

I. Introduction

- A. Look at a fully grown circus elephant. We are talking about a creature that weighs 12,000 pounds. It can uproot a tree with its face. It can flip a car like a toy. It is a biological tank.
- B. But if you look closely at that elephant in the tent, you will see something tragic. It isn't held back by a cage of steel bars. It is held in place by a small rope tied to a wooden stake.
- C. How is that possible? The elephant could snap that rope with a flick of its ankle.
- D. Here is the secret—and it is cruel: When the elephant was a baby, the trainers used a heavy chain. The baby pulled and pulled, but it wasn't strong enough. It fought until it broke. It learned a lie. It learned: "I am stuck. I am weak. I can't."
- E. Years later, the elephant is a giant. The chain is gone, replaced by a flimsy string. But the elephant never tries to break free.
- F. Why? Because it is not being held back by the rope; it is being held back by the memory of the chain.
- G. It is being held back by learned helplessness.
 1. And that is exactly how the devil holds you back.
 2. He has backed up and dumped an avalanche of learned helplessness on your past self, and everything in Scripture is the force of heaven to help you break free.

II. The Diagnosis

- A. I look around this room, and I see spiritual giants. I see people who have Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit. I see sons and daughters of the Most High King.
- B. But so many of us are standing still, paralyzed by a flimsy string.
 1. Maybe your string is a word spoken over you by a parent twenty years ago.
 2. Maybe your string is a shame from a past failure.
 3. Maybe your string is the anxiety that says, "You'll never change."
- C. You have the power of the Resurrection inside you, but you are living like you are still in chains.

III. The Solution: Rewiring the Soul

- A. So, how can you snap the string?
- B. You might think you need a "zap" from heaven—a lightning bolt moment where everything instantly changes.
- C. But for most of us, the string doesn't snap because of a zap from heaven; it snaps because you bring your present self under the sound of grace teaching, and that silences the whining of your past self, so you can set up your future self for the glory that belongs to you as a child of God.
- D. It snaps when the reality of Jesus gets wired into your soul, deeper than the lie. John 1:14 says that Jesus came to us "full of grace and truth."
 1. You need His Truth to expose the lie that you are weak.
 2. You need His Grace to heal the wound that made you believe it.
- E. This isn't about "trying harder" to be free. It is about hearing who you really are again and again until you actually believe it. Romans 10:17 says, "Faith comes by hearing..."
- F. Faith is the switchblade that cuts the rope. And faith comes when you hear the grace of Jesus, over and over again, drowning out the lies you learned; the lies that still brainwash you.
- G. You need to preach Good News to yourself every single day until the "Elephant" inside realizes: Wait a minute... I'm an elephant! What am I waiting for!
- H. Bam!
- I. The rope snaps.

IV. Scripture Transition

- A. We have been in a series called "Quit Telling Yourself I Can't."
- B. And my message today is simple: "Quit Playing Small"
- C. And today, we are going to finish it by looking at Philippians. Paul was a man who had snapped the string. He was a man who refused to be held back by his Past Self, his prison, or his problems.
- D. He writes:
 1. *"Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me."* (Philippians 3:12)
 2. Do you see it? Christ has laid hold of you. That is the Truth and the Grace.
 3. Now, you must lay hold of it. That is the Faith.
- E. Then he says:
 1. *"Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 3:13-14)
- F. Paul is on a do-or-die mission to possess every square inch of the glorious inheritance that Jesus had in mind for him on the day He got saved.
- G. So today, we're going to open the vault.
- H. Here it is.
- I. Six inexhaustible accounts in your heavenly trust fund.

V. Six Inexhaustible Accounts

- A. Account #1: Your New IDENTITY
 1. The world tries to name you. The devil tries to name you. The powers of darkness try to define your life.
 2. You have to stop it. You have to snap the rope.

