

Crossway Life Group, Week of April 19

See sermon notes on [CMC's webpage](#) for background information

Community

Take time to share and pray for each other's concerns and joys.

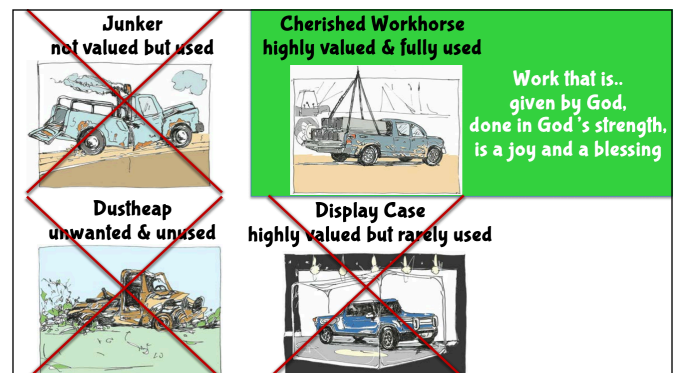
Scripture: Acts 28:1-16. Sermon: "God's Cherished Working Vessels"

Reading & Discussing Scripture

1. **We view things in different ways depending on their value and their use.** For example, some things are *not highly valued but used* (old shoes for mowing the lawn), other things are *highly valued but rarely used* (an antique car). Sometimes we view people, even ourselves, according to value and use. Today's lesson invites us to consider God's view of us in His Kingdom, and how we view ourselves.
2. **Setting of Acts 28.** Luke continues the story of Paul's journey as a prisoner traveling to Rome for trial before the emperor. Paul experienced a range of hardships in this ongoing journey, including the years that led up to this moment (see a summary in **2 Corinthians 11:21-29**). Luke's story shows that these difficult circumstances are not evidence of lack of God's care or limitation on His work. Just the opposite!
3. **Read Acts 28:1-16.**
 - What new difficulties do Paul and his group face over these several months?
 - What are ways that God cared for Paul? Who expressed the care? Why do these details matter?
 - How did God continue His kingdom work through Paul?
4. What do you think Luke wanted Christians in the early church to learn from this story?
 - What is an important lesson that you take from this story (and/or from the sermon)?

The Big Idea

**God is present with
and God cares for
all His children
and all His churches,
which He calls to serve in His kingdom**



Application & Reflection Questions

1. Look at the picture that compares value and use: *dustheap, junker, display case, cherished workhorse*. Referring to the four models, how do you tend to see yourself in God's kingdom?
2. How might that view of yourself affect how you live your life?
3. What is your sense of God's call on your life? Might that be changing?
4. **Read Colossians 3:23-24.** What does it mean for you to do your daily responsibilities as for the Lord rather than doing them for human or earthly authorities?

Growing in Cultural Understanding

Different families and different cultures put a different amount of emphasis on **BEING** and on **DOING**. An emphasis on **BEING** generally gives more emphasis to a journey and to the people who are on that journey, with less emphasis on the destination. An emphasis on **DOING** generally gives more emphasis to the destination of the journey (and to the completion tasks), with less emphasis on the journey or the process needed to get there.

Are you more of a **BEING** person or more of a **DOING** person? What might have led to that? How does that relate to the responsibilities you have each week? (Sometimes our responsibilities fit our own tendencies, which can be a wonderful blessing. Sometimes our responsibilities do not fit, and that can be a source of stress.)

Serving beyond ourselves

In this season of life that is so deeply affected by the coronavirus, what practical things might your group be able to do to help and care for others, while practicing the wisdom and discipline of social distancing?

- **Crossway Congregation Care Fund** – do you know someone who could use financial help?
 - Contact Pastor John or John Bankson (jbankson1414@gmail.com)
- **Crossway COVID 19 special offering** – would you consider giving? This fund will support ministries where Crossway has and is developing a rich connection and are deeply challenged by this pandemic:
 - [Cornerstone Church in Detroit](#)
 - [Africa Revolution](#) (Allan & Annie Greig) ministry colleagues in Kenya & Zimbabwe
 - Church(es) in Myanmar
 - See Crossway website for ways to give: crosswaymchurch.org/give
 - If you missed the presentation in church, go to: <https://vimeo.com/409749380> (password cmc)

Acts 28:1-16 (New International Version)

Paul Ashore on Malta

Once safely on shore, we found out that the island was called Malta. ²The islanders showed us unusual kindness. They built a fire and welcomed us all because it was raining and cold. ³Paul gathered a pile of brushwood and, as he put it on the fire, a viper, driven out by the heat, fastened itself on his hand. ⁴When the islanders saw the snake hanging from his hand, they said to each other, “This man must be a murderer; for though he escaped from the sea, the goddess Justice has not allowed him to live.” ⁵But Paul shook the snake off into the fire and suffered no ill effects. ⁶The people expected him to swell up or suddenly fall dead; but after waiting a long time and seeing nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds and said he was a god.

⁷There was an estate nearby that belonged to Publius, the chief official of the island. He welcomed us to his home and showed us generous hospitality for three days. ⁸His father was sick in bed, suffering from fever and dysentery. Paul went in to see him and, after prayer, placed his hands on him and healed him. ⁹When this had happened, the rest of the sick on the island came and were cured. ¹⁰They honored us in many ways; and when we were ready to sail, they furnished us with the supplies we needed.

Paul’s Arrival at Rome

¹¹After three months we put out to sea in a ship that had wintered in the island—it was an Alexandrian ship with the figurehead of the twin gods Castor and Pollux. ¹²We put in at Syracuse and stayed there three days. ¹³From there we set sail and arrived at Rhegium. The next day the south wind came up, and on the following day we reached Puteoli. ¹⁴There we found some brothers and sisters who invited us to spend a week with them. And so we came to Rome. ¹⁵The brothers and sisters there had heard that we were coming, and they traveled as far as the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns to meet us. At the sight of these people Paul thanked God and was encouraged. ¹⁶When we got to Rome, Paul was allowed to live by himself, with a soldier to guard him.

Colossians 3:23-24 (New International Version)

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, ²⁴since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.