

Message Series: **The Power of a Promise**

Message Title: **The Power to Liberate**

Scripture Source: **Galatians 5:13**

Date: Sunday, July 3, 2016

Teacher: John Garner

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### **The Joy of Liberation**

The people of Holland still express heartfelt gratitude to Canada for the soldiers involved in their liberation from cruel military oppression during WW2. The sincerity of their appreciation is unmistakable. Stories of liberation can move us deeply. It can be on a large scale or on a much smaller scale but just as important to the one child liberated from an abductor and reunited with family members.

Experiencing liberation can be a deeply moving and life altering event. To liberate is defined as: "to set free, as from bondage...to deliver, loose, unfetter"

### **Liberation of the Soul**

At times our soul can feel imprisoned, in bondage to guilt, shame, and chronically destructive attitudes and behaviours. We can feel trapped and powerless, unable to set ourselves free from haunting guilt and self-destructive ways of thinking and acting. Is there a promise of God that can intersect with these interior realities in your life and mine? Yes, a resounding yes that finds its roots in the death of Jesus.

A powerful three fold promise that meets us where we truly are and leads us forward with hope, purpose, and power.

We can experience the power of liberation from the Penalty of Sin, the Power of Sin, and one day, the Presence of Sin. What phrase specifically touches your heart and mind today?

- Liberation from the penalty of sin
- Liberation from the power of sin
- Liberation from the presence of sin

### **The Power to Liberate from the Penalty of Sin**

Romans 3:23, 6:23. Sin is the failure to love God perfectly, ourselves wisely and others sacrificially. Sin is to live a self-centered and self-directed life and to marginalize God. There is a penalty for this choice and behaviour. Death...physical and spiritual...separation from life and God.

Sin, yours and mine must be judged. And this is where the story turns dramatically. God sent Jesus to earth to live a perfect life and die a sacrificial death in our place so that our sins could be fully forgiven and we could be restored to a relationship with God.

When we confess our sins, he promises to forgive us our sins, every single one. Including the ones that haunt you, the ones that keep you up at night. Those sins can be fully and permanently forgiven. 1 John 1:9; Proverbs 28:13. The penalty has been paid on your behalf by Jesus Christ. A pardon has been offered to you. What will you do with it...and Him? Will I ACCEPT the pardon?

How do we experience this interior liberation from the penalty of sin? Faith in the death of Jesus on our behalf, a faith that acknowledges the fact of sin and longs to live for God and to turn away from a self-centered and self-directed way of living. A simple prayer...'Lord, deliver me from the penalty of my sin. I trust that Jesus died for my sins and I surrender my life to your leadership.'

Illustrate: George Wilson story

### **The Power to Liberate from the Power of Sin**

Romans 6:17-18, Galatians 5:13

We can overcome the urges and invitations to 'take a walk on the wild side' and indulge desires and drives that can imprison us. Illustrate:

Please note, the desire for happiness and fulfillment isn't necessarily wrong...it's how we go about satisfying the desire that can be a problem.

“Desire happens....’ desires must not so much be denied as rightly ordered.’ There’s a space – be it small- between yearning and sin, between desire and giving in. In this moment we get to choose. We can choose to follow our urges’ behest. We can choose the way of denial. We can choose to wallow in shame...We can flee temptation by whatever means works best for us.”  
(Agnieszka Tennant)

Friends, the promise of God bristles with energy at this point...we can choose increasingly to make wise and healthy choices. Romans 8:10-14. For every follower of Jesus, the Spirit of Jesus lives within our soul. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead can enable us to think, act and respond with discernment and power when temptation comes calling. Left to ourselves we can be overrun and overcome by all sorts of indulgent desires and drives. The promise of God is this...we can experience liberation from the power of sin...if we will ACT with the power of God within us. We must cooperate with God, reading and responding to his life directing and life sustaining words.

### **The Power to Liberate From the Presence of Sin**

One day, Jesus will return to this earth. How that all works out I will leave to smarter people to figure out...if it can be figured out! 1 Corinthians 11:26 makes a strong statement.

“For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”

And when Jesus returns, evil will be overthrown, the devil will be vanquished and a ‘new heaven and a new earth’ will come about...where sin will be forever banished and every interior struggle with temptation and sin will be a thing of the past. For we will be made like Jesus and the capacity to sin will be destroyed and we will be marked by love and righteousness. 2 Peter 3:13; 1 John 3:2-3

That day gives me hope in the present struggle. One day the need to confess sin, to do battle with temptation will be over. Will you ANTICIPATE the promise that one day we will be liberated from the very presence and taint of sin?

### **If These Things be True...**

We can be filled with hope, energy and purpose today...ready to offer the hope of God’s powerful promises to others, beginning within our own families and relationships, and within this church family.

We are filled with renewed purpose to keep short accounts with God, others and the person in the mirror...and that is a healthy way to live.