

## Title: Captured

Brandy Helton, Garden Gathering, 8/31/25

Welcome to the Garden. We are delighted to have you. We delight to gather in His name, amen. It is the Father's good pleasure, and His delight that we are with Him. He is with us always. There's no place that I can go from His presence. When we get to come together as the Body of Christ, as families, in our city, communities, states, nations, regions, there's glory there. So, we live to give Him all the glory, honor and praise. We can worship on and on and on, but individually, we're supposed to take that worship home with us. That's the believers call, to worship Him in spirit and truth everyday, amen. It is good when we come together, hallelujah.

Today, the Spirit called this, "Captured." So I'm going to get into this and read the word. There is a lot of word today, and I know that He will speak very clearly to our hearts. We're supposed to, "Lay hold of what has been laid hold of for us." We're supposed to, "Lay hold of what has been laid hold of for us," individually and corporately.

### Philippians 3:12-14 NKJV

This is a passage by the apostle Paul, and he stated it perfectly. What a spirit filled declaration and revelation. Writing this letter to the Philippians while he's imprisoned for the faith, he is convinced that God is perfecting him. He is convinced of what God has entrusted to him, and that he is right in the center of His will. He is convinced that he has laid hold of revelation knowledge of the Lord. He knows that God has laid hold of him. He knows that God has surrounded him, filled him, captured him, has brought him to Himself, and he knows that he's no longer his own. He knows that he is, "laying hold of something in Christ, that He has already laid hold of him." He captured me. He has my attention. He knows. Paul says, "I'm not saying I'm finished yet, brothers and sisters, but I have laid hold of that which Christ Jesus has laid hold of me." I'm right in the center of His will. I'm forgetting the things that are behind, and I'm reaching forward. I'm pressing onward and upward into the high call of God, in Christ Jesus." He calls it, "I press towards the goal for the prize. It's an upward call of God in Christ Jesus. He was captured, and so we are captured.

We may have just been born again, but He's the one who captured our heart and granted repentance and turned our hearts and our eyes to Him. It's a beautiful journey. You know, He doesn't care if it takes ninety years for you to really come into the fullness. It's a journey of love. A lot of it depends on our yes, our yieldedness, and our submission to that kind of word, truth. When we first get saved, many times we are saved, glad that we are saved, going to Heaven, not going to hell and that our sins are forgiven. That's where every saint starts. Oh, beloved, there's more, amen. "Captured," laying hold of what has been laid hold of for us.

### Hebrews 6:18 NKJV

I'm paraphrasing here to get you to see the point as the children of God. "We who have fled for refuge, shall lay hold of the hope set before us." Hear it, as the children of God, "We who have fled for refuge, shall lay hold of the hope set before us." We have run to God, Who is our refuge, our fortress, and our Savior. We fled the things of this world, sin and all the death that is encompassing therein. We have run to God for refuge. We lay hold of Him to save us. There's nobody else that can save us. No other name under the sun can save us from eternal damnation or eternal glory. He is the only One. *It is* only through Christ, His Son, amen. As children of God, "We who have fled for refuge, shall lay hold of the hope that is set before us." As the Bride of Christ, which is who we are, we must lay hold of Jesus's Bridegroom heart for us. Jesus is the Head, the Husband and the Bridegroom. We are the Bride.

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Song of Solomon 4:9 NLT

“You have captured my heart, my treasure, My Bride. You hold it hostage with one glance of your eyes, with a single jewel of your necklace.”

I love this, and only God can impart this. This is a love story. In the middle of this, it's the Holy Ghost bringing revelation knowledge of the Son of the living God, the Most High God, God in the flesh, and the Bridegroom King. Who is going to have for *Himself* and lay hold of, a Bride, a Church, made ready for Him. In this there is revelation. He says, “Bride, you have captured my heart.” It's God's purpose. It's God's will. It's God's desire. Jesus would not lay hold of something that the Father did not prepare for Him before the foundations of the world. He wouldn't waste His time. But, He has devoted Himself, and He has done that and proved that through coming to the Earth. Jesus, in obedience to the Father, came and died on the cross to take away our sin. He was obedient even unto death. There is no way human sinners could come to a holy God and into the house of God, if we don't first go through Him. By allowing Him and believing that He is the One that came into the world, because God loves the world. He desires that none would perish. He's the One. We sang about Him this morning, He's the One. He's the only One. He came and He never sinned. He was perfect in all of His ways. He took our sin upon Himself, and that blood covered *us*. The great gospel of salvation.

