

## Romans 16:3-12

By Louis T. Talbot

Louis T. Talbot:

And thank you Mr. Announcer and good morning my radio friends and friends of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. This is Louis T. Talbot greeting and welcoming you to another study in God's world.

And I want you all to please turn your Bibles to Romans chapter 16. I do not know what my voice sounds like over the radio. It sounds like a [inaudible] and a bullfrog to me. But I trust that if it's hoarse that you will forget all about that and become occupied with that wonderful portion of the Word of God that we are studying these days in regard to the obscure Saints of God. You know that for a few weeks we made a study of obscure texts. That is, obscure in the sense that many of God's people do not know them, wonderful texts, texts that are just as wonderful As John 3:16 or Romans 8:28. And then there are other, there are names in the word of God that are just as obscure as the texts that we were talking about. And it's a good thing in view of the fact that we are making a study of the obscure texts that we now spend a little time in making a study of the obscure Saints of God. And you know that the wonderful thing is that I guessed that this takes in that greater number of all of us that are connected with this radio ministry. I don't suppose that many of us get our names in the newspapers or all that any of the news broadcasters make any reference to anything that we do. But my dear friends it's a wonderful thing to note that the Lord God has recorded these texts in regard to obscure saints

that we might know that anything that you do for the Lord, even just loving him, is something that is recorded in heaven.

Now I speak this morning and every morning as a representative of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles faculty and students and you know that this school is a place where hundreds of young men and young women are being carried to, young women that are being trained to carry the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth. Of course all of you folks in radio land are a part of this school and of the Bible institute family. We want you to consider yourself as such and because that's how we consider all of you folks.

Now your Bibles are open please at Romans Chapter 16 and I want to make one or two very brief announcements before we take up the study where we left off yesterday. There came to me by telephone yesterday morning the announcement of the death of Mrs. Lucy R. Redmond who was associated with the Bible Institute of Los Angeles the Church of the Open Door for many years. When I arrived in the city of Los Angeles in 1932, to assume the pastorate at the Church of the Open Door, Mrs. Redmond was in charge of the church office and she was the first one as far as I am able to remember, she was the first one to greet me. That is as among the officials of the church. Then after she had labored for some years in the church of the open door, she became connected with the family of the king's business as one of the staff members' official publication of the Bible Institute. Mrs. Redmond was 84 years of age and she lived a very useful life. You know that she had a grandson and during my pastorate of the Church the Open Door every Sunday night we had a large orchestra run. Mrs. Redman's grandson, just a little shaver, he used to play an instrument that was about as big as he was. And he took a great interest in it and I had something to do with that grandson's acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ. And you know that you'll be interested my dear friends to know that that little shaver is now a grown up man

and that he is one of the honored preachers of the Presbyterian Church. An outstanding man and God is using him in a marked way. I'll have the privilege of seeing him on Friday because that is the time when the funeral service is going to be held at the week of the Heather in Forest Lawn. And I'll have the privilege not only of saying a few words in regard to the wonderful life of Mrs. Redmond but also seeing this young fellow that I knew just as a little boy.

Now just one other word, this is Wednesday and all of you folks I trust will be in your churches for the prayer meeting night. If there was ever a time when God's people need to pray, it is the day in which we are living. And we need to pray for kings and rulers and for all those who are in authority and the Apostle Paul also tells us to pray for all men, that is all classes of men. I get some strange questions that are sent to my desk. For instance a little while ago somebody asked me whether there is any scripture that warns us to pray for unconverted people. Well you know that the Apostle Paul in writing to Timothy states that we are to pray for kings and for rulers and for all men. Well of course the all men would include saved men and unsaved men and sick folks and well folks and everybody. It takes in the whole human race and God knows better than we what their need is. And so I trust my dear friends that all of you folks will be in your church prayer meeting tonight.

