



## Watch

Romans 16:17-20

Paul transitions from an extensive greeting to a strong warning for the believers in Rome. The experienced apostle knows and recognizes the tactics of the enemy. Remember, Satan is a deceiver, the father of lies, and one who seeks to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10). The enemy seeks to undermine the faith with false teachings. I have often said, "The enemy will twist the truth just enough to make it a lie." Speaking about false apostles, deceitful workers, and those who disguise themselves as apostles of Christ, Paul says, in 2 Corinthians 11:14 "No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light."

The enemy also seeks to cause conflict, pride, and unforgiveness for the purpose of destroying the unity of the church. Jesus prays for the unity of all believers so "the world may believe you have sent me" (John 17:20-21). Paul urged believers to...

"walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." *Ephesians 4:1-3*

Therefore, Paul warns the church in Rome to be prepared for any potential attack on the truth of God's Word and the unity of the church.

### Key thought:

Because false teaching and deception are real dangers, believers must stay watchful, exercise discernment, pursue wisdom, and rest confidently in God's promised victory and sustaining grace.

### 1. KEEP WATCH (v. 17)

"Keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them."

- Spiritual vigilance is a responsibility of every believer.
- False teachers and divisive people do not always appear dangerous at first.



- The church must measure every teaching against God's Word.
- Paul commands believers not only to identify error but also to avoid those who persist in spreading it.

**Take Away:** Stay alert to influences that undermine biblical truth and unity.

## 2. DON'T BE DECEIVED (v. 18)

"For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting."

- False teachers often use appealing words rather than sound doctrine.
- Their primary concern is self-interest rather than serving Christ.
- Sincerity, charisma, and popularity are not guarantees of truth.
- Deception succeeds when believers fail to exercise discernment.

**Take Away:** Evaluate teaching/preaching by Scripture, not by personality or presentation.

## 3. BE WISE (v. 19)

"Be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil."

- Christian wisdom involves growing in the knowledge and practice of what is good.
- Believers do not need firsthand experience with evil in order to recognize and reject it.
- Maturity is demonstrated by discerning good from evil and choosing what honors God.

**Take Away:** Fill your mind with God's truth so that error becomes easier to detect.



#### 4. REST IN GOD'S PEACE AND GRACE (v. 20)

“The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.”

- The battle against deception is real, but the victory belongs to God.
- Satan's defeat is certain because of Christ's triumph.
- Believers live between the struggle of today and the promise of ultimate victory.
- Paul closes with a reminder that God's grace sustains His people until that day.

**Take Away:** Remain vigilant, but do not live in fear. Trust the God of peace and depend on the grace of Christ.