

# The Contest For Your Future

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# Preparing for the Contest



## Orientation

- ▶ Reading the Opposition
  - ▶ Help or hurt? Friend or foe?
- ▶ Perspective
  - ▶ Obstacle or occasion to shine?

## Attitude

- ▶ Intentionality
  - ▶ Serious mindset, serious results
- ▶ Objective
  - ▶ Christ's breakthrough is incontestable!
  - ▶ With God's help, see the obstacles as immaterial

# Your Identity and Christ's Triumphal Procession

The Epistles' Image of Christ's Victory





# Leading Every Thought Captive

Divine Power to Subjugate  
What Captivates Us



## Identifying the Cast of the Parade

- Victor (The General)
- Allies (The Cohort)
- Enemies (The Captives)
- Celebrants (The Incense-Bearers)

# Honoring the Victor

The Captain of Your Salvation — Christ!





# Enlisting Your Allies

The Promises of God



# Triumphing Over Your Enemies

Worldly Thoughts



# Distinguishing Friend from Foe (Thoughts)

ALLIES	ENEMIES
Enlighten	Deceive
Justify	Accuse
Defend	Attack
Liberate	Capture
Edify	Destroy



# Combating Future-Spoilers

Discouragement

“Will I Evers”

Hopelessness

“What Ifs”

Stress

“What Nows”

- ▶ Exchange fear of trouble with peace
- ▶ Take heart, hold fast to God's promises
- ▶ Cast all your care on God
- ▶ Past is not the end
- ▶ Present is not permanent
- ▶ Take the long perspective (eternity)
- ▶ Wait on God, seek His plan for your life

Hebrews 4:16:

Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace,  
that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

# Identifying with the Victor

Following in His Steps



# Stepping into the Place He Took for Us

## Step 1: Blessing (Matt. 3:16,17)

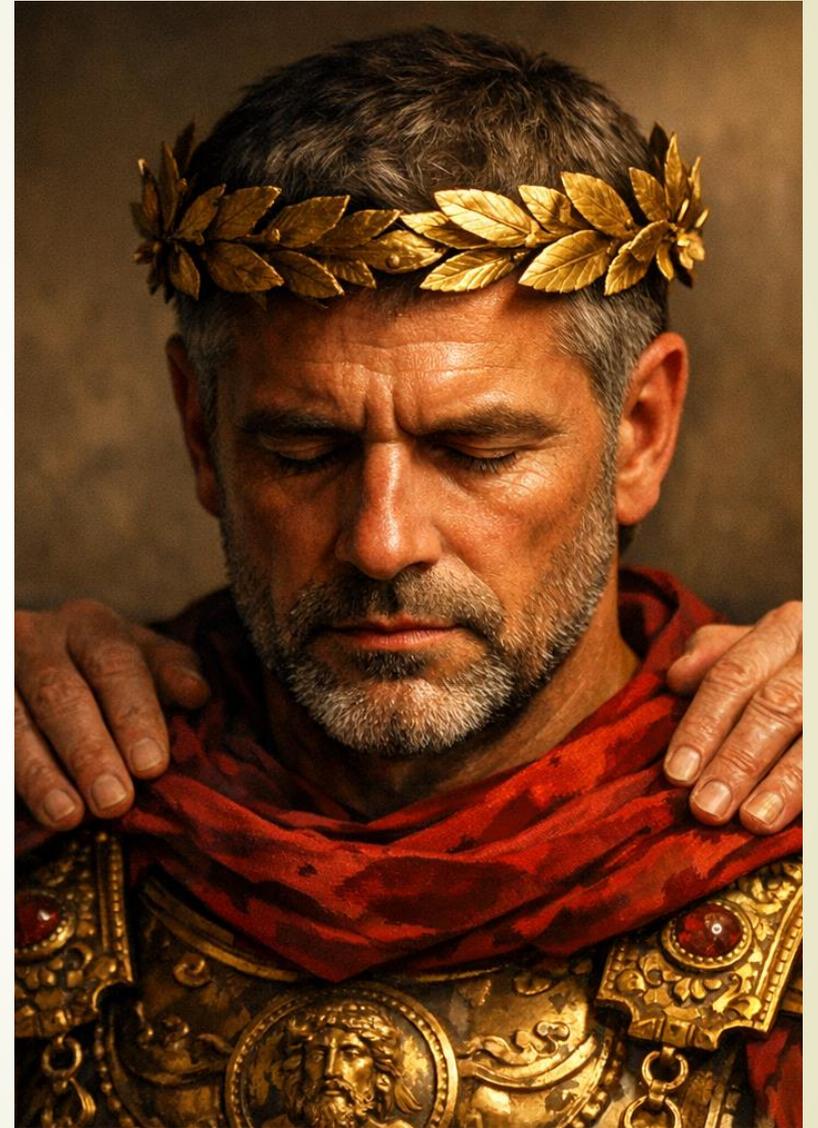
- ▶ God blessed His Son

## Step 2: Substitution (Is. 53:6)

- ▶ God attributed Christ's blessing to us
  - ▶ Christ took our place in punishment
  - ▶ We took his place in atonement

## Step 3: Identification (Eph. 2:4-6)

- ▶ We step into the place Christ took for us
  - ▶ Victory over death
  - ▶ Victory in life
  - ▶ Victory for all time



# Identifying with Him by Following in His Steps

## Christ Died, We Died with Him

- ▶ Price paid in full
- ▶ Offense extinguished

## Christ Arose, We Arose with Him

- ▶ Death defeated
- ▶ New life secured

## Christ Ascended, We Ascended with Him

- ▶ Salvation forever settled in heaven



Psalms 119:89

For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

# The Final Reckoning

## ➤ Leading Worldly Thoughts Captive

2 Corinthians 10:5b (TPT):

... We **capture like prisoners of war, every thought** and insist that it bow in obedience to the Anointed One.

