**Recaptured to Restored**

**Introduction**

1. The gospel has saving power (**cf. Romans 1:16**).
2. Its saving power is multifaceted:
   1. Regenerative – new birth.
   2. Transformative – new life with Christ.
   3. Restorative – provision for prospective failures.
3. This power must be understood in order for us to be benefitted by it:
   1. Regenerative – How am I born again? At what point does this occur? Is there something I must do?
   2. Transformative – How can I undergo something so dramatic? How can I change? What will bring such change? Is there something I must do?
   3. Restorative – How can I overcome sin again? Is there any way to regain hope? Can this guilt be overcome? Is there something I must do?
4. The Christian has been freed from the bondage of sin – **Romans 6:17-18**
5. The Bible teaches the Christian can return to sin, and be recaptured if not careful – **Romans 6:15-16; 2 Timothy 2:26**
6. The Bible presents a message of reconciliation even for those who find themselves recaptured – **2 Corinthians 5:18-6:2** (written to Christians who found themselves again in Satan’s snare)
7. However, some, knowing this provision for reconciliation remains available for one who has come to Christ and fallen, struggle under the renewed grips of sin, desperately wanting out, but finding themselves dominated again. Can they be restored?
8. Recaptured
9. The Snare of the Devil
   1. **2 Timothy 2:24-26** – Paul’s instruction to Timothy regarding his role in warning brethren of error and bringing others out of error.
      1. **(v. 26)** – they’ve fallen prey to the devil’s snare.
         1. **Snare** – *pagis* – a trap (as fastened by a noose or notch); **figuratively, a trick or stratagem** (temptation) (STRONG)
            1. False teaching.
            2. Any temptation – allured through lusts of flesh, eyes, and pride of life.
         2. ***“having been taken captive”*** – *zōgreō* – lit. signifies “to take men alive” (from zoos, “alive,” and agreuo, “to hunt or catch”) (VINE)
            1. 2x – **2 Timothy 2:26; Luke 5:10**

**Luke 5:10** – effect of the gospel – captures men alive – the capturing is not to incapacitate them, but to harness their will with God’s.

**2 Timothy 2:26** – effect of Satan (error) – captures men alive – the capturing is not to incapacitate them, but to harness their will with Satan’s.

* + - * 1. ***“to do his will”***
    1. Describing a people who were once in the truth (**2 Timothy 2:18**), but yielded to Satan’s snare, got themselves captured, and are actively under his will and influence.
  1. Re-enslaved:
     1. Possible immediate repentance – **cf. Acts 8:19-24** (Simon responded immediately to Peter’s rebuke)
     2. **Possible tightening of the snare** – **2 Timothy 2:26** – implication is they are currently doing Satan’s will. (still ensnared)
        1. Paul warns of this – **Romans 6:16, 19** (lawlessness to lawlessness)
           1. ***Anomia eis ho anomia*** – lawlessness into/unto the lawlessness
        2. This progression has stages:
           1. Final – **2 Peter 2:20-22** – hardened beyond the point of the gospel affecting your conscience.

***“being past feeling” (Ephesians 4:19)***

* + - * 1. **Somewhere after the initial departure** – **Psalm 32:3-4** – feeling the weight of guilt, but not getting out of it.

Not necessarily completely hardened (though that is where it progresses).

Loathing self, and sinful choices, and hating your current standing with God, but STILL ENSNARED.

* + - 1. **Pivotal moment – find release and restoration or find yourself spiraling deeper.**
         1. To not choose one is to choose the other.
         2. If not progressing in righteousness, then progressing in unrighteousness (no standing still).

