

HERE I STAND: CAPTIVE BY THE WORD OF GOD

READING OF GOD'S WORD

2 Timothy 3: 16, 17

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Psalm 119:25-32

My soul clings to the dust; give me life according to your word! When I told of my ways, you answered me; teach me your statutes! Make me understand the way of your precepts, and I will meditate on your wondrous works. My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to your word! Put false ways far from me and graciously teach me your law! I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I set your rules before me. I cling to your testimonies, O Lord; let me not be put to shame! I will run in the way of your commandments when you enlarge my heart!

PRAY

INTRODUCTION

Good morning. My name is Eric Mattie. I serve as one of the Elders here at LEFC. I've been asked to step in this morning in light of the sudden death of Pastor Dan's niece, who was like a daughter and sister to the whole Cravillion family. The funeral was this weekend and all that goes with that includes the strength needed to grieve and the distraction that grieving does to everyone's daily routine and job. Please continue to pray for the whole family during this time.

WARM UP

As I start out this morning I want to wish you all "Happy Reformation Day". Today on the church calendar October 31 is "Reformation Sunday". You may wonder what this is all about. And why is it important that I wish for you to be happy about this day.

Well... On this day over 500 years ago God utilized one act to spark a reforming of His church. This reform spread through the known world. It called the people of God back to the purity and the authority of God's word

We should be happy because Had it not been for this move of God, we would be sitting in this church, with no Bibles to understand, no good news to comfort our souls and we would be striving to save ourselves and to labor for God's acceptance and peace through our own works.

But instead on October 31, 1517 Martin Luther nailed 95 theses to a church door announcing the topics of biblical debate.

Through these debates and reforms within the church, God moved to establish the word of God as authoritative over all popes and men who could err. God moved in many men's hearts to translate the Bible into the language of common people

and for sermons and the gospel to be received and preached in the common language

to preach hope for the burdened and weary and sinful people-

people who were ready to give up. People who had lost hope. People who tried so hard to do right and be right-- but just couldn't measure up. (Does this sound familiar? Is this you before Christ or is this you today?)

We should be happy that through Preaching out of the authoritative Word of God reforms spoke good news

that sinners can be rescued,

the lost could be found,

the spiritually dead can born again

That Life and hope are found in a relationship with Jesus Christ

Preaching that by God's favor that was undeserving, through trusting their lives and eternal souls to the now risen Jesus Christ who-- through his Death-- established peace and forgiveness with God.

Trusting Jesus Christ who-- through his resurrection--- defeated death and exchanges the title of men and women from sinners- to saints, enemies of God to adopted children of God- we are called the beloved of God

That is the good news of the Gospel that the Reformation brought back to light. That we are Saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone to the glory and praise of God alone so no man can boast in his measly good works- because good works don't save you. Christ does. You are not saved by what you do. You are saved by trusting in what Jesus did.

Let me read for you the Poem I wrote 5 years when we celebrated the 500th anniversary of this event in 2017. It is called

The Reformation Poem

A CELEBRATION AND A CHARGE IN 500 WORDS

IN THE MIDDLE AGES, THERE WAS A TRUTH THE CHURCH FORGOT
THAT YOU ARE SAVED BY GOD'S GRACE NEVER TO BE BOUGHT
OR TO BE EARNED BY MERITS, SWEAT AND TEARS
THE GOSPEL'S MAIN TRUTHS WERE LOST FOR MANY YEARS.

BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE, THE CHURCH WAS NOT FORGOTTEN
DURING ITS CORRUPTION AND WHEN THE THEOLOGY WAS ROTTEN
FOR GOD WAS ON THE MOVE FOR HIS WORD TO GO FAR
TO GET IT TO HIS PEOPLE, HE RAISED A MORNING STAR

THE BIBLE IN LATIN WAS ONLY KNOWN BY A FEW
SO JOHN WYCLIFFE KNEW EXACTLY WHAT TO DO
PASSIONATE THAT AUTHORITY WAS IN GOD'S WORD ALONE
WYCLIFFE TRANSLATED DILIGENTLY, LIKE A DOG ON A BONE.