He's going to bring a Kingdom through that gospel *to* all who believe upon Him. *Those* who believe in their heart, and confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord, shall be saved, truth. In a twinkling of eye, you *come* out of that mess into glory. Somebody laid hold of you. Jesus laid hold of the mission of the heart of the Father. Jesus Christ laid hold of it. He wasn't just obedient unto death. He has laid hold of everything that was in the Father's heart for us, for Him and for His Kingdom. He didn't shrink back. We ran for refuge under the shadow of His wings. We ran to Him, and we said, “Save me, heal me, deliver me, and help me.” Yes, only through Jesus Christ can we be saved. There's no other name under Heaven. There's no other way but Jesus. It's called a narrow way, and we've been captured. It's amazing. He says, “You beloved Church and Bride, you have captured my heart.”

Now, that sounds poetic and wonderful, but we've got to really think about it. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Most High God, Him, Jesus, this is what He says about you, about me, about His Church, from the beginning to the end. The last one that's going to come in, “You have captured my heart, my treasure, my Bride.” You see, that changes the way you're thinking, from, “I just go to church.” There's some identity here. Wow. You've given me sonship. I've been adopted. I've been grafted in. I've just received an inheritance through Jesus Christ. I'm receiving an inheritance called Heaven. He said, “Pray this way, Father, your Kingdom come, and your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.”

That's just the beginning. Here we go. You hear it? “You hold it hostage with one glance of your eyes, with a single jewel of your necklace.” He is so specific. He knows everything about us, amen. To capture, literally means, “to lay hold of,” that makes sense. “To seize, to take, to arrest, to handle, to wield like a sword.” You lay hold of that sword. You capture it. There's a grip there. Captured, “I'm going to lay hold of that which Christ Jesus has laid hold of me.” I'm going to “capture,” Lord, what you are revealing to me. I'm going to lay hold. I'm going to seize it. I'm going to take it. I'm going to arrest this. I'm going to take it captive. I'm going to take every thought captive to the obedience of your word and your will, so that I can hear what the Spirit of the Lord is saying to me.” Okay, it's not complacent. There's no slumber there. It's not apathetic. It's not dull. It's alive! God will capture the minds and the hearts of all of His people.

Now there's a journey called the Bible. He started working in Genesis chapter one. He goes all the way to the end. There are lots of stories. I say over and over, “Read your Bible.” *There are*

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*many* testimonies of humans encountering Almighty God. Humans were born in sin, and that's all that they knew. Even when God comes to the chosen people, and to this day, they are still working through the flesh. The Spirit came because of what Jesus said and did. Then He gets to come inside of me. Now, I get Holy Ghost in me when I've been born again from above. I'm the temple of the Holy Ghost now, and He's captured my heart. But, flesh is still flesh, yes. Before that time, you see all kinds of idolatry and sin and wickedness. In the journey of Israel, we have a love story of a people that God called to Himself. Yet, in their humanity, they walked it out *with* ups and downs and ins and outs. But, from that seed would come One that would be perfect, Jesus. Yes, the only One that could save us and the nations to boot. So, we're going to read a little testimony here.

Ezekiel 14:1-11 NLT Subtitled, "The idolatry of Israel's leaders."

God always starts with the leaders. He starts with the heads of your households. He goes to the head. Yes, Jesus is the Head. He is very much about a government of order. This is why He instructs us to pray for one another, for husbands to pray for your wives, for wives to pray for your husbands, and pray for leaders. We're called to pray, and commanded to pray for all leaders, whether we like them or not. Because, there's something coming. Idolatry is what has captured the Earth's leaders, period. So, listen to this story. Wow.

"Then some of the leaders of Israel visited me, and while they were sitting with me, this message came to me from the Lord, 'Son of man, 'These leaders have set up idols in their hearts. They have embraced things that will make them fall into sin. Why should I listen to their requests? Tell them, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: The people of Israel have set up idols in their hearts and fallen into sin, and then they go to a prophet asking for a message. So, I the Lord, will give them the kind of answer their great idolatry deserves. I will do this to capture the minds and hearts of all my people who have turned from me to worship their detestable idols.' 'Therefore tell the people of Israel, This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Repent and turn away from your idols and stop all your detestable sins. I, the Lord will answer all of those, both Israelites and foreigners, who reject me and set up idols in their hearts and so fall into sin, and who then come to a prophet asking for advice. I will turn against such people and make a terrible example of them, eliminating them from among my people. Then you will know that I am the Lord. And if a prophet is deceived into giving a message, it is because I, the Lord, have deceived that prophet. I will lift up my fist against such prophets and cut them off from the community of Israel. False prophets and those who seek their guidance will be punished for all of their sins. In this way, the people of Israel will learn not to stray from me, polluting themselves with sin. They will be my people, and I will be their God. I, the Sovereign Lord, have spoken."

