

Freedom From Sin

ROMANS 6:1-23

MEMORY VERSE

ROMANS 6:18

And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Enough “Before and After” templates for each child in the classroom, markers or crayons; optional – Polaroid camera and film and gluesticks.

A watch with a second hand.

Construction paper, scissors, a stapler and markers

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Before and After

Have you ever seen those advertisements that show pictures of people “before” and “after”? Usually it is a diet ad that shows how someone has lost a lot of weight. As believers we also have a snapshot of our lives before Jesus and after. As a fun way to introduce today’s lesson let’s look at some before and after pictures.

Have enough copies of the before and after template to hand out to each child in your classroom. On the template there is a picture of a man in prison. Use this picture to talk about our lives before Jesus (we are in bondage to sin, under judgment, etc.). Next you can have the children draw a picture of themselves under the after Jesus heading. You can then explain the differences of a life before Jesus and after Jesus.

Optional – You can use a Polaroid camera to take pictures of the children and paste the picture to the bottom of the template sheet. Allow the children to take the pictures home with them.

LESSON TIME!

In the previous chapters of the Book of Romans, Paul began to explain to the Romans about the wonderful gift of salvation. He gave a complete history of how sinful man is and everyone's desperate need for salvation. He explained how that salvation was not intended just for the Jews but for the entire world and how that salvation is provided only by believing in Jesus.

In this week's lesson, Paul continues to teach about the free gift of salvation for every man, woman, boy and girl and in particular how that the salvation given to us through Jesus will also free us from bondage, or slavery to sin. We don't have to serve sin any more, but we are now free to serve Jesus! This is exciting news, so let's discover what this means for our lives. **Jesus has set us free from sin.**

ROMANS 6:1-3

What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Let's think about a "what if" situation for a moment. Suppose someone had done something very wrong, like maybe killing

another person. They were caught and went to trial and were found guilty. They were now in prison and waiting to be executed.

Then after a while that day came that they were to be executed. But what would happen if suddenly the very judge that found the prisoner guilty came into the prison. And then they took the place of the prisoner and died for the prisoner and all the prisoner had to do was to simply receive the free gift that was given to him and he could go free.

What do you suppose the prisoner would do? Would he say, “No I don’t think I want to be freed from this prison I am in?” Or would he say, “Yes, I accept the gift!” How do you think he would feel about the judge? He would be forever grateful for what he did for him.

In many ways our salvation is similar. We are guilty of sin. We have done wrong things and we do not deserve to go to heaven. In the Bible sin is often pictured like slavery or being in bondage. Before we come to Jesus we are under the control of our flesh and its desires. Sin has a hold on us that we can’t break by ourselves. And because of this sin we are found guilty and under God’s judgment for our sin.

But then like the judge in our story, God became flesh. And Jesus lived the perfect life we never could and then laid down his life on the cross and died for us so we would not have to receive the punishment for our sin. Jesus died for us so that we could be set free. So we would be forgiven of our sin and given a brand new life to live for Him.

Do you suppose that the prisoner in our story would be thankful to the judge who laid down his life for him? He would no doubt be very grateful. And now that he has been given life and freedom and has a heart of gratitude he is free to never commit the same sins again.

In 2 Corinthians 5:10 it says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” In Jesus, we become brand new people. When we truly realize all that Jesus has done for us in saving us and forgiving us for our sin, it makes us want to please Him and to serve Him. Some people think that we have to serve Jesus to keep Him pleased with us so He won’t take away our salvation. But that isn’t true. Salvation is forever and we serve Him because of what He has done for us, out of a heart of thanksgiving and gratitude. We want to do what is right because He has made us a brand new person, free from the power of sin to make us its slaves and now able to give Him our lives. **Jesus has set us free from sin.**

Paul asks the question, “Should we continue in sin so that we can have more of God’s grace?” And the answer is “No way!” He is explaining that we have been freed from sin and should no longer serve it. Does it mean we are perfect? No, but it does mean that as Christians we should be growing in our relationship with Jesus and becoming more and more like Him. Sin should no longer be the main thing in our lives, rather pleasing Jesus.

Baptism in water is a picture of all of this. When we are baptized it is a picture of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. That is why we baptize in water and have people go under water and back up. It pictures Jesus’ death and burial (going under water) and then His resurrection (coming up out of the water).

It also is a picture of us dying to our old life, being buried with Jesus (going under water) and then being raised to a brand new life in Jesus (coming up out of the water). When we come to Jesus there is a change that takes place. We become brand new people. Our desires change, our relationship with the world changes, and our hearts toward the things of the Lord change.

Again we don't become perfect and there is a whole lifetime of growing in Jesus, but at the same time there is change. If a person asks Jesus to come into their life and there is no change or a desire to live for Jesus then maybe there wasn't something real that happened in that person's heart. It is something that only we know in our hearts between us and Jesus if it is real or not. But the way we can tell it is real is when we see our lives change. **Jesus has set us free from sin.**

ROMANS 6:5-11

For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.

For he who has died has been freed from sin.

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.

For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul goes on to say that just like Jesus died and was resurrected from the grave we too, have new life and will live forever with Him

in heaven. **Jesus has set us free from sin.** After Jesus died on the cross and paid the penalty for all of our sin, we must remember that He did not stay in the grave. He was resurrected to a new life. In the same way we are given a brand new life when we come to Jesus.

