

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2024**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES—
SECOND CORINTHIANS**

Message Two

Captives in a Triumphal Procession for the Celebration of Christ's Victory

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 2:14a;
1 John 3:8; Heb. 2:14; 1 Pet. 3:18-19; Rev. 1:18; Eph. 4:8; S. S. 4:4

I. We need to have a vision of Christ's victory—1 John 3:8:

- A. In His incarnation and human living, Christ defeated Satan during the temptation in the wilderness—Matt. 4:1-11.
- B. The Son of God was manifested to destroy, to dissolve, to undo, the works of the devil—to condemn sin in the flesh, to destroy the power of sin (the sinful nature of the devil), and to take away sin and sins—1 John 3:8.
- C. Through death the Lord Jesus destroyed the devil, who has the might of death; He abolished Satan, brought him to nought—Heb. 2:14.
- D. God openly shamed the evil angels, triumphing over them in the cross of Christ—Col. 2:15.
- E. In the Spirit of His divinity, Christ proclaimed to the evil spirits in the abyss His victory over Satan on the cross—1 Pet. 3:18-19.
- F. In resurrection Christ has the keys of death and of Hades—Rev. 1:18.
- G. In His ascension Christ led a train of vanquished foes; He rescued us from Satan's captivity and took us to Himself—Eph. 4:8.
- H. In Christ's ascension there was a procession of these vanquished foes, led as captives of war, for a celebration of Christ's victory—2 Cor. 2:14a.

II. "Thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in the Christ"—v. 14a:

- A. In 2 Corinthians 2:14a Paul uses the metaphor of a procession held in honor of a Roman general:
 - 1. The verb *leads* means to lead people as captives in a procession.
 - 2. The full phrase means to lead captive in a triumph over the enemies of Christ.
- B. In 2 Corinthians 2:14a the believers are symbolized by captives of Christ in His triumphal procession.
- C. God is celebrating His triumph over His enemies; Paul, who had been so great an opponent of the gospel, is a captive following in the train of the triumphal procession.
- D. The word *us* in 2 Corinthians 2:14a refers to the conquered captives in the train of Christ's triumph, celebrating and participating in Christ's triumph:
 - 1. Every person freed by Christ is a captive of Christ under His power and authority.
 - 2. For Christ to dispense Himself into us, we must be captives.
- E. Jesus defeated us, conquered us, subdued us, and captured us; now we are dependent upon Him, taking Him as our everything in the procession of His triumph.
- F. We may not realize that we have been captured, subdued, possessed, and gained by Christ, the Victor, and that now we are captives in the train of His victorious procession, but if we have an inward realization concerning this matter, it will make us a different kind of person:

1. We will always be conscious of the fact that we have been captured by Christ, subdued by Him, and gained by Him—v. 14a.
 2. In relation to ourselves, we will realize that we are nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing.
 3. A captive is one who is now absolutely for the one who has conquered him, knowing that now he is among those marching in the train of the victorious procession of the one who has captured him.
- G. In 2 Corinthians 2:14a Paul indicates that he was a captive of Christ:
1. Saul of Tarsus was a strong, ambitious young man who fought against Christ, against God's economy, and against the churches—Acts 9:1-22.
 2. Paul once fought against Christ, the heavenly General, but eventually, he was defeated, subdued, and captured and thereby became a captive of Christ.
 3. After he was captured, he was placed in Christ's triumphal procession as one of the captives in a train of defeated foes.
- H. What the church needs is not spiritual giants but little captives; therefore, we all need to say to the victorious Christ, "Lord, I am willing to be Your captive."

III. Our will, the human will, the self-will, needs to be conquered—2 Cor. 2:14a; S. S. 4:4:

- A. If the human will stands with the divine will, then God's will would be accomplished—Rom. 12:2; Eph. 1:9, 11; 5:17; Matt. 6:10:
1. Our God-created will is a "rudder"; as a ship turns according to the rudder, we move according to our will.
 2. On the one hand, we believers are slaves to Christ; on the other hand, we may still be opponents, enemies, to Christ because our will has not been subdued or conquered.
 3. Many things of the self, including selfish will, selfish desire, and selfish thoughts, may be within us.
 4. We may not know how many rebellious elements are within us; hence, we need to be defeated, conquered, subdued, and eventually carried away as a captive in the triumphal procession of Christ's victory—2 Cor. 2:14a.
- B. "Your neck is like the tower of David, / Built for an armory: / A thousand bucklers hang on it, / All the shields of the mighty men"—S. S. 4:4:
1. The neck signifies the human will under God; the Lord considers the submission of our will a most beautiful thing.
 2. The lover of Christ is beautiful in her having a will that is submissive to Christ (neck like the tower of David) and that is rich in the defending power (bucklers and shields of the mighty men):
 - a. If we have a submissive will, a will that has been subdued like a flock of goats on a mountainside (v. 1b), our will is expressed like the tower of David that holds the weapons against the attacks.
 - b. The lover of Christ has come out of her natural will, and now she is standing in her resurrected will against the enemy—Eph. 6:11, 13.
 - c. The more our will is subdued, the more we will be transformed—Rom. 12:2.
 - d. First, our will must be subdued; then it will be strong in resurrection and be like the tower of David, the armory for the spiritual warfare—Eph. 6:10.
 - e. The weapons for spiritual warfare are kept in our subdued and resurrected will—2 Cor. 10:3-4.
 - f. In the spiritual warfare we are mainly on the defensive, standing against all the devilish, subtle attacks of the enemy—Eph. 6:10-20.
 - g. The bucklers and shields that protect us against the arrows of the enemy are kept in the tower of the subdued and resurrected will of those who are seeking the Lord.