Now this is all the announcements that I have to make except that next Friday and every Friday night there will be the festival of music and films at the new auditorium that we have in La Mirada. I also feel that I should make that next week that I will not be in the city of Los Angeles because I have been scheduled for some months to conduct a Bible conference in the Central Bible Church in Portland Oregon of which doctor John Mitchell is the pastor. And I will be giving some addresses at the Multnomah School of the Bible. You know that Mrs. Talbot is in the hospital and I was talking these matters over with her and you know that she wanted me to

keep these engagements and go along in the work of the Lord just as I would if she were not in the hospital at all. And so she will be praying for me while I am in Portland. You know that the Multnomah School of the Bible has always been very friendly with the Bible Institute of Los Angeles and Dr. John Mitchell, the pastor of the Central Bible Church of that city is one of the closest and the most valued friends that I have the privilege of knowing.

Alright now let us go on with our study. We have been making a study of course of these obscure saints and the first two names that are mentioned by the Apostle Paul in the sixteenth chapter of Romans are Phoebe and Priscilla. And I pointed out to you yesterday that Phoebe evidently was the woman who carried this Roman epistle to the city of Rome to be placed in the hands of the Christians there. And before we go along with the study where we left off yesterday, I'd like you to observe my friends that among these Christians mentioned as being in Rome, but Peter's name is not listed among them. In other words if Peter was in Rome and had been the founder of the church in Rome as many believe then the Apostle Paul would certainly have sent greetings to him. And if he was at Rome it is very strange that Paul knew absolutely nothing about it. I might say in passing that there is not a scintilla of evidence that Peter was ever in Rome.

The Roman Church was founded by Christians like Phoebe and Priscilla and Aquila and others who had journeyed there from Corinth and other places where the Apostle Paul had carried on his missionary journey. And that was the wonderful thing my dear friends about those early Christians. That is that they went everywhere preaching the gospel. The Apostle Paul writes to the Thessalonians and tells them that wherever he went that he had heard, that he had met people who had come to know the Lord Jesus Christ through the Ministry of those Thessalonians. And it is evident that the Church at Rome was founded by Christians like all of

you folks who are listening to me this morning. And that is how many of the early churches were founded.

It was just this as something I just mentioned this dear friends, just in passing as we think of the church in Rome. Paul himself had not been to Rome at this time neither had Peter nor Paul founded the Church of Rome. As I said a moment ago it was founded by the converts that the Lord had given to the Apostle Paul. And so in that sense Paul had more to do with the founding of the church at Rome than Peter. Peter had absolutely nothing to do with it but the Apostle Paul had gone into Asia Minor and preaching the gospel and those converts that the Lord had given to the Apostle Paul went everywhere preaching the gospel and some of them had gone to Rome. My dear friends isn't it a wonderful thing that right under the nose of Nero the Christian church was flourishing as it was in Corinth and Ephesus And Philippi and all the other places where the Apostle Paul's message was heralded.

The fact of the matter is that in the Epistle of Paul to the Thessalonians, I think it is in Thessalonians or is it in Philippians, but in one of the other Epistles we learn that there were a bunch of Christians in Caesar's household because when the Apostle Paul was writing a letter he says, "Those who are in Caesar's household salute you." My dear friends how in the world did they ever get into Caesar's household? Well, you know that the early Christians had one burden on their heart and mind. They had one objective in life and that was to carry the gospel to the utter-most parts of the earth so that some of them took it their own and some of the converts were to be found in Caesar's household. It'll be a wonderful thing my dear friends when we get to heaven and we meet all these folks that are mentioned here in the 16th chapter of Romans and all through the New Testament.

Alright Now I want you to look please at Romans Chapter 16 and verse 3. This is where we concluded yesterday, "Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus who have laid down their own necks under whom not only I give thanks but also all the churches of the Gentiles." Now I pointed out to you yesterday that these two people, Priscilla and Aquila, had evidently put their lives in jeopardy and doubtless saved Paul's life in some of the trials through which he passed. You know that the Apostle Paul was in shipwrecks and he was stoned and he was beaten and he spent a great deal of time in jail and there was some experience that he had and if it hadn't been for these two people, Priscilla and Aquila that his life would have been terminated. You know that we'll just have to wait until we get to heaven to find out in what way they put their lives in jeopardy for the Apostle Paul. But it must have been something outstanding that they did because Paul says that all the gentile churches gave thanks to God because of what these two people did in the way of saving the life of the Apostle Paul.

