

**New Caney Church of Christ**

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**Assembly Times**

*Sundays*  
 Bible Class 9:30 a.m.  
 Worship 10:30 a.m.  
*Wednesdays*  
 Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.

***Retaining The Standard  
 Of Sound Doctrine***

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# Standing Firm

“Take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm”  
 Ephesians 6:13

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## Taken Captive

*“See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ” (Colossians 2:8).*

*“See to it”* (“Beware,” King James) is from one Greek word meaning “to see...to see with the mind’s eye...to perceive...understand” (Thayer’s). The use in Colossians 2:8 indicates we must be careful about listening to others teach. It is our personal responsibility to be certain which teaching is accepted in our heart as truth, that is, to be certain what is taught is the truth. This can only be accomplished by confirming what is said by seeing it in Scripture. This is exactly the same concept taught by John when he said, *“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world”* (1 John 4:1).

If we do not “see to it,” we can be *“taken captive”* (“spoil you,” King James). The Greek literally means “to carry off booty...to carry off as a captive (and slave)” (Thayer’s). We can be led astray as the prize of another—which strongly indicates we are led astray from God and are no longer His. Our soul is at stake if we are not careful to “see to it.” Sadly, we have too many examples of brethren, family and friends who have failed to “see to it” who have been taken captive.

Paul, in Colossians 2:8, identifies some of the ways people are taken captive.

- Some are taken captive *“through philosophy.”* This is from the Greek word *philosophia* meaning “love of wisdom” (Thayer’s). The influence of Greek philosophy was strong in the ancient Gentile world, such as in Colossae. Paul’s concern was that some would be swayed away from the truth of God by the wisdom of man. This happens frequently today, especially as some are taken captive by atheism, evolution, and a strong emphasis on science to supposedly disprove the truth of God.
- Some are taken captive through *“empty deception”* (“vain deception,” King James). It is no accident that “philosophy” and “empty deception” are connected. The conclusions of the philosophies of men were empty (vain), unproven. They are perhaps plausible, and

**Taken Captive** [Continued from page 3]

He is our Master and Lord (Jude 1:4). For this reason Paul frequently referred to himself as the *“bond-servant”* of Jesus Christ (as in Phil. 1:1). We must be certain we are *“captive to the obedience of Christ”* (2 Cor. 10:5), rather than *“having been held captive by him (the devil) to do his will”* (2 Tim. 2:26). This is what we must be diligent about. See to it!

Charles Willis

**Know Your Bible: Answers**

1. Moses (at God’s command)  
Numbers 21:8-9
2. Dan (Genesis 49:17)
3. Moses (Exodus 4:3)
4. The Scribes and Pharisees  
(Matthew 23:23)
5. Paul (Acts 28:3)

**This Week’s Assignments & Events**

**Sunday Worship**

Greeter: Corwin Richardson  
 Announcements: John Van Baale  
 Encouragement Talk: Billy Lovell  
 Opening Prayer: Tyler Blazek  
 Scripture Reading: Casey Thomas  
 Philemon 1:10–25  
 Song Leader: Kevin Buckner  
 Table Talk: Sandon Spyker  
 Contribution: Eddie Bowen  
 Helper: Theo Edge  
 Fruit of Vine: Arturo Orozco  
 Helper: Jonathan Lovell  
 Closing Prayer: John Franks

**Sunday Afternoons**

July 28 Classroom Quarter Change  
 Aug 4 3PM Devotionals  
 Aug 11 3PM Prayer Meeting  
 Aug 18 Nothing

**Wednesday Evening**

Song Leader: Truett Blazek  
 Speaker: Tyler Blazek

certainly speculative, being unfounded and unproven. In reality they are deception. Many today have fallen for such ploys. The concept of “global warming as a consequence of man’s carelessness” is a hot topic in our society which some have believed; yet, some have proven it to be an empty deception (example: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jamestaylor/2011/11/23/climategate-2-0-new-e-mails-rock-the-global-warming-debate> [accessed 6.10.2015]). The same can be said of evolution. Paul indicates some are taken “captive” by these things and are no longer walking in Him (Col. 2:6).