1. A Portrait of Helplessness
   1. Context of **Romans 7**:
      1. **Romans 6** – the newness of life is separate from sin. Warning of returning to slavery of sin.
      2. **Romans 7** – the necessity of release from Old Law for the release from ***“the law of sin and death” (8:2).***
         1. Main reason – Old Law did not give provision for sin – **Romans 8:2-3** (only the gospel did that).
         2. The blessings of Christ’s sacrifice aren’t under the Old Law – **Romans 7:24-25a (8:2 – under the *“law of the Spirit of life”*)**
      3. **NOT SPEAKING OF PAUL AS A CHRISTIAN.**
         1. Rather, using his past state as a man under the Old Law before Christ to show the Jews their need to die to the Law and be married to Christ.
   2. **Romans 7:13-25** – describes the dilemma as one enslaved to sin, hopeless and helpless without Christ.
      1. However, **Romans 6:1-2, 15-16** shows the possibility of returning to that hopeless and helpless life – when one turns away from Christ back to sin.
      2. It shows the struggle under consideration.
         1. **NOTE: However, this is not a depiction of normal life under Christ. THIS IS A DEPICTION OF ONE WITHOUT CHRIST.**
         2. **THIS IS NOT HOW LIFE IN CHRIST LOOKS, OR IS SUPPOSED TO LOOK.**
   3. **Romans 7:13-20** – one “sold under sin” – before Christ, but if we can return to sin as master then we can find ourselves “sold under sin” again.
      1. **(vv. 13-14)** – the problem is not the law, but the decision to do what is contrary to the law. (**v. 11** – yielding to sin’s allurement/deception, breaking the law, so the law that was to bring life brought death)
      2. **(v. 15)** – the dilemma.
         1. *Katergazomai* – “Accomplish, achieve…I do not perceive the outcome of my sinful life.” (Vincent’s Word Studies)
            1. **Accomplish**
         2. *Poieō* – “More nearly akin to Katergazomai/accomplish, realize…I do not practice what I would, and the outcome is what I hate.” (Vincent’s Word Studies)
            1. “sometimes means “to produce, bear,” **Luke 8:8** (“yielded” – produced)” (VINE)
            2. **Produce**
         3. Amended – ***“For what I am [accomplishing], I do not understand. For [the reason why I am accomplishing] what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I [produce].”***
            1. **Accomplishing** – (**v. 13**) – death (“producing” – Katergazomai)
            2. ***“through what is good”*** – why good? – meant to produce life – (**v. 10**)
            3. **What do you hate that you produce? – Death.**
      3. **(vv. 16-20)** – elaborates the figure using the same language.
         1. Amended – ***“(16) If, then, I [poieō; produce] what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. (17) But now, it is no longer I who [katergazomai; accomplish] it, but sin that dwells in me. (18) For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to [katergazomai; accomplish] what is good I do not find. (19) For the good that I will to do, I do not [poieō; produce]; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. (20) Now if I [poieō; produce] what I will not to do, it is no longer I who [katergazomai; accomplish] it, but sin that dwells in me.”***
         2. **NOTE: Not I, but sin that dwells in me – not a denial of responsibility, but an emphasis of control.**
            1. Opposite – **Galatians 2:20** – you are still living, but Christ is in control.
         3. **NOTE: In my flesh nothing good dwells – not an implication of inherent total depravity – simply an assertion that THE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM IS NOT WITHIN YOU. (not inherently evil or good – not source of evil, but THEN ALSO NOT SOURCE OF GOOD – LIFE). (seen in v. 18b).**
   4. **One found enslaved to sin again** – may want out of the grip of sin and death and may want spiritual life (to be right with God again), but finds self continuing to practice sin, and therefore continuing to produce death **(v. 19).**
      1. **Problem Paul addresses** – **(v. 24)** – stressing the state of man before Christ’s sacrifice and offering of freedom in the gospel.
      2. **WHAT IS THE PROBLEM FOR ONE ENSLAVED TO SIN HAVING ONCE BEEN FREED BY CHRIST?**
2. Coming to Our Senses
   1. NOTE: May be many reasons why found stuck in sin, but granted for this sermon – this person WANTS out, and hates where he is, but Satan has figuratively inebriated him with lies, and he must sober up (come to his senses).
   2. **2 Timothy 2:26** – Timothy’s work in preaching/teaching is to help those who are caught in the devil’s snare “come to their senses.”
      1. What is involved in helping them “come to their senses?”
         1. Teaching **(v. 24).**
