

Setting Captives Free Purpose, Vision, Drumbeat and Methodology

The purpose of Setting Captives Free is to honor and glorify God. Our vision is to reach as many people as possible with the liberating message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our drumbeat is to exalt the Name and Word of God above all things. Our methodology is to speak, preach, write, and proclaim by every means possible the truth of God's Word, in grace, apart from worldly wisdom or psychological methodologies.

The purpose of Setting Captives Free is to honor and glorify God.

1 Cor. 10:31

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1) Because our purpose is to glorify God, we seek to declare the excellencies of Him Who called us out of darkness into light. That is, we need to be Christ-centered rather than man-centered.

1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, *that you may proclaim the excellencies of him* who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

2) We know that *unity* in diversity is essential in honoring the Lord, so we seek for our ministry to be *unified* in the truth.

John 17:19-23

And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in *truth*.
²⁰"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, ²¹ *that they may all be one*, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² The *glory* that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, ²³ I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

The above passage could be summarized by saying that when we are *sanctified* by the truth, and *unified* in the truth, God is *glorified in us*. The same is true in Romans 15:4-6.

Romans 15:4-6

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the *encouragement of the Scriptures* we might have hope. ⁵ May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to *live in such harmony with one another*, in accord with Christ Jesus, ⁶ that *together you may with one voice glorify the God* and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Summary: when we are unified in the truth (the Scriptures) we glorify God.

The vision of Setting Captives Free is to reach as many people as possible with the liberating message of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our vision is evangelistic in nature: we desire to *find* those who are in habitual sin and *help them* to freedom in Christ.

- 1) We know that all who are appointed to eternal life will believe (Acts 13:48), and so our goal is to preach the gospel as far and wide as we can, to as many people as we can, knowing that God will grant repentance and faith and freedom to some.
- 2) We seek to extend our ministry to every tribe and nation.
- 3) We desire to come alongside the local church and equip and help them to minister to their own and help them out of habitual sin, including the use of local accountability groups.

Isaiah 24:15

Therefore in the east give glory to the LORD; in the coastlands of the sea, give glory to the name of the LORD, the God of Israel.

Matthew 28:19-20

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Summary: We are "go" oriented, therefore we are "grow" oriented, believing that as we "go" into all nations we will "grow" the kingdom of God and the ministry of Setting Captives Free.

The Drumbeat of Setting Captives Free is to exalt the Name and Word of God above all things.

Psalm 138:2

I bow down toward your holy temple
and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness,
for you have exalted above all things
your name and your word.

We are purposely biblical in our approach to ministry and truth plays a very important role with us. We see the church in some places sacrificing truth on the altar of relationship, and we believe that *only* a purposeful revival of preaching and teaching of the Bible can turn this weakness into strength.

- 1) The reason we must exalt the truth of God's Word is because God's Word is that which both saves and sanctifies:

2 Tim. 3:15-17

and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

John 17:17

Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

2) We know that one of the distinguishing characteristics of the teaching of Jesus is that He, as opposed to the scribes and Pharisees, taught as one having authority.

Mark 1:22

And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes.

We seek to teach the Bible with authority, but also with grace, with passion, and with clarity.

3) We must have a commitment to not be distracted by administration needs, but rather continue to exalt God's Word:

Acts 6:1-7

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. ² And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.

³ Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. ⁴ **But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.**" ⁵ And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶ These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷ **And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.**

As the leaders of the church set the priority to pray and preach, and have others administrate, the Lord honored their commitment and increased and multiplied their number daily.

4) A commitment to truth will, at times, divide relationships. Though we do not seek for this, indeed we do all we can to avoid it, we must acknowledge it will happen:

Matthew 10:34-38

"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.

³⁵ For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. ³⁶ And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. ³⁷ Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸ And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

Jesus is saying here that He is the priority relationship. Anytime we set aside Him and His truth for the sake of relationship we are in fact making an idol of relationship. This passage teaches us clearly that if we are following Christ, sometimes relationships will be divided, even important relationships. Though we purposely seek to not be divisive, we should expect to have division in relationship, for Jesus “came to bring a sword.”

Summary: God Himself exalts His Name and His Word above all things. It is our desire to do the same. We desire to be as Ezra, whom God used to usher in national revival to Israel. Ezra exalted the Name and Word of God above all things:

Ezra 7:10

For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.

Setting Captives Free methodology is to speak, preach, write, and proclaim by every means possible the truth of God's Word, in grace, apart from worldly wisdom or psychological methodologies.

Psalm 107:36-38

And there he lets the hungry dwell, and they establish a city to live in; ³⁷ they sow fields and plant vineyards
and get a fruitful yield. ³⁸ By his blessing they multiply greatly,
and he does not let their livestock diminish.