"Then this message came to me from the Lord." This is Ezekiel, the prophet, receiving the word of the Lord. He says very clearly, "Son of man, these leaders have set up idols in their hearts." So, yes, there would be a real idol. "Here's a calf, a fish, whatever, I don't care what it is. Let's worship it." It's been around since the beginning. But, the true idolatry happens in the heart first. That's why He said, "Have no other gods before me. Don't make graven images of what you're worshipping." Today in America, you could have an idol called the dollar, and you could bow down to the dollar. But, it's in your heart, you understand? He said, "You can't serve both God and mammon. You must choose this day whom you're going to serve." Nothing is new.

Jesus Christ literally manifested the Father's heart and came with so much grace knowing that He was going to be the only one that would fulfill this. He is Prophet, He is Apostle, He is Pastor, He is Holy Ghost, hallelujah. He is Evangelist. He is Teacher, and a guide. He is the Son of God, manifest to save us. "Apart from Him, I can do nothing." You must hear this. He knows that these idols are set up in the hearts. "They have embraced the things that make them fall into sin," because that's where sin happens. Yes, it starts in the heart. It didn't start in your

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head. It starts in the heart. That's why it says, "If you believe in your heart, that Jesus is Lord." He didn't say, "If you believe in your mind." He didn't say, "If you believe in your fingers or your toes." He said, "If you believe in your heart." Okay, this is how you enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. All those other idols fall when you make Jesus King and Lord, yes.

This is the great message. He says, "They have embraced these things that will make them fall into sin," because that's just the beginning. When you open the door to sin, there is a fall, and great was the fall. He says, "Why should I listen to all the requests?" He's just talking with the Prophet. "Why should I listen to the request?" So, "You tell them this." "This is what the Sovereign Lord says: "The people of Israel have set up idols in their hearts and have fallen into sin. Then they go to some prophet asking for a message. So I, Lord, will give them the kind of answer that great idolatry deserves."

Can't you just see the Father's good pleasure, to purify the sons of man? He wants to capture us. He is laboring to lay hold of a people for His own good pleasure. He is captured by His own sovereignty, and He will have the final say, amen. Humans are humans, no matter how they're called. The flesh is always wanting a wonderful word. Any other word, but what God says. "That's a little too straightforward. I would like something a little softer, Lord." But, it says, "There is only one name under Heaven in which you can be saved, the name of Jesus. He is very straightforward. "So I, the Lord, will give them the kind of answer their great idolatry deserves." You must remember who His enemy is. "Satan comes to kill, steal and destroy. I have come to give you life and life abundantly," said, Jesus. You must understand who is behind that.

Ezekiel 14:5 NLT

"I will do this in order to capture the minds and hearts of all my people who have turned from me to worship their detestable idols."

Ezekiel 14:5 NKJV

"That I may seize the house of Israel by their heart, because they are all estranged from Me by their idols."

Ezekiel 14:5 ESV

"That I may lay hold of the hearts of the house of Israel, who are estranged from me through their idols."

Ezekiel 14:5 NIV

"I will do this to recapture the hearts of the people of Israel, who have all deserted me for their idols."

Ezekiel 14:5 NET

"I will do this in order to capture the hearts of the house of Israel, who have alienated themselves from me on account of all their idols."

Do you hear a sovereign God that is in love with His family and His people? He is jealous. He is jealous for those that He has created, fashioned, and formed to be His. Oh, He is very jealous. Yes, He is jealous, and this is the reality of the battleground on the planet still, truth. You hear His heart captured? "Lay hold of what has been laid hold of for you. You're going to know that I'm the Lord." That is always it. "You're going to know that I'm the Lord," no matter what you go through. Here's the bottom line, "You're going to know that I'm the Lord." He says that a lot in the book of Ezekiel. "They will know that I am the Lord, and the nations will know that I am the Lord. All will know that I am the Sovereign Lord over all." Amen, can you hear it?

