praise. To God. You know. When you have a. Prayer meeting. And we.

Pray. We pray for many. Many things. And some of them. Are quite ordinary. And some. Are for people. Who are ill. Which is natural.

And there's. Various situations. In the world. As we've just been praying. About persecuted Christians. But you are someone to. Praise God. There can be a deafening silence.

[39:28] And yet. This should come. Out of our hearts. So the. Injunction of these verses. And of people.

Like top lady. Who gave voice. To what he was feeling. In his soul. Let's learn. From God. This evening. To let our voices. Be raised.

To praise God. Continually. For all that. He's done for us. So that. His name. Will be glorified. In all the earth.

So whenever we read. A doxology. Just remember. That's coming from the heart. And soul. Of a born again Christian.

Seeing the. Immensity of God. In his creative work. And what he's done. To draw us to himself. Who could fail. To sing out.

[40:24] With praise. Giving glory. And honor. To God. Amen.