GOD'S WORD TO HIS PEOPLE WITH A CLEAR COMMUNICATION
YET GOD'S WORK WAS JUST STARTING WITH A GREAT REFORMATION

A MONK WITH A Mallet IS WHAT PEOPLE THINK.
A MONK WHO BOTH MARRIED AND BEGAN TO DRINK

BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE ABOUT HIS ROLE
EVEN MARTIN LUTHER KNEW WHO WAS IN CONTROL

FOR THE NIGHT BEFORE HIS MEMORABLE STAND
LUTHER WROTE IN HIS PRAYER BY HIS TREMBLING HAND
“THE WORK IS NOT MINE, BUT THINE.” HE HAD PENNED
“I HAVE NO BUSINESS HERE... I HAVE NOTHING TO CONTEND”

LUTHER HAD SENSED GOD’S CALL FOR HIS STAND
TO BE IN THE LIVING BOOK THAT HE HELD IN HIS HAND
HIS CONSCIOUS CAPTIVE TO THE EVERLASTING BIBLE
HE WOULD STAND FIRM AGAINST THE QUESTIONING RIVAL

WHO ASKED HIM TO RECANT OF WHAT HE TAUGHT
TO OBEY GOD’S WORD WAS HIS ONLY THOUGHT.

THE MOVEMENT OF GOD THROUGH THE NATIONS PERSISTED
REFORM WAS ON THE RISE AND THE PAPACY RESISTED
“AFTER DARKNESS, LIGHT” WAS THE CRY OF THE SWISS
A METAPHOR OF THE GOSPEL BELIEVERS COULD NOT MISS

IN ENGLAND, THERE WAS A POLITICAL AND PAPACY STORM
MONARCHS WITH RELIGIOUS POWER WAS THE TROUBLING NORM

BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE FOR GOD HAD HIS MAN
THOMAS CRANMER WAS PART OF HIS SOVEREIGN PLAN

HIS WRITING ESTABLISHED BIBLICAL WORSHIP AND PREACHING
EVEN IN HIS MARTYRDOM, THEY WERE WORKS OF FAR REACHING
IN SCOTLAND JOHN KNOX WAS A MAN WHO WAS FRAIL
YET GOD STRENGTHEN HIS WORK SO HE WOULD NOT FAIL

THE PURITANS OF ENGLAND WERE MISTAKEN TO HAVE NO COMPASSION
BUT THEY LOVED GOD AND HIS WORD WITH A FIERY PASSION.

THEY DECLARED GOD'S BEAUTY AND GRACE IN ELOQUENT PROFESSIONS
THEY LEFT FOR THE CHURCH DOCTRINAL WRITINGS AND BIBLICAL CONFESSIONS

TO KEEP REFORMING THE CHURCH WE LIVE IN TODAY
BY THE WORD OF GOD IS THE ONLY WAY

LET'S PRAY THAT WE WILL SEE HIS GLORY AND HIS MIGHT
BUT MAKE NO MISTAKE WE MUST STAND WHERE GOD'S WORD IS RIGHT

IN OUR LIVES WE MUST TRUST GOD'S SUPREME AND SOVEREIGN PLAN
TO BRING GLORY TO HIMSELF AND TO SAVE ALL ELECTED MAN

BE IT THROUGH PEOPLE LIKE ZWINGLI,

CALVIN AND HUS

JUST AS GOD HAD USED THEM, GOD WILL USE US.

WE MUST STAND AS STEWARDS OF A CONTINUING REFORMATION.

PROCLAIMING GOD'S TRUTH WITH BOLD DECLARATION!

The title of Today's Sermon is **Here I Stand: Captive by the Word of God**

Luther's Fight:

The famous Words "Here I stand" is debated in history as to whether or not Martin Luther actually said that at His trial over his teachings.

But make no mistake- Luther stated that his heart and conscious was held captive by the God's Word and would not renounce his teaching that went against the organized church officials of that day. He made a stand

The fight in Luther's debates was about Scriptures authority as being the final authority alone over the authority of tradition and the pope's interpretation which can have errors and be wrong.

