

## Paul's Photo Albums!

### I. Announce:

- A. Slide#1 Big TY to all who served at *FamiliesThatSoar* Conf: Great feedback of your hospitality
- B. Slide#2 Ordain Paul Luciani:
- C. Slide#3 The Lisa Project: *A multi-sensory project* regarding Child abuse.
  1. Go listen, see, even smell Lisa's story.
  2. I met the project coordinator & he asked for our church to come walk the lot & Pray.
- D. Slide#4 Prayer for our Cambodia Team: Oct.16-31

### II. Slide#5 Intro: Paul's Photo Albums!

- A. We tease each other, if you're over a friends & they pull out pictures "Ut oh, here comes their family vacation photos!"
  1. When we returned from our churches 1st missions' trip to China in 1986, we decided to show the slides to the church...we bored them to death! (I alone shot 10 rolls & wanted to share every one)
  2. Often times we feel the same way when we run across the Bibles *photo albums*.
    - a) Lists of names we can barely pronounce.
    - b) We'd rather run back to the Bibles *fast-food book...Proverbs!*
    - c) Well, we can skip over them; **or** stop & take the time to befriend them, get to know them a little bit.
- B. Slide#6,7 Send my greetings to: My old friend **Raul Villasenor** who witnessed to me at a party about having a real & living relationship w/Jesus.  
 Greet Pastor **Garry Ansdell** of Hosanna Chapel of Bellflower who gave me the invitation to respond to Jesus that Thursday night, August 7th, 1980.  
 Greet Pastor **Roger Cochran**, now of C.C.L.B., for taking Kelly & I through pre-marriage counseling, & inviting us to be involved in prison ministry.  
 Greet **Dick Dellahey** now at C.C.C.M. for trusting me to teach the children at Bellflower.  
 Greet Pastor **Brad** who gave me a much needed sharp rebuke, when I flaked on him an hour before Sun morn service...to go do "*another ministry*".  
 Greet Pastor **Bob Chappell**, now home with the Lord (who began this Calvary work here in Murrieta), who shared with me 2 important words that I've tried my best to live by "*Be Real!*"  
 To pastors **Dan & Larry** who are my 2 right hands. Who love me enough to hold me accountable. Who are free to share their hearts & speak truth into my life.  
 To pastor **Rick** who has lovingly provided more counseling hours than anyone I know. Who should own the title "*Pastor of all Comfort*".  
 To **Mike Nielsen** who is a sound advisor in just about every situation.  
 To **Greg Ghironzi** who keeps me laughing & not taking myself to seriously.

And to my wife **Kelly**, for always pushing me on, and prodding me forward, even when I didn't want to go.

1. Who has touched your life? Do you remember them?  
Have you ever written them & told them how they've ministered to you?

C. But now what about all the multitude of *ordinary believers* who also have touched our life?

D. We tend to forget all the *ordinary people* who make ministry possible.

1. This morning Paul introduces us to his *host family*, **Gaius**; his *transcriber*, **Tertius**; & **Phoebe**, his *female UPS mail carrier*.
2. Nobody in God's family is unimportant to Him, & no ministry is insignificant.
  - a) So each of us needs to find the work **He** wants us to do.
  - b) Whether it is big or small, seemingly important, or maybe it is just monotonously mundane...*but somebody's gotta do it!*

### III. Slide#8 **COMMENDING!** (1,2)

A. Letters of Commendation were well known in the ancient world.

B. Slide#9 **Phoebe** – *Bright, radiant*(photo). Gk. mythology starts w/12 *Titans*, 6 male, 6 female. *Phoebe was one of the 6 Titanesses*. So the name Phoebe was of a goddess, so it's probable she had a heathen background. **But now**, a sweet sister in the lord.

C. **Cenchrea** – the eastern port of Corinth.

D. Many commentators see her as the person who is delivering the letter.

### IV. Slide#10 **GREETING!** (3-16)

A. Slide#11 Here Paul mentions **33 names**. 24 from Rome (17 men, 7 women) The other 9 were w/Paul in Corinth(8 men, 1 women).

1. This reveals the importance Paul placed on **women** in ministry in that 1st cent; and an intimate knowledge of their family relationships & Christian service!