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Oh, captured, that's why the Apostle Paul said, "I'm going to lay hold of that with which Christ Jesus has laid hold of me. I'm right here in this race, and here I am. I'm not saying I have gotten there yet, but forgetting everything that I've been through to this point, I am reaching forward to the things that are His. I'm pressing towards the goal. I'm going to the upward call." You hear it? There's never an end where you retire from God. I hammer this constantly. There's no retirement in the Kingdom of Heaven. You're just getting started when you hit fifty. The Lord knows when He'll call you home, truth. But, we are in the house of the Lord. It's a Kingdom, you see? We're all growing up into that.

Once you've tasted and seen that the Lord is good, you're laying hold. Laying hold and getting revelation and knowledge and understanding, and He just keeps your heart burning. We don't want that cold or lukewarm stuff, amen. All saints, as believers in Christ Jesus, are called to capture all the thoughts that wage war against us. When the false prophet comes up to us and a devil is putting thoughts in our head, Jesus has deputized, authorized and empowered the saint to say, "Hey, wait a minute, that's a stranger's voice. I'm not going to listen to that." As saints and believers in Christ Jesus, we are called to capture all the thoughts that wage war against us. You know, sometimes it's like, you're just fighting off flies. I mean, anybody ever hit your own head and said, "Stop thinking that way?" You know? "What am I thinking?" You know, "boink." There's something attacking my mind right now in my thoughts. It's called the battlefield of the mind, okay?

#### II Corinthians 10:3-4 ESV

"For though we walk in our flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but have divine power to destroy strongholds."

We have divine power to destroy the weapons that are coming against us, to destroy the strongholds.

#### II Corinthians 10:5-6 ESV

"We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete."

So, it has been from the beginning. We are to "take every thought captive to obey Christ, the one that's been sent, and then be ready to punish every disobedience when your obedience is complete."

That's so amazing. He plucks us out of hell. He saves us from this flesh war. He saves us from the idols in our own heart. He calls us to Himself. He is totally devoted. He is captured by us, and He puts that in us. So now we, in turn, are captured by Him. We are laying hold of Him. We don't want any other gods. We don't want our own flesh. We don't want the ways of the world. We want to follow the Word of God. Yes, we want to obey the Word of God, now. Once I was a sinner, and that's what I used to do, but no longer. It's been taken out of me. I don't even know who that person was. I've been transformed by the Light, until we go see Him face to face. Yet, we have to be empowered to know who we're waging war against. Right there in the mind, is 98% of your battle. As we continue to stir each other up, strengthen each other, pray and seek the Word and His Word, we are transformed. Correct? "Captured," it's so glorious.

Now you're going to see Him tearing up some idols in the heart and some ways of the flesh. Molding us into how God would handle things. We're going to see how God would do it. Humans are like, "Huh?" Because, He's laying hold of us. "He leads us into all truth," the Scripture says.

Colossians 2:6-23 NLT

6) "And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow Him. Let your roots grow down into Him, and let your lives be built on Him."

7) "Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness."

8) "Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high sounding nonsense that comes from human thinking and from spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ."

9) "For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body."

10) "So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority." Aren't you glad you are His?

11) "When you came to Christ, you were, "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision— the cutting away of your sinful nature."

12) "For you were buried with Christ, when you were baptized. And with Him, you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead."

13) "You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away." Then God," that same one that was talking to Ezekiel, "made you alive with Christ, for He forgave all of our sins."

14) "He canceled the record of the charges against us. He took it away by nailing it to the cross."

15) "In this way, He disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities." He took you back. "He shamed them publicly by His victory over them on that cross."

16) "So don't let anybody condemn you for what you eat or drink or for not celebrating certain holy days or the new moon or ceremonies or Sabbaths."

17) "For these rules are only shadows of a reality yet to come. And Christ Himself is that reality."

Wow, He has become all these things to me. Now, He's Lord of the Sabbath. You understand? Oh, now everything shifts, and "I have come to My rest." You hear it? Holy One, Christ Himself is this reality. "

18) "Don't let anybody condemn you by insisting on pious self denial or the worship of angels, saying that they have had visions about these things. Their sinful minds have made them proud."

19) "And they are not connected to Christ." Very important, "The head of the body. For He holds the whole body together with its joints and its ligaments, and it grows as God nourishes it."

Remember, "God causes the growth." Amen, He is the head of the body. He holds the whole body together with its joints and ligaments as it grows as God nourishes it." Our Father, yes?

20) "You have died with Christ, and He has set you free from the spiritual powers of this world." Glory to God. He says it over and over again, "You belong to me. Now I have laid hold of you, and you're laying hold of me."