## ➤ Capturing the Captors

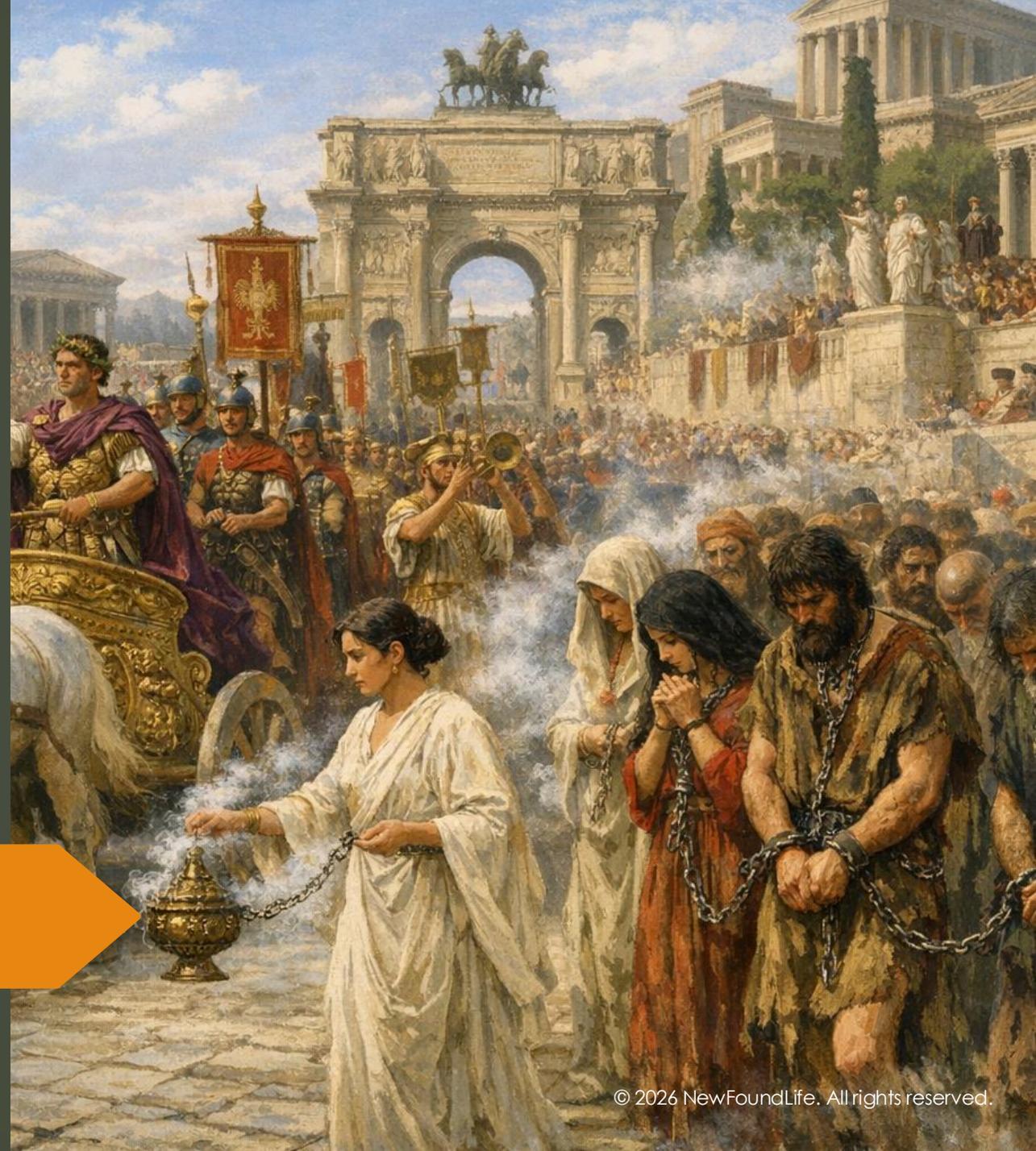
Colossians 2:15 (TPT):

Then Jesus made a public spectacle of all the powers and principalities of darkness, stripping away from them every weapon and all their spiritual authority and power to accuse us. And by the power of the cross, Jesus led them around as prisoners in a procession of triumph. **He was not their prisoner; they were his!**



# Celebrating the Author of Victory

Praising God, Spreading Christ's Fragrance



# Leaning into the Future with God in Christ

## Engage

- Take initiative to act, but take a break from works

## Engage God

- In all you take on, do it together with God

## Follow in Christ's Steps

- Step into your God-given identity revealed in Christ

## Walk in Love and Respect

- Love and honor God, Christ, and your fellow man