Alright now let us go down to verse 5 and note a few others of these obscure saints, I trust that I am able to pronounce the names of these folks correctly. In verse 5 and 6, "Likewise greet the church that is in their house." You know that back there in those days the believers just met together in the houses. They called in the neighbors and some of the neighbors came to know the Lord and they had the churches gathered in that way. I sometimes wonder my dear friends whether it has been a great mistake to build the churches the way we have as we have it today because back there in those days they just meant in believer's houses. And wouldn't it be a wonderful thing upon the Lord's Day if there were thousands and thousands of houses in the city of Los Angeles that were open and where some ten or fifteen or twenty of the Lord's people gathered together to worship. Now that is how the worship was carried on back there in those days.

And so the Apostle Paul says, "Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my well-beloved Epaenetus, who is the first fruits of Achaia unto Christ." He was the first fruits of Asia. In other words when the Apostle Paul went into Asia on that missionary journey, the first one to come to know the Lord Jesus Christ was this man Epaenetus, and the Apostle Paul calls him the well beloved. You know that he was a kind of fellow that everybody loved. I wish my dear friends that that was true of all of us. You know that some of us are known as a fairly good Bible teachers and preachers. But you know it's a wonderful thing my dear friends to live in such a way so that folks love you. They not only like to hear you preach, but they love you. And this man, Epaenetus, was evidently there was something about him my dear friends that folks admired and folks loved. I do trust that that is true of you my dear friend. I do trust that a lot of folks don't say of you that you get around with your nose up in the air and it's very hard to reach you and that when you go to church that you give folks the brush off. You know it's a wonderful thing to have people say that other folks love you. And that was true of this man Epaenetus. You know that the Apostle Paul does not say anything about him being a great Bible teacher or a great preacher. We thank God for every great Bible teacher and every great evangelist and so on. But you know that this man Epaenetus did not fall in that category at all. He just went into, He just went about you know in a way just scattering sunshine wherever he went and people just loved him. And he was the first fruits of Paul's ministry in Asia under Christ.

And then the Apostle Paul says, "Greet Mary who bestowed much labor on us." Now this Mary is not Mary the mother of Jesus. And it is she was not the same Mary as we know in the Gospels as Mary Magdalene. She was another Mary all together and all that the Apostle Paul says about her is that she bestowed much Labor on her. Now whenever God uses words of that kind, my dear friends, it has a meaning. And Paul says that she bestowed much labor on us that is

on Paul and his associates. I do not know what this label was; we'll just have to wait until we get to heaven. I guess that when Paul came to preach that she went down the street and rang the doorbells if they had doorbells in those days. But she bestowed labor on the Apostle Paul. Now Mark you my dear friend, here is another woman, here is another woman mentioned and another helper of the Apostle Paul. I do not know how the Apostle Paul would have gotten along unless he had all of these women that were backing him. I don't suppose that he had so many men but it's remarkable to note as I pointed out yesterday the number of women whose names shine like bright stars on the pages of the word of God. And all of you women who are listening to me I trust that your names can be fitted in here somewhere. You know that God has recorded all these names my dear friends in order that you might emulate them. I trust that all of you men, you know that you will remember what Paul says about this Epaenetus, that is he was the well beloved. And then this Mary she bestowed much labor.

Then I want your eye to go down now to verse twelve where the Apostle Paul introduces us to a bunch of others that were associated with him. Look at verse twelve, "Salute Tryphena," I do trust that I get his name correct. When I get to heaven I'll be able to pronounce that possibly correctly if I haven't pronounced it correctly now. But I want you to note Paul says, "Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa who labored in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis." Now here is another one of God's people that people just loved. You know that I think that this man Persis, like Epaenetus, I think that they were the kind of fellows that went through church with a with an oil can and whenever there was any trouble and you know that they would just go around and speak a few words that were just to a situation what a few drops of water is to A machine. You know that you always have some folks in the church you know and they seem to take a great delight in throwing a number of monkey wrenches into the machinery. Well it's a wonderful thing my dear

friends to have a few men like Persis around, "The beloved Persis who bestowed much labor in the Lord."