This passage teaches us that we are to “sow and plant” (verse 37) and that God will “multiply and provide” (verse 38). Our focus, our energies, our efforts are to be directed toward sowing the Word of God as widely as we can. If we do that, God will multiply our harvest, that is, grow our ministry, and will provide the resources needed. We are not to plan our ministry endeavors according to resources, but rather focus on sowing God's Word and accepting by faith that God will supply all our needs (multiply and provide), and we are not to become distracted by administrative needs (Acts 6).

1) We are to focus on sowing the Word of God abundantly.

2 Cor. 9:6-10

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. ⁹ As it is written,

"He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." ¹⁰ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.

As a ministry we seek to distribute the Word of God as far and as wide as we possibly can. We want to "sow abundantly" not sparingly. We must focus on how to get God's Word out as far and wide as possible.

Our current courses are:

Setting Captives Free—The Lord's Table: A Biblical Approach to Weight Loss
Setting Captives Free—Pure Freedom: Overcoming Pornography Addiction
Setting Captives Free—New Wine: Overcoming Drunkenness
Setting Captives Free—Door of Hope: Overcoming Homosexuality
Setting Captives Free—Breath of Life: Overcoming Smoking
Setting Captives Free—A United Front: Biblical Study for Spouses
Setting Captives Free—Purity Force Challenge: Equipping Teens for Purity

This year we have:

- Written 8 out of 10 additional studies which will be for all courses (these are follow-up studies, first written for TLT that will be adapted for all courses)
- Exalting the Word study (weekly Bible studies based on the Westminster Shorter Catechism)
- Deep and Wide study (twice daily studies)
- Translation work: Translators have finished Pure Freedom in Spanish and are nearly finished with Door of Hope in Spanish. They are currently translating Pure Freedom and The Lord's Table in French, Spanish and Dutch. Should all be available online by summer, Lord willing.
- We are seeking to find co-authors for courses on abortion and gambling, and considering online gaming.

We should expect God to grow us, if we exalt and sow His Word, and walk in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Holy Spirit:

Acts 2:42-47

And *they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship*, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³ And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ And all who believed were together and had all things in common. ⁴⁵ And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶ And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. *And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.*

Acts 9:26-31

And when he had come to Jerusalem, he attempted to join the disciples. And they were all afraid of him, for they did not believe that he was a disciple. ²⁷ But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles and declared to them how on the road he had seen the Lord, who spoke to him, and how at Damascus he

had preached boldly in the name of Jesus.²⁸ So he went in and out among them at Jerusalem, preaching boldly in the name of the Lord.²⁹ And he spoke and disputed against the Hellenists. But they were seeking to kill him.³⁰ And when the brothers learned this, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him off to Tarsus.

³¹ So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was being built up. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it multiplied.

Paul had begun infusing the church with power. As he preached boldly and disputed error two things happened: the church was strengthened and established (verse 31) and Paul was persecuted (verse 29). At Setting Captives Free we desire to preach the Word of God boldly and we expect for believers to be established in the truth, and we expect some persecution for our preaching, and we expect to see the ministry multiplied.

- 2) Our methodology is to sow the Word of God, and at the same time refuse worldly wisdom, humanistic philosophies and psychological techniques.

Col. 2:8-9

See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.⁹ For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,

The world is no different today than it was in the days when Paul wrote this verse to the Colossians. The world has their philosophy, their deception and their tradition, and all of it leads to captivity, whereas Christ brings freedom.

1 Cor. 1:19-27

For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."

²⁰ Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?²¹ For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.²² For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom,²³ but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles,²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.²⁵ For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong;

Both of the above passages call for discernment. In promoting the truth we must reject humanistic philosophies, man-centered theology, and worldly wisdom. We must reject this philosophy and empty deceit in the world, and in the church. This calls for discernment. We must have ways and means of

monitoring what is being taught by our leaders, what is being recommended, and make sure that what we are putting out as a ministry is doctrinally sound and honoring to the Lord.

However, there is much caution needed in discernment that we don't become prideful, schismatic or fall to elitism:

Luke 9:49-50

John answered, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he does not follow with us." ⁵⁰ But Jesus said to him, "Do not stop him, for the one who is not against you is for you."

Because of the above passage tolerance is much-needed. If people are not against us they are for us.

- 3) As our desire is to spread the Word of God far and wide we will seek to partner with other ministries that are like-minded in bringing glory to God, who desire to reach people with the gospel and make disciples of all nations, who seek to exalt the Name and Word of God above all things, and who refuse man-centered and humanistic methodologies.

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