3. Stop letting the world name you. Stop letting your trauma name you. Stop letting your ex, your boss, or your bank balance name you.
 4. On the day you got saved, God issued you a new ID card.
 5. It is an identity that is bulletproof because it isn't based on what you do; it is based on who you are in Him.
 - a) *"For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God."* (Colossians 3:3)
 6. That is your reality. The old preserved identity is dead; the real you is wrapped up in the victory and love of Jesus. And your future self will one day prove it.
 - a) The devil tells you... you're an accident, a mistake, unwanted.
 - (1) But Jesus shouts back, No. You are CHOSEN. I loved you before the world began (Ephesians 1:4).
 - b) Your Past Self tells you... you're in trouble. You're in trouble with God...
 - (1) But the blood of Christ speaks, declaring your true self is RECONCILED. The war is over... it's time to believe that you are who God says you are (2 Corinthians 5:20).
 - c) The voices in your head label you stupid, and your ex- labels you worthless, and the demons say you're garbage...
 - (1) And along comes your father to scoop you into his arms, and he calls you MASTERPIECE. You are GOD'S WORKMANSHIP, sculpted by the loving hands of the Master Artist, designed for royalty, honor, dignity, love, value, importance, meaning, influence, victory, joy, peace, goodness, blessing, and grace (Ephesians 2:10).
 7. When somebody asks who are you... here's your answer: *I am a royal child of God with an identity that dazzles the angels. Who are you?*
- B. Account #2: Your Limitless RICHES
1. You need to play small, dream small, pray small...
 - a) Not enough time.
 - b) Not enough energy.
 - c) Not enough money.
 - d) Not enough love.
 2. The biggest fake play in the devil's playbook is the lie that God is cheap with his children.
 3. He runs that play over and over and over again till you believe it. And that breaks you... it breaks your mental health. It damages your emotional health. It sucks the life out of your spiritual health.
 4. So along comes Paul to say, I'm going to spend my whole ministry "Preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ!" (Ephesians 3:8)
 5. Christian, you are richer than you think:
 - a) God will supply all your need. (Philippians 4:19)
 - b) You have the riches of his grace. (Ephesians 2:7)
 - c) You are an heir of God and joint heir with Jesus. (Galatians 4:7)
 - d) You have Peace with God. (Romans 5:1)
 - e) You have a mansion in heaven. (John 14:2)
 - f) And rewards beyond compare. (1 Corinthians 2:9)
 6. How can you be poor when your Father who loves you is rich?
 - a) *"He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us ALL THINGS?"* (Romans 8:32)
 7. Stop worrying about this world. This world is not your home; you are just passing through to a glory that never ends.
- C. Account #3: Your Royal PRIVILEGES
1. Christian, you have the All-Access Pass. You have the Platinum Card that opens the door to the Creator of the Universe. You don't have to wait in line. You don't have to make an appointment. You belong in the throne room.
 - a) "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God." (Ephesians 2:19)
 2. Look at the privileges that are yours right now:
 - a) You have been BROUGHT NEAR. He is not a distant God. He is not far from you, and you are not far from Him. (Ephesians 2:13)
 - b) You are FREE FROM CONDEMNATION. The Judge has banged the gavel and said "Not Guilty." There is zero condemnation from God to you, forever. (Romans 8:1)
 - c) The Devil has NO LEGAL AUTHORITY over you. He is a liar. Don't believe him (Acts 26:18)
 - d) You are a CITIZEN of the heavenly realms. You have full diplomatic status in heaven. (Philippians 3:20)
 - e) You are FAMILY. You are a member of the household of God. There's a seat at the feast of heaven reserved for you, and you are welcome there (Ephesians 2:19)
- D. Account #4: Your Supernatural POWERS
1. This is the big one. We walk around acting like we are victims. "Oh, I can't help it. My addiction is too strong. My temper is too hot. The world is too dark. I'm just weak."
 2. Stop it. You are walking around with a nuclear weapon in your pocket and you're afraid of a spider.
 3. You are not powerless. The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead is actively dwelling inside of you right now. You have been given the power to break chains.
 - a) "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love." (Colossians 1:13)
 4. Feel the power that is in your hands:

- a) You have the power of PRAYER. (Jeremiah 33:3)
- b) You have the power of the SPIRIT. (Galatians 5:16)
- c) You have the power of the WORD. (Hebrews 4:12)
- d) You have the power of a NEW MIND. (Ephesians 4:23)
- e) Sin is not the boss of you. (Romans 6:18)
- f) The Flesh is not the boss of you. (Galatians 2:20)
- g) The Law is not the boss of you. (Romans 6:14)
- h) Death is not the boss of you. (Romans 8:2)
- i) The devil is not the boss of you, no matter what he tries to tell you. (Colossians 1:13)

E. Account #5: Your Exalted STATUS

1. You have been given a rank that outshines every CEO, every celebrity, and every king on earth. "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!" (1 John 3:1)
2. Look at your rank in the Kingdom:
 - a) You are ADOPTED. You were not a burden God got stuck with; you were selected by the King to be His own. (John 1:12)
 - b) You are a SON or DAUGHTER. You are not a servant; you are an heir. You are not an orphan; you are loved. (Galatians 3:26)
 - c) You are JUSTIFIED. You have been declared righteous. You are robed in Christ's righteousness, which means you have nothing left to prove. (Romans 3:24)
 - d) You are a MEMBER OF THE BODY. You are not unlucky, not cursed, and not an accident waiting to happen. You are not an outlier. You belong. (1 Corinthians 12:27)
 - e) You are GLORIFIED. From God's eternal perspective, your future glory is so certain that He speaks of it as if it's already a done deal. You are not a loser or a failure. (Romans 8:30)
3. Right now your glory is veiled, but if we could see you as God sees you, we would be tempted to fall down and worship you...

F. Account #6: Your Unbreakable PROMISES

1. The devil gets you to horrilize.
2. The devil gets you to expect the worse.
3. But you have a secret arsenal... it will reprogram your heart, and break the hypnotic spell of darkness.
4. You have written in ink and signed in blood, the book of the promises of God.
 - a) *"By which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature."* (2 Peter 1:4)
5. Read the guarantee on your life:
 - a) I will bless you. (Ephesians 1:3)
 - b) I will protect you. (Ephesians 6:16)
 - c) Fear not, I am with you. (Isaiah 41:10)
 - d) I am the Lord, who heals you. (Exodus 15:26)
 - e) I love you with an everlasting love. (Jeremiah 31:3)
 - f) Nothing shall be able to separate you from the love of God. (Romans 8:39)
6. You are not at the mercy of the stars, karma, bad luck, or a curse. You are destined to rule and reign with Him. (2 Timothy 2:12)
7. These are God's legally binding, ironclad commitments to your future self... all of which adds to this truth:

G. There's not a day that goes by when you can't say with absolute certainty:

1. I am richly blessed, highly favored, deeply loved.

VI. Conclusion: The Riot Act to the Soul

- A. You can leave here, walk back into the cold, gray fog of your Past Self, and agree with the lie that you are weak, middle class, broke, and alone. OR... you can stand up, shake off the dust of your history, and step into the blazing light of your God-ordained Future Self.
- B. I am telling you: The days of living like a spiritual serf are over. You have the deposits into your account for mental health and emotional health. Spend them. You have the Peace of God guarding your heart and mind. Believe it.
 1. When fear knocks on your door, don't cower—pull out your Identity and tell fear, "You have the wrong house! A child of the King lives here!"
 2. When anxiety tries to choke you, pull out your Promises and say, "My future is funded by the Ancient of Days!"
 3. When sin tries to enslave you, pull out your Power and remind the devil that the grave is empty and he is defeated!
- C. You need to look in the mirror every single morning and preach this sermon to yourself until your soul believes it.
 1. You need to tell your Past Self: "You don't own me anymore."
 2. You need to tell your feelings: "You don't control me."
 3. You need to tell the world: "I am who God says I am, I have what God says I have, and I can do what God says I can do!"
- D. We have been in a series called "Quit Telling Yourself I Can't." And today, can we bury that phrase forever.
 1. Because if you are United to Christ... If you are Forgiven, Redeemed, and Beloved... If you are Empowered, Exalted, and Secure... If you have the Creator of the Universe backing you up, filling your lungs, and fighting your battles...
 2. Then tell me: What is it that you cannot do? You can climb the mountain. You can break the addiction. You can save the marriage. You can build the business. You can change the world.
- E. You can even look death in the face and call it victory, just like the Apostle Paul.
 1. For 22 messages I have said that Paul died by beheading under the emperor Nero.

