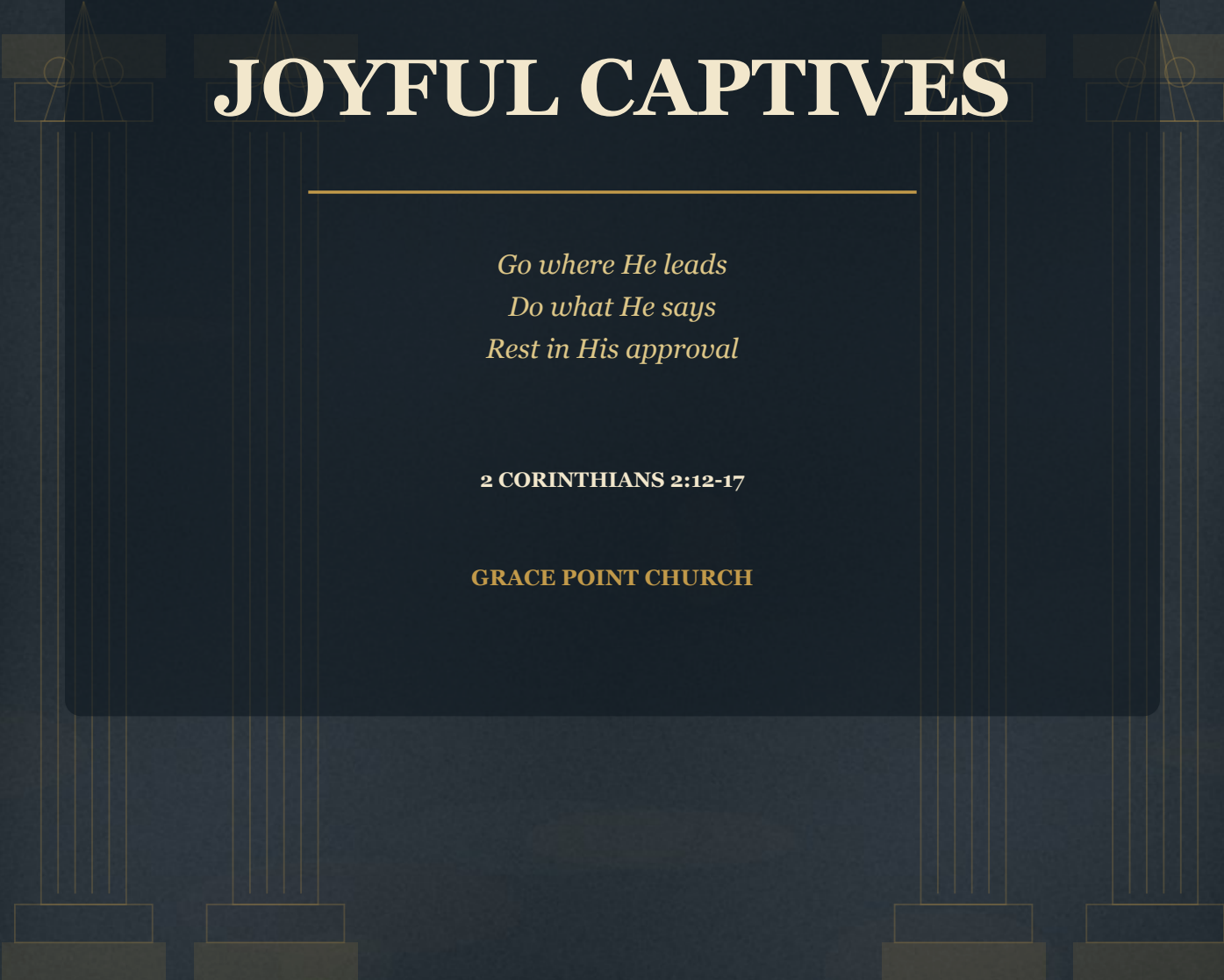




G.

A COMPANION WORKBOOK FOR 2 CORINTHIANS



JOYFUL CAPTIVES

*Go where He leads
Do what He says
Rest in His approval*

2 CORINTHIANS 2:12-17

GRACE POINT CHURCH

THE BIG IDEA

Stop making an idol of independence. Live united as joyful captives of Jesus Christ.

The world celebrates self-made independence, but Paul shows that independence is the enemy of unity in the church. We are never without a master. True freedom and joy are found in full surrender to Jesus as Lord and King - together with His people and for His mission.

