

Theme: Christians must always be on their guard against being carried away by the empty deceits offered by the world to replace Jesus as our only source of true fulfillment and joy.

I. Intro – Meeting Prisoners of War

- A. At USNA I got to meet many former POW's
- B. Held captive by a real army, in a real war
- C. Today Paul warns us about being held captive
- D. But being held captive - for nothing!

II. A Lurking Danger

- A. The command - beware!
 - 1. NIV - see to it - idea is 'look out' 'beware'
 - 2. There are dangers all around them
 - 3. Being a Christian does not protect them
- B. The danger - being taken captive
 - 1. συλαγωγῶν - only time in NT; first use ever
 - 2. 'To carry away as booty or spoil'
 - 3. Metaphor - people taken captive after losing battle

III. The Means of Captivation

- A. The means - hollow and deceptive philosophy
 - 1. Not an army - the heart and mind!
 - 2. KJV - philosophy and vain deceit - 2 things
 - 3. NIV is correct - one thing in view

- 4. It is an empty, deceitful philosophy

B. The issue - A philosophy that is empty & deceitful

- 1. Issue is not philosophy - but **this** philosophy
 - a. Philosophy in ancient world included wisdom, religion
 - b. Like our worldview today
- 2. This philosophy is empty/hollow - it can not deliver
 - a. The meaning of KJV vain - not pride, but empty
 - b. This is why I titled this - 'Captivated by **nothing**'
 - c. These ideas look grand - but they are hollow
- 3. This philosophy is deceptive - it captivates
 - a. ἀπάτης - deceit, especially involving pleasure
 - b. Gen 3:13 - first use in LXX [2 Cor 11:3; 1 Tim 2:14]
 - c. Not just mental trick - he enticed her to sin
 - d. Hearts & minds captivated - then we are taken captive
 - e. This is why I titled this - '**Captivated** by nothing'
- 4. Christians captivated by nothing - without a fight!

IV. The Root Problem

- A. Philosophy built on a false foundation
 - 1. Human tradition & basic principles rather than Jesus
 - 2. This always leads to trouble - unpack these ideas
- B. Human tradition - rather than Jesus

1. Paul says this is just human ideas - not God's
2. Contrast with 'receiving' Jesus in 2:6 (similar word)

C. Basic principles of this world - tough phrase

1. A look at various translations of this phrase
2. στοιχεῖα - idea is building blocks of something else
 - a. Physical elements of universe
 - b. Rudimentary principles of religion, or world
 - c. Intermediary spirits who rule between humanity & gods
3. I think it is a combination of these ideas - especially b & c
 - a. Spirits - Col 2:10, 15, 18
 - b. Rudimentary principles of world - Col 2:20-21
4. Spirits behind and ruling through this world's principles

D. The essential - problem - not based on Christ!!!

V. Our Modern Traditions, Spirits, & Principles

A. Generation Me - it's all about me

1. This is the whole message of Joel Osteen
2. Same temptation as in Genesis 3 - it is about you!
3. Rom 9:20-21 - It's about God - not us!
4. Don't be deceived - it is not about you!

B. Money - the desire for riches

1. Seen in the popularity of the prosperity 'gospel'
2. Matt. 13:22 - deceitfulness (same word) of wealth

3. 1 Tim 6:5-10 - desire for riches; plunge into ruin

C. Relativism - no universal truth, right wrong

1. 68% of evangelical Gen-Y believe in universal right & wrong
2. This means 1/3 do not!!!
3. More and more think Jesus not the only way
4. But Scripture is clear - relativism is wrong
 - a. Isaiah 5:20 - don't confuse good and evil!
 - b. John 14:6 - Jesus is the ONLY WAY

D. Unbridled pleasure - especially sexual 'liberty' - sin!

1. Professing Christians proudly engage in sexual sin
2. 'This is the way God made me'
3. Eph. 4:22 - put off old sinful self; deceitful desires
4. Eph 5:5-6 - don't be deceived; immorality judged

E. An unbridled tongue

1. Only getting worse with facebook, blogs, etc.
2. People often show no restraint (or wisdom!)
3. TV & radio shows, magazines just for gossip
4. Matthew 12:36 - words matter, and will be judged!

VI. Applying the Word - Look to Jesus!

Christians Captivated by Nothing

Colossians 2:8

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Prayer

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”
Genesis 3:13 (Also see 2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:14)

Basic principles of this world (NIV)
Elemental spiritual forces of this world (NIV2011)
The rudiments of the world (KJV)
Elemental spirits of the world (ESV)
Elementary principles of the world (NASB)

and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over **every power and authority**.... 15 And having disarmed the **powers and authorities**, he made a public spectacle of them, **triumphing over them by the cross**... 18 Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and **the worship of angels** disqualify you for the prize.
Colossians 2:10, 15, 18

Since you died with Christ to **the basic principles of this world**, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to **its rules**: 21 “**Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!**”? 22 These are all destined to perish with use, because **they are based on human commands and teachings**. Colossians 2:20–22

But who are you, O man, to talk back to God? “Shall what is formed say to him who formed it, ‘Why did you make me like this?’” 21 Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for noble purposes and some for common use? Romans 9:20–21

The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the **deceitfulness of wealth** choke it, making it unfruitful. Matthew 13:22

men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and **who think that godliness is a means to financial gain**. 6 But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7 For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 8 But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 9 **People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap** and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into **ruin and destruction**. 10 **For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs**. 1 Timothy 6:5–10

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Isaiah 5:20

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its **deceitful desires**; Ephesians 4:22

For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person — such a man is an idolater — has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no one **deceive** you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Ephesians 5:5–6

But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. Matthew 12:36

23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.
1 Thessalonians 5:23–24