Our Fight:

In our church family here at LEFC, We are people of the Word in the respect that many of us, are like the group of people in the Bible called the Bereans, We take what is said in this podium and we think through what is said and compare to Scripture. We study, and read the Bible and know a lot about it. Some would say that we are good at loving God with our minds.

But I challenge us this morning that to be a people of the word that stands as Martin Luther did...captive to God's word and not flinch, this book has to not just fill our minds with profession that are true. And to have the right answers. But this living Word, must affect our affection, desires, loves hopes and values.

Just as the fight in Luther's day was about authority, today's debate- this morning's debate- are in the hearts of well intended people. The nice church going people. People who profess correctly- yet how do we live and what do we love? What do we love passionately? (I too am challenged by this word so I am throwing no stones. But I do serve today as the mouth piece to this challenge)

Today's debate is about Scriptures authority as being the final authority alone over the authority of our own thoughts, opinions and will which can have errors and can be wrong.

Why was Luther able to stand on the word of God? And how can we develop the conviction to stand on God's word in the midst of a world that continually tells us that we must conform and be progressive in our thinking, actions and affections that contradict God's word?

I want to give you 4 reasons why we are to be captivated by God's word. The very nature—(attributes, characteristics however you want to categorize them) of God's word is to captivate us. That is to excite us and engage us and draw us to love it and desire it. More precisely to love God. When we are captured by God's Word in this way, we will be able to stand where God wants us to stand.

So let's go:

Four Reasons We are to Be Captivated By the Word of God

(ABC'S of the Word of God)

1. Because God's Word is Authoritative

A. The Bible's authority is found in its Author.

The reason why the Bible is authoritative, is because God is its divine author. The Ground for Biblical authority is found in...

2 Timothy 3:16,

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness"

The phrase "breathed out by God" is a figure of Speech for speaking the words of Scripture. We understand that every quote of people and account of events are God's report of what they said, What the Lord said or what happened.

- These quotes and events rightly interpreted come to us with God's authority. God is the one who spoke the Scriptures although God used human agents to write these words down.

The ins and out of how God breathes out Scripture remains a bit of a mystery.

Yet we can know that this **supernatural act of the Holy Spirit coming upon the human authors to write exactly what God intended, preserved the author's writing style and personality. Since this divine act means the author's word are God's words, then they are therefore authoritative. Period**

The apostle Peter says it like this in the example of OT Prophets:

2 Peter 1:21

21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

- Peter is saying no prophecies were the impulses of man. The prophets didn't decide what to write on behalf of God. Rather the ultimate source of every prophecy was the result of the Holy Spirit's action in the prophet's life and carried out in ways unspecified here.

The Bible has authority Because the Lord God almighty is the author. The buck stops here. There is no higher authority than the Lord God almighty.

- While Confirmations from experts and evidence can be useful and affirm the truthfulness of God's word they cannot qualify its authority. If we appeal to them then Scripture is not the highest authority and then it is subordinate to that which we appeal for proof.
- The Convincing from the Spirit, testifies to us as we read, that it is the very Words of God. The more we read prayerfully dependently and trustingly, the more the Spirit will testify to our spirits his truth and His authority.

Four Reasons We are to Be Captivated By the Word of God

2. Because God's Word is Biblically Inerrant

Let me define what the word "inerrant" means. It means to be- free of error or untruths. To state this positively it means to be- wholly true, reliable and correct.

A. The Written Word of God is God's Speech Recorded

To state it this way draws us away from thinking that this thickly bound book is a collections of Stories and teachings.

It reminds us that God is speaking when we open the cover.

B. Because it is God Speaking We Know His Word will Be True

God is the God of Truth not error

2 Samuel 7:28

"And now, O Lord God, you are God and your words are true..."

- The proclamation of David, is our proclamation, O Lord God, you are God and your words are true.

Titus 1:1, 2

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, 2 in hope of eternal life, which God, **who never lies**, promised before the ages began..."