So we can now live this new life in Jesus and allow Him to do amazing things in our lives. We don't have to continue to do wrong things, but now, through the Holy Spirit, we can choose to do what is right. Verse 11 tells us that we need to live our lives "reckoning" or knowing that we really are dead to sin now, and alive to God. Be careful not to fool yourself that you have to "give in" to sin. If you are in Jesus then you don't have to give in. Jesus will give you the power to live for Him. **Jesus has set us free from sin.**

Trapped

Have all of the children form a circle in the center of the room and stand shoulder to shoulder next to each other. Choose one student to be "It". Have that child go into the middle of the circle. Explain to the student in the middle that their goal is to get out of the trap, but the children in the circle are going to do everything they can to keep you trapped (be careful to make sure the student in the center does not hurt anyone in trying to get out of the circle). Tell them that they have 30 seconds (or however long you determine) to try to get out. Using a watch with a second hand say go and give the children 30 seconds. Say stop when the time is up.

What should happen is hopefully the student won't break free. Allow several other children to play the part of the student in the middle.

When finished playing have the children sit down again and share that this game is kind of like sin. It can have us trapped and we

can't get out of it. The only way out is for Jesus to open the prison door and set us free!

ROMANS 6:12-14

Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

So what does all of this look like in our lives? We are given some practical things in these verses. It is important to realize that we have a part in all of this. We are told that we need to realize and understand this new life we have and start living our lives according to that truth (reckon ourselves dead to sin). Then we are told that we should not let sin reign in us. As Christians we can let sin creep back into our lives and even control us again. But it isn't because we have to, it is only if we choose to. Paul tells us, "Don't let that happen!"

Then we are told what we need to do. We should present our lives and everything about us to the Lord for Him to use. If we grow in our relationship with Him and allow Him to use our lives and live for Him then He will use us and doing right things (righteousness) will mark our lives, not sin.

Then Paul says that sin shall not have dominion over you. We don't have to say yes to sin. Did you know that when you are tempted that you can have the power to say no every time? I Corinthians 10:13 says, "No temptation has overtaken you except

such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.” **Jesus has set us free from sin.**

ROMANS 6:15-16

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

Just like back in verse one, Paul once again uses this question “Just because we are now under grace, is that going to give us the right to keep on choosing to sin?” His answer, which needs to be our answer if we truly want to live for Jesus is “Certainly not!” Grace does not give us the right to sin whenever and however we want, it gives us the desire to live for God and helps us to live free from sin. It is only through a relationship with Jesus that this type of life is possible. **Jesus has set us free from sin.**

ROMANS 6:17-20

But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.

And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness.

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

How did you become a Christian? You were taught the things of God from the Bible then you believed in Jesus with all your heart right? Well, that's what Paul is saying here in verse 17. When he speaks about doctrine he was referring to the scriptures and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Paul talks about how we were before we came to the Lord, dead in our sins; we were slaves to our sins. But when we are born again we become slaves to righteousness, the true things of God. He used the strong word "slaves" to show just how drastic that change is when we come to the Lord. When we are truly seeking the Lord and living for Him we will be His slaves in that we will want to do anything to please Him, and that definitely means we turn from our sinful ways. **Jesus has set us free from sin.**

ROMANS 6:21-23

What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness and the end, everlasting life.

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul ends this chapter by telling the Romans, and it's the same for you and I, that Christians do not have to live in bondage to the sins we did when we were without Jesus because **Jesus has set us free from sin.** There is no middle ground. We are either serving the Lord, and that means we are no longer controlled by sin. Or we are

continuing to choose to sin, which will lead to death. Sin will only lead to death and grace will only lead to eternal life in heaven.

We must always remember that we cannot earn our salvation. It is a gift and we must receive it in order to have it. Remember the story of the man in prison at the beginning of today's lesson; he was given the gift of life, he didn't earn it and there was no way he ever could. We need to just receive God's gift and remember that **Jesus has set us free from sin.**

If you have never asked Jesus to come into your life, you can do that today and experience the new life He has for you. If you are a Christian now, what is your life showing? Are you walking in the newness of life that Paul talks about here? Or are you allowing yourself to be brought back under the control of sin. God's grace and power is there for you to overcome sin. May the Lord bless you as you continue to grow in Him.

Freed from Sin

This craft will help to remind us that Jesus has freed us from our sin. The children will be making handcuffs from construction paper. You will need construction paper, scissors, a stapler and markers.

For each child you will need two 1"x 10" strips and five 1"x 7" strips. The color of the construction paper doesn't matter, except that it should be a light color so that it can be written on (gray would do well since it is the color of handcuffs). Once the strips are cut and distributed (strips can be pre-cut before class) have the children share markers. On one of the 1"x 10" strips write the word Jesus in large letters. Next, take one of the smaller strips and write "has". Take another small strip and write "set"; another small strip and write "us"; another small strip and write "free"; another small strip and write "from"; and the last small strip write "sin". On the final larger strip write, "Romans 6".

After writing the words on the strips take the first strip (with Jesus written on it), form a circle and staple the ends together with approximately a 1" overlap. Next, take the small strip with "has" written on it and put it through the circle you just made. Bring the ends together making sure the writing is on the outside and make a circle. Staple the ends together with approximately a 1" overlap. Do the same thing with the remaining small strips making sure to go in order of the words to have the theme written out. Finally, take the last strip and form a circle. You will have a set of handcuffs with two larger circles on the outside and 5 smaller circles on the inside representing a chain. The theme will be written out in order if done correctly. Have the children take this craft home to remind them that Jesus has set them free from sin.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving that Jesus has set us free from sin. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.

Before Jesus



After Jesus