

Handout January 12, 2024

He Led Captivity Captive **Ephesians 4:1-31**

Welcome back and here we go!

I would just like to say I am so grateful for the faithfulness of God. Long ago, I made a commitment to God, but never fully committed to God. Yet, He never left me.

II Timothy 2:11-13 'This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.'

1) Once you _____ Christ, His _____ enters you _____!

God never leaves you. He is always with you. Do you understand and believe that? I want you to understand that no matter how dire your situation, God has not left you. In fact, He is with you and within you. He is aware of your needs and He is able to help.

Tonight's message is "*He Led Captivity Captive*". What does this mean?

Captivity: The condition of being imprisoned or confined.

Captive: A person or animal taken prisoner, imprisoned or confined.

"My Arrest Story"

- Once I was cornered, I knew I was not going home. I no longer was in charge of where I would go.
- I knew my behaviors and crimes would come to light.
- I knew my wife would be destroyed.
- I knew my employees would --- all 328 --- lose their jobs.
- I was taken captive.

2) Long before my _____, I was already in _____!

Some of you today might be in captivity to sinful behaviors and all of its results.

----Hurt, anger, sexual addiction unforgiveness, other addictions, loneliness, depression, hopelessness----

3) _____ keeps me captive!

Honesty is the first step.

The enemy will use shame to keep you in your cage...

Ephesians 4

4) Jesus has already _____ you. Leave your _____!

Aren't these words wonderful!

Where did I learn them? In my captivity.

In my captivity, I was free, free from the burden of my sinful actions and all of its pain.

Ephesians 4:1-7

5) It all starts with God's _____.

When you accepted Jesus, God set you free. LEAVE YOUR CAGE!

These are scriptures I quote often because they have such deep meaning, not only for me.....

Ephesians 4:8 *'Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men."*

6) He led _____ captive and gave us _____.

God defeated death and gave us life. So, what is a proper response?

Ephesians 4:8-24

The key here is we stop walking like we used to. They said slaves, when freed, didn't want to leave. They were comfortable; they had fear; they didn't trust the freedom they received.

John 8:34-36 *'Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore, if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.'*

We put off the old person with all its habits and look to God. You get rescued in your mind.

7) Stop thinking like a _____!

You are not hopeless. You should be hopeful!

The ANSWER is NEW BEHAVIORS.

Ephesians 4:25-32

Hear these words. Jesus has given you gifts. First and foremost, He sent the Holy Spirit.

Let's pray we learn how to walk in new behaviors this New Year. Let's not pretend we are free.
Let's recognize we have the freedom to make NEW CHOICES!

I love you.

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