KEY SCRIPTURE

"Thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession."

2 CORINTHIANS 2:14

Where have I made independence an idol? What am I afraid I will lose if I become fully dependent on Jesus and His people?

REFLECT AND RESPOND

UNITY BEFORE MISSION

Paul had a genuine opportunity to preach in Troas, yet his spirit was not at rest because Titus had not arrived with news from Corinth. The open door mattered, but so did restored trust and gospel unity with the church he loved.

OPPORTUNITY

A door was opened in the Lord for Paul to preach the gospel of Christ.

UNITY

Paul could not ignore the unresolved relationship with the Corinthians.

Independence kills unity. Where there is no unity, there is no effective gospel mission.

Where is unresolved distrust, pride, or isolation weakening my partnership in the mission of Jesus? What relationship needs gospel attention?

A STEP TOWARD GOSPEL UNITY

GO WHERE HE LEADS

Paul's triumphal-procession image is not a parade in which believers are the conquering heroes. Jesus is the victor. We are His conquered enemies, now led as joyful captives who display the mercy, strength, and glory of our King.

WHAT WE WERE

- Enemies of Christ
- Slaves of sin
- Ruled by self

WHAT GRACE MAKES US

- Captives of Christ
- Slaves of righteousness
- Led by our King

Paul lost. Jesus won. And that was best for Paul.

Where is Jesus leading me down the path of the cross? What would joyful surrender look like instead of resistance?

WHERE I WILL FOLLOW

DO WHAT HE SAYS

God spreads the knowledge of Christ through His people. The same gospel produces opposite responses: to those being saved it is the fragrance of life, while to those perishing it exposes the death of self-rule. Our calling is faithfulness, not universal approval.

"Through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere."

2 CORINTHIANS 2:14

LIFE TO LIFE

To those being saved, surrender to Jesus smells like resurrection and freedom.

DEATH TO DEATH

To those perishing, surrender sounds like condemnation of independence.

How does the gospel smell to me: like freedom through surrender, or a threat to my independence? Do my words and life smell like Jesus?

TELL THE TRUTH ABOUT JESUS

REST IN HIS APPROVAL

Paul felt the weight of representing Jesus before a world that could reject both the message and the messenger. His question - 'Who is sufficient for these things?' - exposes the limits of independence. Nobody is sufficient on their own.

Paul wanted the Corinthians' approval, but he only needed the approval of Christ - and in Christ, he already had it.

SINCERE

We do not peddle, soften, or use God's Word for personal gain.

SENT

We speak as people commissioned by God, in His sight, and in Christ.

Whose approval am I treating as necessary? How would resting in Christ's approval free me to speak and live with sincerity?

RESTING IN WHAT CHRIST SAYS

SINCERE & SENT

Joyful captives do not build their own brand or keep the gospel to themselves. Jesus sends His unified church into darkness with a message He alone can make effective.

1

REST

for the weary

2

JOY

for the suffering

3

HOPE

for the broken

4

GRACE

for the rebellious

5

LIFE

from the dead

Only Jesus can save. And Jesus saves through us - His unified people.

Where is Jesus sending me with this message? How can I rely on the church instead of trying to be all things to all people by myself?

MY PLACE IN THE MISSION

DISCUSSION & PRAYER

- 01 Where does independence most often compete with unity in your life?
- 02 Why did an open door in Troas not automatically equal effective mission?
- 03 What makes being conquered by Jesus a reason for joy?
- 04 How does the gospel smell to you right now - like life or like a threat?
- 05 Whose approval makes it hardest for you to speak the truth about Jesus?
- 06 How can the church help you live as someone sincere and sent?

PRAY: Thank Jesus for conquering your rebellion. Ask Him to expose independence, restore unity, make your life carry His fragrance, and send the church together with courage.

NOTES AND PRAYER

WALKING AS JOYFUL CAPTIVES

True joy can only come in full surrender to Jesus as King.

The sermon closes with three questions. Answer each one honestly and name one concrete response.

1

AM I READY TO GO?

Follow where Jesus leads, even through the weakness of the cross.

2

AM I WILLING TO ACT?

Do what Jesus says and speak the truth in love.

3

IS JESUS ENOUGH?

Rest in His approval for yourself and for the people He sends you to.

Go where He leads. Do what He says. Rest in His approval.

MY NEXT SURRENDERED STEP