

Christ for the Crisis

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I. Introduction.

- A. What is God doing now? He is resisting the proud and giving grace to the humble. (James 4:6)
- B. He is also alert and active, watching over His word to perform it. (Jeremiah)
- C. God is meeting the needs of those who are seeking Him with all their hearts. (Jeremiah 29:13)

II. Christ for the crisis.

- A. Crisis defined: a dangerous way, a turning, and an opportunity.
- B. Nobody would argue that danger exists in the world.
- C. There are major problems in the world with both the distribution of food and the spread of the gospel - this is a day both of crisis and opportunity.

III. Application. (Romans 16)

- A. The twenty-seven Christians in Rome were people that Christ had met in crisis.
 - 1. The names of these Christians typify their experience or at least someone's experience.
 - 2. Paul ad-libbed between the lines as he wrote this, so other people may have been implied.
- B. Names.
 - 1. Phoebe - the radiant Christian. She was not always that way for she surely came from a pagan family and worshipped idols.
 - a. We find ourselves in the midst of idols of materialism and therefore cannot be radiant.
 - b. Servants who commit themselves to two years with CSC service group have been said to regain their radiance.
 - 2. Epaphroditus - praiseworthy. He was the first Christian to come out of Asia to maintain a testimony and was useful in this place.
 - 3. Mary - contrary. Paul was saying that Mary was anything but contrary to what her name signified because of what Christ had done.
 - a. Perhaps she had not been as favored as others she knew. She had a need.

b. Sometimes we can rejoice in our tough circumstances because any glory clearly goes to God.

4. Andronicus - conqueror. His family may have had military leanings. (Proverbs 16:32) One who is slow to anger and rules his own spirit is better than a conqueror.

5. Urbanus - city person - and Stachys - an ear of corn. These two appear to have opposite origins. They probably thought that neither one could be a Christian because of where they came from. Christ transcends culture.

6. Narcissus - lethargy - and Phlegon - burning. One person that you could not stop and the other that you could not get going. Paul probably thought that Christ met the crises in bringing them together.

7. Asyncritus - means unlikely. If a contest would have been held about who was the most unlikely to succeed, it would have been Asyncritus. Paul perhaps thought that it was not this way anymore.

a. Of successful Christians queried it was found out that the most unlikely men to succeed read the Bible daily.

b. Christ beats the crisis for the unlikely ones.

C. Christ met the crisis in all of these persons' lives.

IV. Conclusion.

Application questions.

1. How does Christ meet the crisis in our personal lives?

2. How would you assess the speaker's method in approaching Romans 16? What can you take away from this message?

3. What crises are you facing or have you faced in your own life? Give testimony to past victory or remind yourself of Christ's faithfulness in your present struggles.