- a) But do not mistake the executioner's sword for a tragedy; to Paul, it was a worship instrument.
- 2. To end his book, Paul signs off:
 - a) *"Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you. All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."* (Philippians 4:21-23)
- 3. I'm telling you, this nobody who planted the gospel in Caesar's household has won more eternal fame and power than all the Caesars combined.
- 4. Nero will commit suicide shortly after Paul has been executed.
- 5. But Paul today is walking on streets of gold, a hero's hero with a martyr's crown.
 - a) When he told the Philippians he was being 'poured out,' he was describing the final, necessary act of an ancient sacrifice.
 - (1) Paul's hard work and his sufferings—the shipwrecks, the beatings, the sleepless nights—all of that was the 'living sacrifice' laid on the altar.
 - (2) His beheading? That was the final splash of wine hitting the hot coals, instantly turning to steam.
 - (3) The blade didn't cut his life short; it put the signature on his lifelong thank you note to God.
 - (4) It was the final, triumphant aroma rising from a life of love, and of peace, and of joy that held absolutely nothing back.
- 6. So let's make the declaration.
- 7. Let's claim the prize.
- 8. Let's dream bigger, pray bigger, strive harder by grace.
- 9. Let's believe God is better than we ever thought he was.
- 10. Let's light the fire.
- 11. Will you say it:
 - a) I am done telling myself I can't.
- 12. Because when I am in Christ, and Christ is in me... And when I keep the faith... The only thing I can't do... IS LOSE.
- F. Closing Prayer
 - 1. Father,
 - 2. I stand in the gap for this people right now. I stand here as a steward of Your Word and a shepherd of Your flock, and I bring them before the Throne of Grace.
 - 3. Lord, I pray against the lie. I pray against the "string" that has held them captive. In the name of Jesus, I sever the tie of learned helplessness. I cut the emotional ropes of their past. I silence the memory of the chain that has convinced them they are weak.
 - 4. I declare over them that the days of playing small are over.
 - 5. I pray that You would open the vault of Heaven over their heads.
 - a) I release their New Identity: Let them wake up tomorrow knowing they are Royal Sons and Daughters, not orphans.
 - b) I release their Limitless Riches: Where there is lack, I pray You pour out Your abundance.
 - c) I release their Privileges: Remind them they have the All-Access Pass to Your presence.
 - d) I release their Supernatural Power: Holy Spirit, rise up in them. Turn their anxiety into authority.
 - 6. I pray a holy amnesia over their failures. Let them forget the shame. Let them forget the rejection. And I pray a holy remembrance over their destiny. Let them see themselves as You see them—as masterpieces, as warriors, as victors.
 - 7. God, I commission them now. I send them out into their marriages, their businesses, and their battles not as victims, but as conquerors. I pray that when the enemy sees them coming this week, he sees the blood of Jesus and the power of the Resurrection.
 - 8. I bless them to dream bigger. I bless them to fight harder. I bless them to stand taller.
 - 9. They are Your people. They are Your church. And because they are in You... I declare that the only thing they cannot do... IS LOSE.
 - 10. WE can do all things through Christ who gives us strength.
 - 11. In the mighty, matchless name of Jesus,
 - 12. Amen.