Now you'll note that in verse 5 it says that that Mary bestowed much labor on the Apostle Paul. And then in verse 12 we read that Persis bestowed much labor in the Lord. That is that they labored much, my dear friend that's hard work. That is that they not only worked for the Lord but they had hard work. And you know that there is a difference my dear friends in some kind of work that the Lord gives to people. For instance I want you to make a note of 1 Thessalonians chapter 1 verse 3. And if you have a pencil and a paper just put that down will you because I want you to note the different kinds of work that the Lord gives to people. 1 Thessalonians chapter 1 verse 3 because it reads on this wise, "Remembering without ceasing, your work of faith and labor of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus." Now you're not my dear friends that that there are two kinds of works there. There is the work of faith and there is the labor of love and both carried on in the patience of hope in the coming of the Lord. Do you notice my dear friends those two expressions, the work of faith and the labor of love? You know it is love that Labors. You know that there is a labor of love that is really a hard work and there is a work of faith that is really hard work.

Sometimes God gives to a man a work of faith. That is, just to receive the Lord Jesus Christ and he does that work. Sometimes it is altogether different. Sometimes God gives you some hard work to do and you know that that is a difference. I mean this that there is the difference between the work of faith and the work of love. I might illustrate it in this way. You know that Livingston whom I referred to yesterday went to open Africa to the gospel. He toiled and he built boats and he worked to have the native men in the heart of the jungles of Africa. He labored to find somebody who could understand him. He went up and down the rivers and

stopped in villages and tried to get in touch with somebody who could understand him and make the language known to him so that he could preach the gospel to the people. and he toiled and he toiled, 12, 14, 16 hours a day sick with fevers and often in a stormy stream his boat would be turned upside down and he'd lose all of his supplies and then for days streaking through the forest and living on just what the forest provided. That is the wild fruit and so on until he came to a base of supply. And his life my dear friend was a life of toil until he was worn to nothing. And going into his tent one night he knelt down to pray but he never got up. And you know that his black servants outside, they said one to another, "Our master is praying a long time to day." And then after a while they pulled the door of the tent aside and there they found Livingston on his knees but he had there and he had just worn himself out in labor for the Lord. And he had given every ounce of strength for the opening of Africa to the gospel.

Now my dear friends that is a work of labor; But you know that there is a work of faith and the Lord gave the work of faith to George Mueller and he used the illustration of God giving a work of faith to a man. You know that George Mueller did not do what David Livingston did. He did not go up rivers and fight mosquitoes and everything that is in a dense, uncultivated jungle. He didn't do any hard work at all along that line. What he had to do my dear friend was to believe hard. He had a work of faith and he had to labor that. My friends he did not work hard but he believed hard. And every day he had to trust the Lord for two thousand orphans and sometimes rising in the morning with no breakfast to give to the children that were gathered together without breakfast and no food to put on the table. And George Mueller two hours before would be on his knees. And my dear friend his faith was a labor, that is it was hard. He worked hard at faith. And you know that often times it's wonderful to read his life how that sometimes just a half an hour, just as all the kids were coming down all those orphans to sit at the table for

their breakfast and there was no breakfast to put on the table, no milk and no porridge, no mush no nothing. Not even bread and yet often times there would drive them, up to the orphanage, a great milk wagon with a hundred quarts of milk and a Baker would come along with five hundred loaves of bread. My dear friend, in order to accomplish that he had to believe hard.

Now if you go back to those two texts that we were looking at, you will, that is in 1 Thessalonians Chapter 1 verse 3; you will find that the apostle speaks about a work of faith and a labor our love. Livingston was given the labor of love And Mueller was given the work of faith. And I want to tell you brother that both kinds of work are hard business.

Well my time is up. Thank you for listening and tune in tomorrow and the Lord richly bless you all.

Announcer:

You just listened to Dr. Louis T. Talbot, Chancellor of Bible Institute of Los Angeles. Listen each day Monday through Friday for a verse by verse study of the Bible.