*Northwest Bible Church – Oct. 23, 2005                 Worship Service – Alan Conner***Rom. 16:3-16***Greetings for Paul’s Coworkers*

**INTRO**      
  
**A. PERSONAL GREETINGS**    In many ways this section is like a mini Heb. 11. A majority of the names are Gentile, and many of these names are typical names of slaves or freedmen. The key word is “greet” - 16x’s.   
  
1) Individuals that are greeted (3-15).  
      
    Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus (3-5).   
Paul met them on his second missionary journey (Acts 18:2), they shared the same trade, and he stayed with them and they traveled and ministered with him. Paul left them at Ephesus (18:18). Later they return to Rome and are there ministering when Paul writes this letter from Corinth during his third missionary journey.   
  
There is debate as to why Prisca is mentioned first in four of the places that this husband and wife team are mentioned (Acts 18:18, 26;here; 2 Tim. 4:19).  
  
They also risked their own necks for Paul’s life.   
          
There was also a church in their house.   
          
    Epaenetus (5) – beloved, first convert to Christ from Asia Minor (Turkey).   
  
Mary (6) - a hard worker for the church in Rome. Five women were noted for their “labor” in the Lord (vv. 3, 6, 12).   
  
Andronicus and Junias (7) – my kinsmen (fellow jews), fellow prisoners, meaning they too were incarcerated for their faith at some time in their life. Some suggest that Junias is a women but probably better viewed as a man.   
          
But what does “outstanding among the apostles” mean?  
           
    Ampliatus (8) - my beloved in the Lord. A common name for slaves or freedman.   
  
    Urbanus and Stachys (9) - Urbanus is probably a slave/freedman.   
  
    Apelles, the approved in Christ (10) – The word “approved” refers to something that has been tested and found to be genuine, acceptable and approved, such as gold and silver tested by fire and found to be pure and genuine. His faith was greatly tested and triumphed.  
    Those who are of Aristobulus (10) – Those greeted are either members of his household including slaves. Some reputable commentators have suggested that Aristobulus may have been the grandson of Herod the Great and brother of Agrippa I who lived and died in Rome (A.D. 48-49) as a private citizen and the plausibility of this is increased by the following reference to Herodion in v. 11, probably a slave from Herod’s household.  
          
    Those of Narcissus (11) – Name of a well-known freedman who served the Emperor Claudius and who committed suicide just before Paul wrote Romans (Tacitus, Ann. 31:1). Those greeted were members of his household.  
  
    Tryphaena and Tryphosa (12) - sisters or twins? Probably slaves or freedwomen.  
  
    Persis (12) - “the beloved” rather than like the previous “my beloved” which indicates that she was loved by everyone who knew her and who had also worked hard in the Lord. The past tense (contrast present tense with the twins) may indicate that she is an older woman whose most productive years of service was behind her.  
  
    Rufus, a choice man in the Lord (13) – In Mark 15:21 there is a man called Simon of Cyrene who helped Christ carry his cross and he is said to have two sons, Alexander and Rufus. Many commentators believe that this Rufus is one of the sons of Simon of Cyrene.   
  
“A choice man in the Lord” -   
  
        Rufus’s mother is described by Paul as “his mother and mine.”   
  
    Two house churches (vv. 14-15). The men listed may have been leaders in these churches.  
  
    Pagan names - Hermes (14), Olympas (15), Phoebe (1), Apollos.   
           
  
2) Greet one another with a holy kiss (16) –  
  
3) All the churches of Christ greet you (16) –  
  
  
**CONCLUSION**  
    1) Paul was not a lone-ranger.  
    2) Women play an important role in the early church      
    3) The great value of the ministry of greeting.  
    4) Strive in a godly way to have a name which speaks of service and love to Christ.