B. Partnering in Ministry:

1. Slide#12 Phil.1:3-5(NIV) **I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.**
2. "Each of us has the opportunity to participate in **ministries** far beyond our own personal endeavors." Jerry Bridges

C. Here's what we can learn from this list that you might not catch upon 1st reading. **The 1st Century Church had incredible diversity!**

1. Rich & Poor; Jew & Gentile; Male & Female.
2. Slide#13 **"It was like a garden with flowers of every color & type."**

a) **Different Ranks, Different Races, Different Genders!**

D. **Slide#14 [1] Different Ranks!**

E. Rome's Elite:

1. **Aristobulus** (10) most likely the grandson of Herod the Great, & a friend of the Emperor Claudius.
2. **Narcissus** (11) John Stott says, "he was a rich & famous personality who held a great deal of influence in the emperor's palace."

F. Rome's not-so Elite:

1. **Amplias** (8), **Urbanus** (9), **Hermas** (14), **Philologus & Julia** (15) were common names for *slaves*.
  - a) Yet Paul gives them just as much honor as everyone else!

G. **Slide#15 [2] Different Races!** [not only Diff Ranks]

H. The Church in Rome featured **Jewish & Gentile** members.

1. Remember the bible only sees **2 races** (Jew & Gentile).
  - a) **It doesn't draw racial distinction by color of skin!**

I. **Jews:**

1. **Slide#16,17 Priscilla & Aquilla** (3-5a)
  - a) What the Emperor Claudius meant for evil turned out for good for Priscilla & Aquila.
    - (1) **They were living in Rome in ad49 when Claudius expelled all the Jews because of a riot over a certain *Chrestus*, probably an allusion to Jewish arguments over Christ.**
      - (a) Jewish Christians like **Priscilla and Aquila** were also forced to leave.
      - (b) **So the couple moved to Corinth, where they set up their tent-making business.**
    - (2) When Paul arrived, Priscilla & Aquila opened their home to him & invited him to work with them.
    - (3) The trio later worked and ministered together in **Ephesus**, which may be where Priscilla and Aquila **risked their necks** for Paul(4), possibly when he **fought with beasts at Ephesus**.
    - (4) **Priscilla** is sometimes pictured with **two lions** who had refused to attack her, lending credence to this tradition.
    - (5) When **Claudius** died in 55, **Priscilla and Aquila** returned to Rome and again hosted a church in their home, to whom Paul now sends greetings in this letter to the Romans.
2. Also **Andronicus & Junia**, **Herodion** (7,11) & **Apelles** (10) were all Jewish names.

J. **Gentiles:**

K. Most of the other names listed come from the **Greek**; a few are **Latin** like **Amplias** & **Urbanus**.

L. **Slide#18 [3] Different Genders!** [not only Diff Ranks & Diff Races...]

M. A large number of **women** are greeted by Paul.

1. Possibly 8/10 of the 33 names mentioned are ladies.

N. In addition to Phoebe & Priscilla he names: **Mary, Junia; Tryphena & Tryphosa; Persis; Rufus' mother, Julia, & Nereus' sister.**

1. 4 of these (**Mary, Tryphena & Tryphosa, & Persis**) were praised for being **hard workers**.

a) **Labored** - lit. "*they worked till they were weary*".

O. Listen to some extra-biblical quotes:

1. **Slide#19a** The 4th-century pagan philosopher **Libanius**, "What women these Christians have!"

2. **Slide#19b** **Clement** of Alexandria, "Many women have received power through the grace of God & have performed many deeds of manly valor."

3. **Slide#19c** **Jerome**, referring to Marcella, "She was in the front line in condemning the heretics"

P. **Slide#20** Different **Ranks**, Different **Races**, Different **Genders...1 Church!**

Q. If Paul was writing a letter to Calvary Murrieta...How would he greet you personally? Would you be mentioned? Why or why not?

## V. **Slide#21 AVOIDING! (17-20)**

A. We don't hear much of *false teachers* today, **because** society says there is *no such thing!*

1. We are told we need to **accept all views** as equally valid, & thus no belief system can claim to be right.

2. Paul says, "*uh...no!*"

B. (17,18) Not sure who these *troublemakers* were exactly?

C. **Slide#22a** **What do they do?**

1. **They cause the church to divide! Divisions.**

a) Remember, this ranks in the top 7 of God's **Most wanted** list in Prov.6:16-19 ...**And one who sows discord among brethren.** (or, *stirs up dissension* - NIV)

2. **They set traps hoping to stumble some believers!**

a) **Offense** = lit. "the bait stick of a trap".

