

Imagining the Kingdom: *Captives Led Captive?*

Jerry Cisar — August 13, 2023

Text: Ephesians 4:1-16

Introduction: Learning How to Walk



To receive an email preview of the sermon (with link to outline) or notification of new blog posts, scan here.

LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- What is Paul urging us to do in this passage?
- How has peace been running theme throughout Ephesians?
- Paul was a prisoner “in Christ.” If that is true for him, is it true for all those in Christ? Explain.
- What might be meant by the metaphor “the bond of peace”?
- What are some of the ways Paul lists that our calling calls us to walk?
- What might it mean that Christ led captivity captive and gave gifts to the peoples? How does that speak to you?
- How might you explain the importance of each part from the text?
- Someone in prison because of Christ might feel like they are hindered from doing any good. Paul saw himself differently. What circumstances might you be in that might feel limiting but in fact can be used for God’s glory?
- What struck you the most from this text or message?

I. Captive in Christ

A. Bound in Christ

- i. The prisoner of vs. the prisoner in the Lord (3:1; 4:1)
- ii. The word for prisoner (*desmios*) has at its roots the word for bonds (*desmos*).

B. Bond of Peace

- i. Leading up to...
 - a) 1:10b
 - b) 2:1-3
 - c) 3:6; 18-19
- ii. In the middle of (4:1-6)
- iii. Followed by
 - a) 4:25, 28-29, 31-32
 - b) 5:1-2, 18-20
 - c) 6:12, 15

- C. The controlling metaphor of this letter is adoption, and the central characteristic of living as children of the Father is peace.

II. Captives to a Calling

A. Paul urges believers to walk in a path congruent with, worthy of the (lit.) calling with which we have been called.

B. What creates this bond of peace?

i. “The Gospel” but Paul gets more specific (4:4-6).

ii. Each of these in some way bind us to live at peace.

C. We are captives in Christ to a calling which created this bond of peace.

III. Captives Led Captive

A. “To each one of us grace has been given. That is why it says....”

a) Paul is bound in Christ.

b) We have a bond of peace.

c) “When he ascended on high, he led captive a company of captives.”

d) Christ freed us from our captor and gave us, this company of captives, as a gift to humanity... lit. to the humans, or to the people.

B. What kind of gifts are we? (4:11-16)

C. Every gift is necessary!

i. A simple spring is important.

ii. The church cannot grow and build itself up in love, and therefore cannot achieve the hope to which it has been called until each part does its work.

D. Are you a captive in Christ?