

## *Phoebe, Prisca, Junia*

The number and prominence of the women mentioned in Romans 16 is striking: ten are mentioned in verses 1, 3, 6, 7, 12, 13, 15. Three of these are especially noteworthy:

- *Phoebe*. Paul sends the letter with her and commends her to the congregation. He identifies her as a deacon in her home church and a benefactor of many (16:1–2).
- *Prisca*. She is singled out as one who, along with her husband, risked her life for Paul and earned the thanks of all churches of the gentiles (16:3). We hear of her elsewhere (Acts 18:2, 18, 26; 1 Cor. 16:19; 2 Tim. 4:19).
- *Junia*. She is said to be “prominent among the apostles” (16:7). Nineteenth-century scholars, perhaps unable to believe that Paul could have called a woman an apostle, treated the accusative *Ioulian* in the Greek text as a form not of the female name “Junia” but of a male name “Junias”—a name for which there is no ancient evidence.