

## **BROKEN**

*"Broken Chains" Romans 6:1-14*

April 16, 2023

**INTRO:** Welcome to the concluding message from our Easter series, **BROKEN!** When planning this series, the pastors thought it would be good to provide a closing message to talk about the results of the resurrection of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. What significance is there with the empty tomb?

We began this journey three weeks ago when Pastor John preached on the theme **BROKEN WORLD**. He did an excellent job clearly setting the foundation as to why the world is broken. This *broken world* includes you and me. So, I ask you, "Why is the world broken?" It is because of sin which, as Pastor John described it, is a direct assault against God. Rarely do we sin without it affecting someone else, but first and foremost sin is a violation against God. So, the dilemma is, "God is good and we are not!" How can a good God let sin go unpunished? He can't! There is nothing you and I can do that would appease God's rightful and just wrath against us because of our sin. **NOTHING!!!** If there was anything we could do, then the cross would have been unnecessary. The Apostle John clearly shares the only solution in the gospel of John.

**John 3:36** Whoever believes (present participle) in the Son has (present, indicative) eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains (present, indicative) on him."

So, the ultimate question becomes: What have I done with Jesus?

Two weeks ago we looked at the theme, **BROKEN HEART**. As Jesus was entering Jerusalem He had two of the disciples go and get a colt which they put Jesus on and the crowd threw their coats and palm branches down in worship. As Jesus looked down on Jerusalem He wept because He knew they were going to be judged because of their rejection of Him as Messiah and King. We were reminded that through Jesus **WE GET TO!!** We get to:

\*come alongside what God is doing

\*worship God

\*have the same love and concern for others that God does

Last week our theme was **BROKEN SEAL** as we looked at the significance of the empty tomb. (big thank you to all those involved in the drama and the music) The religious leaders were able to convince Pilate of the need to secure the tomb, a truly fruitless venture. As Mary and Martha came to the tomb, expecting to find it as it was left, they found the stone rolled away with an angel sitting on it. The angel declared that he knew they were looking for Jesus, the One who was crucified (picture of a cross), but he told them Jesus was risen, just like He said. He invites them to come and see and then he sends them to go and share (telling the disciples the Lord had risen). Jesus Christ meets them on the way and repeats their mission to go and share the news with the disciples. When the disciples meet up with Jesus He tells them:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

If anybody has a right to tell us what to do, it is Jesus.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

The application:

God invites each one of us to come and see.

**HE IS RISEN**

There is proof for the resurrection.

**HE IS RISEN**

Every believer is called to go and share.

**HE IS RISEN**

He will never leave the believer.

**HE IS RISEN**

Let's celebrate!!!

**HE IS RISEN**

This brings us to this morning's theme: **BROKEN CHAINS**. What is the result of the resurrection? With the resurrection Jesus brought victory over sin and death, freedom from both the penalty and the power of sin!. This is highlighted in Romans 6, the passage we will be reading this morning. I encourage you to think about how this passage communicates these three thoughts found on your outline: **NO WAY**, **SET FREE**, and **TRULY ALIVE**. Let's take some time and read this passage.

**Romans 6:1–14** What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.

As I begin sharing this theme, **BROKEN CHAINS**, I'm reminded of how some elephant trainers would train elephants to not wander off or try to get away, like in the circus.

### **Memories of Chains Keep Elephants in Place**

In his book *Teaching the Elephant to Dance*, James Belasco describes how trainers shackle young elephants with heavy chains to deeply embedded stakes. In that way the elephant learns to stay in its place. When they get older and more powerful elephants never try to leave—even though they have the strength to pull the stake and walk away. Their conditioning has limited their movements. With only a small metal bracelet around their foot attached to nothing, they stand in place. The stakes are actually gone!

Like powerful elephants, many companies and people are bound by earlier conditioned restraints.

Even though Jesus Christ's resurrection breaks the chains of sin, do we, at times, live like we are still imprisoned with our sin?

*Source: Adapted from Hans Finzel, Change Is Like a Slinky: 30 strategies for promoting and surviving change in your organization (Northfield, 2004)*

The first thing we see in this passage can be expressed by the phrase:

### **NO WAY!!**

This is what I would say if somebody made the statement, "The Phillies are better than the Mets." **NO WAY!!**

Paul is speaking to believers, followers of Jesus. Since Paul begins Chapter 6 with this question, "*What shall we say then?*", he must be referring to something he has written previously. He begins Romans 5 telling us that the believer has been justified through faith, resulting in peace with God. Our sin has been paid for by Jesus Christ and we are declared righteous, because of what Jesus has done. He then concludes the chapter by showing how Adam's sin brought death, condemnation by God. In contrast, Jesus' righteous sacrifice brought justification and life. God's law demonstrated that we are unable to obey it perfectly, in fact, not even close. Paul then shares this statement; "Where sin increased, grace increased all the more." Because we are so in need of God's grace, some might conclude, "Since where there is more sin, there is more grace, I should sin more to receive more grace." Paul puts the question out there that everyone is asking.

Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? Romans 6:1

His answer: By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Romans 6:2

"*by no means*:" literally, may it never be! Strongest phrase that Paul could have used, which he uses 14 times in his letters. Don't let this thought even cross your mind! Don't think like this!

Don't live your life in chains. Don't be like the elephant who doesn't go anywhere because he thinks he is chained up.

Paul then tells them and us why this is such an unthinkable conclusion.

*We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?* Because of what Jesus accomplished on the cross we no longer have to sin. We *have* died (past tense) to sin. To continue to live a life of sin after coming to faith in Jesus is like dragging a dead man around. It stinks!!

The second truth I see in this passage relating to BROKEN CHAINS is:

### SET FREE

### v. 3-10

In the next verse he is speaking of the believer being baptized through the Holy Spirit, totally identifying with Jesus Christ. We identify with His death and through His resurrection we may live a new life! Because of that the chains of sin and death are no longer there!

**Romans 6:4** We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

The resurrection provides the power to live a new life, free from the chains and bondage of sin! To continue to live in sin when the chains have been broken through Christ's death and resurrection makes NO SENSE!!! Jesus changes EVERYTHING!!!

**Romans 6:5** If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.

The truth in this passage provides hope! In identifying with the death of Jesus we also identify with His resurrection. Yesterday we had the Celebration of Life service for Marge Dieffenbacher, a lovely lady who knows Jesus and is with the Lord now. She is all better, greatly missed but all better. It was her passion to live for Jesus and honor Him through her words and actions. Since Jesus has risen, those who know Him as their Lord and Savior, will also be risen. We have been set free from sin and death!!

The verb tenses in these next few verses are absolutely crucial:

**Romans 6:6-7** For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

*"we know:"* this is a present tense. We know right now and will continue to know.

*"that our old self was crucified with Him:"* this is a past tense, an accomplished fact. Through Jesus that old man no longer has the power it had before!!

*"so that the body of sin might be done away with:"* once again this is a past tense! You and I don't have to sin! Does this mean we will be perfect? No way! Romans 7 reminds us of the ongoing struggle we have with sin: not doing what we should and doing what we shouldn't.

Near the end of his life the Apostle Paul said this:

**1 Timothy 1:15** Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

*"because anyone who has died:"* past tense. Through Jesus Christ we have died to sin. Sometime later today or this week check out how many times *death* is mentioned in these verses.

*"has been freed from sin:"* the tense of this verb indicates it happened at a point of time in the past and continues on and on. You and I have been freed from the power of sin! How awesome is that!

How important is the resurrection in setting us free?

**Romans 6:8-9** Now if we died with Christ, we believe (present tense) that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised (past tense) from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery (present tense) over him.

The very thing the enemy thought would thwart the plan of God, the death of Jesus, was the means of victory through the resurrection! Death could not stop Him!!

**Romans 6:10** The death he died (past tense), he died (past tense) to sin once for all; but the life he lives (present tense), he lives (present tense) to God.

*"I serve a risen Savior, He's in the world today. I know that He is living whatever men may say."*

The resurrection allows us to say **NO WAY** to a life of sin and the resurrection allows us to be **SET FREE** from power of sin and thirdly, we can experience what it means to be:

### **TRULY ALIVE**

**v. 11-14**

The resurrection brings life!!! This section is filled with commands:

**Romans 6:11** In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

*"count yourselves:"* present tense command (to consider or reckon)

*"alive to God:"* present tense participle

How do we tell if somebody is alive? You look for a pulse, see if they're breathing, if their heart is beating. How can you and I tell if we are spiritually alive? That we have been set free from sin's slavery in our lives? Paul is going to list 4 things in these next few verses.

1) Don't let sin reign in your body (present tense command) Don't let sin be your boss! *"so that you obey (present tense) its evil desires"*

2) Don't offer the parts of your body to sin (present tense command)

Don't give sin a chance! Yet, it's not just what I don't do but also what I do.

3) Offer yourself to God, (aorist tense command), as those who have been brought from death to life. We say we're alive, live like it! Throw the shackles off!!!

4) Offer the parts of your body to him (past tense command) as instruments of righteousness

Before coming to faith in our risen Lord and Savior we had no chance in this battle. We were doomed to failure but Christ's death and resurrection provides the possibility of victory. In Him we are truly alive. In Him we are set free. In Him we can say **NO WAY**. There are great truths in the songs we have sung this morning.

### **SO WHAT???**

We hope that through this Easter series God has encouraged and challenged each of us. I know that He has spoken to me as I have studied in preparation to share His Word. God spoke to me as Todd, Dan, and Orville shared their testimonies at the SonRise service.

Am I living like a person who has been set free?

Have I experienced the peace and victory of the chain breaker?

Am I living like one who is truly free?

With whom am I sharing my journey of faith?