3. **They are Syrupy Smooth talkers, & fantastic flatters...**things haven't changed much have they!

a) **Christian, know your bible, so you are not duped!**

b) Don't be *shallow-minded!* – **Think things through!**

4. **And most importantly what ID's them as False teachers?**
- a) **Not** their Charisma; **not** their Hairdos; **not** their odd practices;  
**No**, they are identified by **their teaching** (contrary to the doctrine you learned).

D. **Slide#22b What do we do?**

E. **Note** them, **Avoid** them, be **Wise** & **Simple**/innocent!

1. **Note** – “Mark them, keep you eye on them, scrutinize everyone’s teaching & measure it up to Bible truth!”
2. **Avoid** – Turn away from them. Don’t associate nor encourage them in any way.
3. **Be Wise in what is good** - **Good** in this context is sound doctrine.
4. **Simple/Innocent concerning evil**. “Reign in your curiosity, don’t even explore it, don’t experiment w/evil!” Discern it & stay away from it!
  - a) **Wise as serpents and harmless as doves**.

VI. **Slide#23 GREETINGS FROM PAUL’S FRIENDS! (21-24)**

A. (21) **Lucius** (prob not Luke, but Lucius of Cyrene, Acts 13:1);  
**Jason** (Paul’s host at Thes, Acts 17:1-9);  
**Sosipator** (prob Sopater from Berea, Acts 20).

B. **Slide#24 (22) Tertius** – means “third”.

1. In Paul's day most letters were written by a **professional scribe** called an amanuensis(a·man·u·EN·sis).
2. When Tertius began working on Romans, he had in hand a fresh scroll and a pen with brown or black ink. **Scribes** wrote on the side of the papyrus where the fibers ran horizontally, the fiber lines serving as a guide. **Tertius** would then organize the roll into three-inch wide columns for text. **As he worked**, he likely wrote entirely in capital letters, giving the text a splendid dignity. **And**, remarkably, he never left spaces between words, letting one word spill into the next. **The final effect** gave a block text with straight margins on both right and left sides.<sup>1</sup>

C. (23) **Gaius** (baptized by Paul, 1 Cor.1:14); **Erastus** (a bigwig in Corinth, the city’s treasure);  
**Quartus** (means, “4th”).

VII. **Slide#25 DOXOLOGY! (25-27)** [*Doxology* = A Christian hymn of praise to God]

A. Here’s one of Paul’s long run on sentences...*but what a sentence it is!*

1. In it we find many of the major themes he’s covered already.

B. (25) **Establish** – We don’t have much stability w/in ourselves.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gary Burge, Paul and His Times, Christian History, no.47.

1. Many things make us “*unstable*” – our emotions, hormones, worry, fears, circumstances, confusion, and misunderstandings.
  2. Christian, God is your stabilizer! – How will He make us stable?
    - a) Through His Word! (NT vs.25; OT vs.26)
- C. (26) All nations/ethne – Again, God’s ability to establish the *multi-ethnic church* in Rome.
- D. (27) God alone - Only one God is true, only one God exists: The Triune God...*God the Father, Jesus the Son, & the H.S.*
1. All others are pretenders & idols.
- E. God alone is wise – Yes in your situation *right now* He is Wise! – He has the ability to devise the **perfect ends** & to achieve those ends **by** the most **perfect means**.
1. “All God’s acts...are as pure as they are wise, & as good as they are wise & pure!”<sup>2</sup>
  2. “An infinitely wise God must work in a manner not to be improved upon by finite creatures.”
- F. No wonder why Paul wanted to give the glory to God forever & ever!
- G. Slide#26 A Hymn called *The Breastplate of St. Patrick* reads, [It is written in the style of a druidic incantation for protection on a journey]
- Christ be **within** me, Christ **behind** me,  
 Christ **before** me, Christ **beside** me,  
 Christ to **win** me, Christ to **comfort & restore** me,  
 Christ **beneath** me, Christ **above** me,  
 Christ in **quiet**, Christ in **danger**,  
 Christ in **hearts** of all that love me,  
 Christ in **mouth** of friend & stranger...  
 Praise to the Lord of my salvation, salvation is of Christ the Lord.  
 Slide#27end

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<sup>2</sup> A.W.Tozer, The Knowledge of the holy.