- The Lord God is the unlying God

Hebrews 6:18 it says that it is impossible for God to lie.

This is saying not only does he not lie, but that it is not even possible for him to lie.

Look at Psalm 12:6:

“The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times.” Psalm 12:6 (ESV)

- the attribute of purity is a term used to describe freedom from imperfections or impurities.
- The furnace pictured in this verse is extremely hot and would enable the silver to be purged from all impurities.
- The psalmist is expressing in a forceful way the concept of absolute purity by using the word seven which is the “perfect” number of times.
- He is saying the words of God are totally free from impurity or imperfection.

Now there is a subtle, but profound difference that is noticed from what Jesus says:

Jesus says in John 17:17: “Sanctify them in your truth, your word is truth.”

- Notice that he didn’t say: your word is true. He said God’s word is truth itself!
- This is a significant difference, because it encourages us to think of the Bible not simply as being true in the sense it conforms to a higher standard of truth.
- But rather to think of the Bible as being itself the final and ultimate standard and definition of truth. The reference point by which every other claims of truthfulness is to be measured.

Psalm 119:160

“The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endure forever.”

- The sum refers to the result of collecting and evaluating all of God’s words. The result is truth.
- Truth that is reliable, honest, firm and able to be trusted and depended upon.

Four Reasons We are to Be Captivated By the Word of God

3. Because God’s Word is Clear

A. The Scriptures are Written for all to Understand its Main Message

Psalm 19:7

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

Psalm 119:130

The unfolding of your words gives light; it imparts understanding to the simple.

- Our understanding of Scripture is not directly proportional to the amount of education.
- In these verses, the simple person is not merely one who lacks intellectual ability, but someone who also lack sound judgement or common sense. They are prone to making mistakes and are easily led astray.

“But God’s word is so understandable and clear, that even this kind of person can be made wise by it.”- Grudem

Deuteronomy 30:11- 14

“For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ 13 Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ 14 But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.

- The people of God here are being reassured that God’s word can be understood and obeyed. Not in a way that they need to merit God’s approval and certainly not in perfect way since they will fail.
- What God expects of His people is not hard to find or far off.
- It will not take a scholar in a tall tower to come down after months of research to inform us what God’s will is.

Yes there are some parts of Scripture that are harder to understand than other. But for all the matters that one must know in order to know about God mankind be saved, the Bible is clear

And this is encouraging to us a missional front. We can provide Bible’s in other languages and trust that even though they don’t have study notes and confessionals and maps and indexes in the back, the Bible is written clearly for them to know God, to know the Gospel. We can trust God’s moving in the hearts of His people around the world to save them and sanctify them and to speak to them through His Word!

Four Reasons We are to Be Captivated By the Word of God

4. Because God’s Word is Sufficient

A. God’s Word has all that is needed for any aspect in human life.

Back to 2 Timothy 3:17- All Scripture is breathed out by God ..

2 Timothy 3:17

that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

The word every refers to sufficiency.

Christians sometimes say that Scripture is sufficient for religion or faith. But not Science or auto repairs. This statement misses the point. Sufficiency is not about learning every logical and knowledgeable piece of information from the Bible. It means that the divine words in the Bible for the scientist, auto repair guy and the pastor, the welder, office worker and salesmen, are sufficient.

God’s word contains divine words sufficient for all of life. That means we all have what is needed to trust God and obey him in our careers, relationships, situations troubles and trials. We have what is needed to be made complete and equipped for every good work God has for you in those areas of your life

There are the reason why we should be captive to God Word
Its Authoritative, Biblically Inerrant, Clear and Sufficient
But do you love it? And as a result love God better?

Look at this passage from our reading:

Psalm119:25-32

My soul clings to the dust; give me life according to your word! When I told of my ways, you answered me; teach me your statutes! Make me understand the way of your precepts, and I will meditate on your wondrous works. My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to your word! Put false ways far from me and graciously teach me your law! I have chosen the way of faithfulness; I set your rules before me. I cling to your testimonies, O Lord; let me not be put to shame! I will run in the way of your commandments when you enlarge my heart!

