

Chapter 2

- 1) The title of this chapter in “Counterfeit Hopes,” focusing on “how broader cultural influences can lead Christians to look beyond Scripture for alternative pathways to change. *After* reading the chapter, return to this question and summarize in your own words what that means.

False Hope

- 2) How does our culture attempt to compete with the Bible’s warnings and promises?

Name some specific examples.

- 3) What is Paul warning us of when tells us to not allow ourselves to be “taken captive”?

Where do find yourself easily “taken captive” in this way?

- 4) What is “hollow and deceptive philosophy”? Define it.

Why is it effective in deceiving even Bible-believing persons?

What does such philosophy do to one’s relationship with Christ? Why?

What needs to change?

- 5) In this section the authors identify several popular “deceptive and hollow” approaches to change. As each are listed below, define what the strategy is, how it works and state what the problem with it is. Then give examples of how these strategies threaten to take you captive.

My Circumstances –

How does this strategy work?

What is the problem with this strategy?

How have you seen yourself “taken captive” by it?

How does the Gospel speak to this strategy?

My Behavior –

How does this strategy work?

What is the problem with this strategy?

How have you seen yourself “taken captive” by it?

How does the Gospel speak to this strategy?

My Thinking –

How does this strategy work?

What is the problem with this strategy?

How have you seen yourself “taken captive” by it?

How does the Gospel speak to this strategy?

My Self-Concept –

How does this strategy work?

What is the problem with this strategy? (He lists several for this one!)

How have you seen yourself “taken captive” by it?

How does the Gospel speak to this strategy?

Just Trust Jesus More –

How does this strategy work?

What is the problem with this strategy? (He lists several for this one!)

How have you seen yourself “taken captive” by it?

How does the Gospel speak to this strategy?

True Hope

In this section, the authors show from Colossians 2 that there are three things true about every believer in Christ; truths which change the way we struggle against sin. In the questions below, identify and define these truths, then meditate on how they impact our struggle against sin (especially in light of the “hollow and deceptive philosophies” just discussed).

6) What is the first thing that we have in Christ, according to Colossians 2:9-10?

What does that mean?

When is that true?

How does this help us in our struggle against sin?

Give an example of how this helps you in a particular struggle you have or have had.

7) What two things does the fullness of Christ give us?

What does that mean?

When is that true?

How does this help us in our struggle against sin?

Give an example of how this helps you in a particular struggle you have or have had.

8) Building on these things, from what are we set free?

What does that mean?

When is that true?

How does this help us in our struggle against sin?

Give an example of how this helps you in a particular struggle you have or have had.

The Real World

9) How do the “real life” situations of those to whom the Scriptures were originally written encourage you in your struggle against sin?

10) Summarize in your own words what J. C. Ryle says about Christ and sanctification.

11) How are “peace of conscious” and “war within” related?

Change is Possible!

12) “The goal of this book is to help you grasp the implications of the good news of Jesus Christ for your identity and the daily trials and temptations you face.”

What areas of your life would you like to see changed? From what particular struggles with sin would you like to be free? How would you like to be more like Christ? List some specific examples below.

Do you believe that what Christ has done is sufficient, through the working of the Holy Spirit, to produce change? Or, do you doubt it?

If you are comfortable doing so, share some of these areas and struggles with others in the group. Pray for one another.