- Some are taken captive through *“the tradition of men according to the elementary principles of the world.”* Some Jewish Christians were attempting to *“delude”* the Colossians with *“persuasive arguments”* (Col. 2:4). Specifically about food, festivals, and other physical, worldly things. Vincent, in his *Word Studies*, states the “tradition” refers to “Ceremonialism—meats, drinks, washings, Essenic asceticism, pagan symbolic mysteries and initiatory rites—all belonged to a rudimentary moral stage.” In this regard, Paul concludes, *“If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit yourself to decrees...”* which come from men (Col. 2:20). Many today have also been taken captive by such teaching. Traditions of men are taught as the commands of God (Matt. 15:9). Jesus condemned the Pharisees saying, *“Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men. He was also saying to them, You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God in order to keep your tradition”* (Mark 7:8–9). Today, for example, the Catholic church teaches their traditions are as binding as Scripture (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraph 97). Many have been taken captive (carried off as booty) because of a tradition of men which they have believed, rather than seeing to it that they follow the truth.

What we MUST be certain of is that we are captive *“according to Christ”* (Col. 2:8). Paul argues in Romans 6:16, *“Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?”* Colossians 2:8 teaches we will be captives (slaves), but we must see to it that we choose the right master! It is our responsibility to ensure we follow the truth, and are not carried off as a prize by something or someone who is false. We must be captive according to Christ. *“He who was called while free, is Christ’s slave”* (1 Cor. 7:22). [Continued on page 4]

## Know Your Bible

### Snakes

1. Who put a bronze snake on a pole in order to heal snakebite?
2. What tribe of Israel was supposed to be like a snake?
3. Who had a rod that turned into a snake?
4. Who did Jesus refer to as a brood of vipers?
5. Which apostle was bitten by a snake a lived?

Answers On Back

### Sunday Sermon

Point your phone camera at the square below, then click on the link to hear the sermon. Recordings will change mid-week.



## Ezekiel’s Wife

C.L.W.

Much of the writing of Ezekiel is in an apocalyptic style and thus difficult for us to understand, but not all of Ezekiel is this way. We are wrong to think we cannot understand any of what is found in Ezekiel. Consider this example from Ezekiel 24:15–24.

God was sending a message to His people through Ezekiel. Verse 21 says He was about to profane His sanctuary, *“the pride of your power, the desire of your eyes, and the delight of your soul; and your sons and your daughters whom you have left behind will fall by the sword.”* The passage continues saying they will not mourn, they will not weep, but they will rot away *“in your iniquities, and you will groan to one another”* (v.23). God was about to cause calamity to come upon the Israelites and they would not see that the calamity came from God.

Ezekiel was to be a sign to the people. God demonstrated through Ezekiel how strange it was for a people who supposedly loved God to not mourn when His temple was profaned and His people taken captive. He shows them how unusual and peculiar for a people to not relate to their God. He does this through Ezekiel’s relationship with his wife.

*“Son of man, behold, I am about to take from you the desire of your eyes with a blow; but you shall not mourn, and you shall not weep, and your tears shall not come. Groan silently; make no mourning for the dead. Bind on your turban, and put your shoes on your feet, and do not cover your moustache, and do not eat the bread of men. So I spoke to the people in the morning, and in the evening my wife died. And in the morning I did as I was commanded”* (Ezekiel 24:16–18).

We think of the wonderful teaching the prophets of God gave the people, yet many of the prophets had great sorrow in their service to God—Ezekiel among them. He was not permitted to mourn for his wife publicly, only silently. What a strange way to mourn someone we love. What a peculiar attitude to not speak of the one we love who has just passed. This was a powerful message to the people of God about how He viewed their attitude toward Him.

What is perhaps more significant for us is to see the obedient attitude of Ezekiel in not mourning his wife’s death. Knowing that her death was coming would seem to only have made her passing worse. To understand God intended this as a sign for the people would have been difficult to accept. Ezekiel knew it was God’s will for her to die—it was part of His plan. Groaning silently and mourning our loss is part of life—it’s how we continue to live without the one we love. God did not forbid his mourning, just the public mourning. It would have been so easy to have disobeyed, and so difficult to obey. Ezekiel stands before us as a man of character, strength and great faith. Traits we would do well to emulate.