

HOPELINE

The Newsletter From Christ-In-You Glory Church

01/17

Captured For The Master's Use

Written By Pastor Anthony 'Yinka Adesile

For this reason, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you gentiles (Ephesians 3:1)

The very use of the word, 'captive' today is often seen as derogatory, and in this world of political correctness, could provoke huge backlash. But I'm hoping that rather for it to provoke such backlash against me – or Paul, it would lead to some reflection.

Reading the passage above reveals the unfathomable wisdom and ways of God. Who could ever imagine Paul working among the gentiles in any way? Paul, a proud man; Hebrew to the core; renowned and feared in the land; defender of the law ... and the list just goes on. No one could ever imagine him labouring among the people he deemed to be unworthy, and therefore beneath him in every way! In his own words; ***Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the Church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless (Philippians 3:5-6)***

Paul himself could never have dreamt or imagined himself 'stooping so low!' But fast forward to another phase in his life and you found a man who 'became a gentile' in order to win the gentiles. Only God can be credited for such a miracle. It is this same miracle that has transformed many who lived for themselves to now live solely for the LORD.

Such is Dipo, a childhood friend of mine. He was a very proud man, ambitious and set to gain the world.



God was not in his mind at all. In fact, he was renowned to attend Church about once a year, and that on the last day of the year. His mission was to create a scene with the fireworks he would have bought for the occasion. Any mention of God would invoke his wrath. Such was the life he lived. No one dared speak to him. God himself captured him when, alone in his room he had a divine encounter that turned him around completely. Today he lives for God, and labours from the hometown he returned to decades ago. From there his tentacles is spreading to the regions around him, campuses and schools; taking the gospel to the youths while he also pastors a Church. There is hardly any Christian that has not been captured by God. The how is not that important here but the purpose. Your becoming a Christian could have been spectacular like that

of Paul or Dipo. It might even be as unremarkable as it could be. What is important is that God finally got our attention.

But something is seemingly lacking in the Church of today. We preach the gospel of liberty that invites people to a life of entitlements in God without the conditions. Christians have become selfish and not selfless; proud and not humble; earthly and not heavenly. The only vision we seek from God is the vision of riches unimaginable. The only service we know is that of using our finances to sponsor Church projects

Continued Next Page

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and to do good works. Yet we fail to note that to that ruler who came to Jesus with the question of what he must do in order to enter the kingdom of heaven, the response was for him to give up all that he had and follow Jesus (Luke 18:18-30). The old and new testaments are full of examples of people who regarded themselves as servants of God, labourers, prisoners, etc. All were 'captured' by God Himself.

Which brings us to the purpose behind the word. The very idea of being made a prisoner is rehabilitation – to be made conformable to the way and manner of society. It is a way of redeeming the captive. Of course there is the unforgettable history of slavery where people were captured by fellow human and made to do degrading and detestable things. God's own purpose is divine, with glorious intent and with eternity in mind. His purpose is to make man conformable and Christlike. It is in order to make us fit for purpose. It is to com-

pletely kill all that is earthly and prepare man for heaven. To this end, the captured of God is not only being blessed by Him; he is also expected to become a blessing.

This brings us to a soul-searching question; have we been truly captured? If truly we have been captured by God, how surrendered are we to His will? Are we truly broken and submissive? While Paul surrendered to God's will, following Him to the end, Jesus Himself saw how the ruler who came to him left sorrowfully. He wanted the glory of the Kingdom of God but was unwilling to

pay the price required. Are you willing and surrendered to His will?

I seem to remember reading about a terrorist been pursued and when faced with death asked his assailant, "At least I'm dying for my cause, what are you living for?" There is no Christian saved by God without a purpose to fulfil. We are just not willing. And an unwilling man is an uncaptured man. He lives for himself and not for God. Paul in testifying of his encounter with the Lord Jesus tells of the word that changed him:

But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will yet reveal to you (Acts 26:16)

I have not and will never forget the few months following my rededication to Christ decades ago. I was captured as I spent these months praying and seeking to know what He would have me do. Many of course genuinely want to know God's will and purpose – what He would have them do. Not many are willing to obey when they do get to know His will. But that is where we are called into servanthood. That is where we

become captured, living for Him and no more for ourselves. This is where as Christians, we are also judged to be profitable or unprofitable.

But to each one of us grace was given, according to the measure of Christ's gift (Ephesians 4:7)

This is then a call to every believer to examine himself or herself. Have you received a vision from God? Are you living the vision or is the vision abandoned and forgotten? What is God keeping you alive for? For Paul, it was;

That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel (Ephesians 3:6)

And in order to fulfil this mission, Paul also has this to say;

Of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power (Ephesians 3:7)

Being captured by God is a privilege and the reward is greater than the pleasure you get if you had the whole world for your pleasure. Submit your will to Him and watch him make you a vessel of honour for His own glory.

And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul (Deuteronomy 10:12)



... Again He designates a certain day, saying in David, "Today," after such a long time, as it has been said: "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." (Hebrews:4:7)

Programme Flash

- **A Holy Convocation:** Join us every Sunday on a fulfilling time of worship from 10:30 - 13.00
- **Prayer Points Meeting:** We'll love to have you at our last Friday of each month for Prayer Points meetings from 19:15 - 20:50
- **Covenant Sunday:** Fancy going through each month with a clear promise from God? Then don't miss the First Sunday service of the month where we receive our theme for the month - a word from the LORD to hold on to.
- **Communion Service:** Every first Sunday of the month

Venue:

Christ-In-You Glory Church

Music Room, First Floor
Deptford Lounge, Deptford Library
9 Giffin Street
London, SE8 4RJ