Notice the emotional cry Give me life Teach me strengthen me I cling to your testimonies I run in the way of your commands.

But look at that last request: when you enlarge my heart.

Some of us need enlarging of our hearts- this is not something we just think about. We need pray for that enlarging of our hearts to feel the emotion and affection of loving God pray that now as I share these closing thoughts

The BIBLE

Yes that's the book for me

I stand alone on the Word of God

The BIBLE

Proclaim

We are to be captivated that God's Word stands as the Final Authority in life and godliness

- In life, God's Word is the authority of meaning- that creation's purpose in this galaxy and man's purpose on this earth is finalized and realized in what God says. Since he is Creator he know why he created you. He has the final say of what brings purpose in your life- be it success or suffering. Prosperity or pain. He will work all things together for your good and His glory. Don't stop it short by giving up and wanting to die. Or retiring from life and sticking your head in sand of the beaches you are collecting seashells from
- In life, God's word is the authority of morality- that right and wrong is not a game of situational ethics. Rather, what is right conforms to God's moral character. What is wrong directly opposes the good and just character of God. Sin ought never be approved in the

universe created by God. And we are to address sin in our life (by repenting) and the wrong in our culture (by lovingly and persistently confronting it).

- In godliness, God's word is the authority of how forgiveness is granted. Jesus says I am the way the truth and the life no one comes to the Father except through me. Not through Buddha, not through the Tao, Not speaking the Secret into the universe. But through trust in Christ's sacrifice of dying on the cross that satisfied the wrath of God and has made a way for you and me to have peace and forgiveness before God.

PREACH

We are to be captivated that God's Word is Biblically Inerrant because it is truth and because its truth...

- God's word is reliable. What he promises he will fulfill. What he warns man kind about he is not kidding. When he predicts something it will come to pass. On the day of our resurrection he will say Rise! There will be no hesitation, glitch or pause. Fullness of life and new bodies in an instant... why because His word is reliable and trustworthy.
- God's Word speaks no falsehood. When he says you are free you are free indeed. When he says his grace is sufficient realize it is an over abundant sufficiency not just a "I get just enough of Jesus to ward off this temptation of weakness." No its God-strength made perfect in your weakness. Full capacity. He is not proclaiming used goods Mercies are new every morning- over and over and over
- God's word does not proclaim truth from a certain point of view leaving us wondering. He is Truth. When He says He exists, He exist! To deny Him is to be a fool. When he says, if you confess your sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us of sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, he means full cleansing, and full forgiveness is ours!!

Preach

We are to be captivated that God's Word is Clear

God's word is clear for everyone to understand-

- from those who are unlearned to those of highest scholastic minds...
- From the tribes of the third world to privately schooled royals in high society...
- from little children in the nursery to the oldest saint among us.

The Fact that God's word is clear and creates an obligation to all who read it and hear it ...

to believe what it say

to do what it commands

to write it on our hearts

The clarity of Scripture is a doctrine that elicits motivation for greater obedience, greater reverence and a greater love affection for God him and the word. We have no excuse for not standing on the Word of God.

Preach

We are to be captivated that God's Word is sufficient for all of life

The Bible shows that through God's word, he acts. Let their be light- there is light. Peace Be still- the storms stop. Come forth- Lazarus lives.

- When God says that we are strengthen through Christ we are strong
- When God says he is near the brokenhearted- we are comforted
- When God's word says, His word is a lamp for feet and light to our path- he Guides and counsels us
- When God reveals blind spots in our character he provides the grace of forgiveness and the ability to change
- When we need wisdom, God 's word invites us to ask for it
- When God says sinner need rescuing from the coming judgement, he provides the rescue through Jesus Christ to be save.

The BIBLE...

Let's pray

HERE I STAND: CAPTIVE BY THE WORD OF GOD

2 TIMOTHY 3:16, 17

Four Reasons We are to Be Captivated By the Word of God

(ABC'S of the Word of God)

1. Because God's Word is A_____

2. Because God's Word is B_____

3. Because God's Word is C_____

4. Because God's Word is S_____