21) "So why do you keep on following the rules of the world, such as, 'Don't handle! Don't taste! Don't touch?'"

22) "Such rules are mere human teachings about things that deteriorate as we use them."

23) "These rules may seem wise because they require strong devotion, pious self denial and severe bodily discipline, but they will provide no help in conquering a person's evil desires."

Anything could become an idol. Religion can become an idol. Good works can become an idol. Yes, you see it? He's cutting through everything. Back to Ezekiel, God's like, "Well, let me say something. I'm going to say something here." All He wants is that heart. He has laid hold of

something, and we are laying hold of Him. He's bringing revelation to revelation. Yes, He only brings truth.

Colossians 3:1-17 NLT

This was written to the body of Christ.

1) "Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of Heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand."

That's why our prayer is, "Let Heaven come." You know everything that lines up with Heaven, He says, "That's your home." Yes, you've been "seated with Christ in heavenly places, far above everything else," correct? So, you've got to shift here. "Set your sights on the realities of Heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand." That's our focus. That's our focus. That's our Lord.

2) "Think about the things of Heaven, not the things on Earth." Right? "Set your sights on that. Think about this." "Think about the things of Heaven, not the things on Earth."

3) "For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God."

4) "And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all His glory." Oh baby, there is a day coming where He will manifest and reveal Himself to all, amen. Look at these bullets.

5) "So put to death the sinful, earthly things lurking within you. Have nothing to do with sexual immorality, impurity, lust and evil desires." These come through the eye gate of what you see. "Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater." Oh, no, don't hit that idol word. He dealt with that in Ezekiel, correct? He wants our heart. He says, "Don't be greedy, for a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world."

6) "Because of these sins, the anger of God is coming."

7) "You used to do these things when your life was still part of this world."

8) "But now is the time to get rid of anger, rage, malicious behavior, slander and dirty language."

9) "Don't lie to each other, for you stripped off your old sinful nature and all of its wicked deeds." Oh, it's getting a little hot in here.

10) "Put on your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like Him." Did He just say that? He said, "Put on your new nature. Lay hold of what has been laid hold of for you." Get dressed. Yes, clothe yourself in Christ. Know it from the inside out and the outside in. The anointing is here. The anointing is here through Christ, who changes us to new creations. He says, "Put on your new nature." Agree with it, lay hold of it, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like Him." Oh, my God!

11) "In this new life, it doesn't matter if you're a Jew or Gentile, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbaric, uncivilized, slave, or free. Christ is all that matters, and He lives in all of us."

Wow. What focus. The Savior of all. The One that says, "Oh, wow man, you have captured me. Just one glance of your eyes." You say, "Why would you see us that way?" Because, He sees us perfect. "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." Wow. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and your neighbor as yourself." Who can do that? Only Christ in you. Yes, redeemed ones, this is who we are. Wow.

12) "So since God chose you to be the holy people He loves," don't you love that? "Since God chose you to be the holy people He loves, you must clothe yourself with tender hearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience."

13) "Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anybody who offends you. Remember the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others."

14) "Above all, clothe yourself with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony."

15) "And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body, you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful." That's a lifestyle. It's not just at

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Thanksgiving or when it's your birthday or when you get a gift. We're called to live in thankfulness to God every day.

16) "Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom He gives. Sing songs and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts."

17) "And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to Him, God the Father."

Wow, "captured." Oh, He has captured us, and we are laying hold of the One who was captured. He's laid up something called glory and the glory of God. As we seek His face Beloved, we turn our hearts to Him. He brings the conviction. We repent. We don't blame it. We say, Yes, I am. Forgive me, Lord. I am guilty as charged. Please forgive me and wash me and cleanse me. I command that and the spirit in it to leave in Jesus name. Yes, "Confess your sins one to another that you might be healed." Yes, He is purifying His Bride. I want you to be encouraged today with the movement in His glory. Amen.

Let's stand up and we'll pray. If you need prayer, we'll pray for you in any way. God is good.

"Father, we do. We submit ourselves. Oh, you are sovereign. You are sovereign. You are jealous. We honor your anointing. We honor you, Father, Jesus and great Holy Ghost. We love you. We love your word. We're attending to the messages you bring us. We lay hold of them, and we know that you wash us whiter than snow. Oh, the blood of Jesus. Thank You, Lord. I bless everybody who hears these words, Lord, that they'll be drawn in. Drawn into your heart like never before, in Jesus' name, amen.