

Series: Community and Diversity; Sermon: **Unity around the Gospel**
Delivered by: **Dr. Josh Moody**, senior pastor; Date: **February 5, 2017**

Bible text explored: Romans 16:17–27

¹⁷I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. ¹⁸For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. ¹⁹For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. ²⁰The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

²¹Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my kinsmen.

²²I Tertius, who wrote this letter, greet you in the Lord.

²³Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

²⁵Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages ²⁶but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith—
²⁷to the only wise God be glory forevermore through Jesus Christ! Amen. [ESV]

Review and application:

1. How (*Rom. 1:16-17*) had Paul introduced the subject of his lengthy letter?
How (*Rom. 15:15-16*), near its close, did he summarize his motivation for writing it?
2. After a warm commendation and greetings in this closing section, why did Paul feel a compelling need (v. 17-19) to appeal to the Roman believers to stand firm?
What experiences of Paul may have led him to warn of the deception for which they should be watching? (See Gal. 1:6-7; 4:17; 6:12; Col. 2:8; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3-5.)
What are ways in which opponents of the full-orbed gospel serve their own appetites?
How did Paul advise responding to such people? (See also Matt. 18:15-17; Titus 3:9-10.)
3. What about the faith of the Roman Christians causes Paul to rejoice?
To what deception is he concerned they may succumb?
Paul mirrors Jesus advice to the Twelve (in *Matt 10:16*) about being wise as serpents but innocent as doves. When can innocence as to what is evil result in naïveté?
4. Pastor Moody singled out several forms of deception we face. What flaws does each embody? Salvation by . . .
 - . . . relativistic pluralism
 - . . . politics
 - . . . intellectual assent to truth
 - . . . sports
 - . . . career
5. What kind of victory (v. 20) will cause God’s peace to prevail?
Paul was posting his letter from Corinth. The greetings in verses 21-23 are from people there.
6. In his doxology (vv. 25-27), with what preaching and what writings does Paul insist that his gospel is aligned?
If the inclusion of all nations in God’s call was contained in the prophetic writings, what caused it to remain hidden for ages?
7. How will surrendering to God in obedient belief make us strong?
Why, if God’s calling is for all nations, should our strength impel us to reach out beyond our “holy club” to make him known?