         2. Correcting **(v. 25).**
         3. Knowing the truth (**v. 25).**
         4. All have to do with dismantling misinformation/deception/lies.
      2. ***“come to their senses”*** – *ananēphō* – *ana,* “back,” or “again,” *nepho,* “to be sober, to be wary” (VINE)
         1. “to return to soberness” (VINE)
         2. CONTEXT – error – **cf. 2 Peter 2:17-18** – intoxicating messages designed by Satan to lure men away from truth.
      3. Satan can inebriate us spiritually even though we know the truth, and aren’t incumbered by a specific false doctrine:
         1. “That they will come to their senses means literally ‘that they may return to soberness’ (ananēphō), a metaphor implying some previous duping by evil influences. As in the case of intoxication, the devil’s method is ‘to benumb the conscience, confuse the senses and paralyse the will’ (cf. Horton)” (Tyndale NT Commentaries, Guthrie)
         2. He is trying to dupe us, benumb our conscience, confuse our senses, so as to paralyze our will.
   3. Some are in the grips of Satan again, and though they want out they find themselves stuck even though they know better.
      1. Part of restoration requires “coming to their senses” about some lies Satan is telling them.
3. Restored
4. The Mechanism **(1 John 1:9; 2:1-2)** – God has made provision for restoration by Jesus’ blood – accessed through repentance (implied), confession of sin, and request through prayer for forgiveness.
   1. This provision by God brings several implications which dismantle the lies Satan tells us to keep us in the pit of sin.
   2. Understanding these implications, and having faith in them, will help us “come to our senses,” and escape the devil’s snare.
   3. The fact is WE CAN BE RESTORED!
5. God’s Repudiation of Satan’s Lies (with the offer of forgiveness/restoration)
   1. Godly sorrow is not to death.
      1. **2 Corinthians 7:8-10** – the function of godly sorrow.
         1. Involves shame – **(v. 11)** – all these efforts to clear themselves suggests a desire of distance from the act.
         2. **Cf. Ezekiel 36:31** – remember evil, loathe self for iniquity (after speaking of spiritual restoration occurring – involved shame – even continued, i.e. identifying shame with the activity from then on.)
      2. **2 Corinthians 2:6-8, 10-11** – such sorrow and shame was necessary for the man to experience to “come to his senses.”
         1. However, that sorrow is something Satan tries to take advantage of.
         2. The sorrow is not meant to remain – not as a present circumstance **(cf. 1 Timothy 1:15** – Sorrow for sin is a part of our humble countenance before God.).
      3. Not God’s intention/desire for you to be “swallowed up with too much sorrow:”
         1. **Psalm 32:3-5, 11** – from sorrow/gloom to joy!
         2. **Consider: Contrast of Judas and Peter.**
   2. Your purpose in God’s kingdom can be restored.
      1. Peter – especially would have struggled with this thought.
         1. Jesus’ foreshadow – **John 13:6-9** – ***“part with Me”*** – fellowship – no place in the kingdom.
            1. ***“wash you”*** – metaphor for the washing of sins.
            2. For Peter (and the others) to carry out their purpose, and further the Lord’s cause, they would need the cleansing power of Christ’s blood like any other.
         2. Jesus’ prediction – **Luke 22:31-32** – implied failure followed by command to do something for the Lord’s cause.
            1. **John 21:15-17** – ***“Feed My lambs…Tend My sheep…Feed My sheep.”***
            2. He still had a purpose to be restored to – it wasn’t erased.
      2. **Matthew 9:37-38** – always needs laborers! You can be one again!
   3. God’s grace still abounds much more.
      1. Receiving forgiveness is contingent on faith – **Romans 3:25** – propitiation through faith.
         1. Must trust in the efficacy of the sacrifice.
      2. Don’t believe Satan’s lie, and don’t lie to yourself, that God’s provisions are not enough for you and your particular circumstance.
      3. David appealed to God’s lovingkindness – **Psalm 51:1-2, 7** – multitude, thoroughly, I shall be clean/whiter than snow.
         1. He knew God’s grace was enough!
         2. After lust, adultery, murder, lies, etc.
      4. God’s grace abounds much more – **Romans 5:20-21**
      5. Able to save to uttermost – **Hebrews 7:25**

**Conclusion**

1. We must be wary of the power and progression of sin, and the craftiness of our adversary.
2. We must be aware that God has provided a way out through Jesus even if we fall back into sinfulness.
3. Let us take advantage of the restoration the Lord offers, and resist the lies Satan seeks to convince us of.