

Sermon 2010 Reformation  
Text: John 8: 31-36  
Theme: "Peace and Freedom"

**Once upon a time there was a man who struggled mightily in life. But he believed that Adam had sinned and therefore, no matter what he did, he would be punished for that sin. He believed that God was patently unfair because he was being punished in life for the sin of someone he had never even known. Brokenness and heartache were all around him all because Adam had sinned!**

**After years of drinking on the job, his employer finally had to let him go. He came home drunk and angry. He kicked the dog and yelled at his wife and kids. And his wife, a good Christian woman, came to him and expressed her concern over his life choices but he declared that he was a victim of Adam's sin. Adam had brought all this on for had he not chosen to sin the garden, had he not chosen to be disobedient; then original sin would not have its claws in him.**

**The man continued to lie around the house and drink. Soon, his wife took their children and moved away. Right after that, his landlord evicted him because of his inability to pay the rent. He cried to a worker at the homeless shelter that his life was horrible and lonely for Adam's sin had been passed on to him. He could not help his wretched life, all alone, and nearly penniless. The worker suggested some help at AA, a job opening he knew of at the local hardware store and perhaps an apology to his wife**

and children, but the man simply said it didn't matter because he was cursed by the sin of Adam and what could he do about that. Life is horrible and although he had done nothing to deserve this, Adam's sin brought these consequences to him.

Eventually the man was living on the street and begging for handouts so that he could buy something to eat and a bottle of cheap wine to keep him warm during the night and help him forget wretched Adam and the wretched God who held him accountable for Adam's sin.

One day a wealthy man pulled up in front of him in a long, white car with a silver phantom hood ornament. The chauffeur, a large, jolly looking man, got out of the car and came to the man and said,

"My employer has instructed me to offer you a place to stay, food to eat and new clothes to wear."

Well, as you can imagine, the man was very leery of this offer for why would this wealthy man want to share his wealth with him? But he was cold and hungry and his bottle of 20/20 was empty so he agreed. He was sure that he would end up suffering for it. No matter what happens, eventually things would fall apart because of Adam's sin.

The home was amazing. It was a mansion on the lake with sweeping views and breath-taking grounds. He met with his benefactor and was given carte blanche to the whole estate. The master of the estate gave the man a new wardrobe of beautifully expensive clothing

**made of the finest materials and the man's filthy, smelly clothes were taken away along with the empty wine bottle in the pocket of his greasy overcoat. If he was hungry call the cook. If he was bored, here is the recreation room, the pool, the library etc. If he was tired, here was a beautifully appointed bedroom, complete with fireplace and whirlpool. And if he wished to go off the estate, the limos and chauffeurs were at his service.**

**There was only one caveat. There was one room which was private. This room was never to be entered under any circumstances. Every square inch of the estate was open to the man; even the master's own bedroom and office! Just this one small room down the hall from the kitchen was locked and off limits.**

**At first, the man could have cared less about that room. He ate like a king, wore the finest clothes, lived in a beautiful mansion and did not have to do anything in return! The master of the estate required nothing of him. But the man did not feel right accepting all of this for free. He offered to make some kind of remuneration. He said that he would like to do something to earn his keep. He was handy with engines; perhaps he could maintain the master's cars? He was good with animals, perhaps he could take care of the master's stables? No. The master of the estate did not wish any repayment. In fact, he would accept no payment.**

**Regardless of what the man could do, he would accept nothing in return. It was all a gift.**

**The man had everything but soon he was not happy. He wanted to be able to repay the master. He wanted to be able to make his own way and be able to succeed on his own. He had almost forgotten about the sin of Adam. For a time he enjoyed his new found freedom and did not think of the chains that surely would shackle him soon. Now that he had tasted the life that was possible he wanted to create it for himself. He began to feel shackled by the master. Why should he live off of this benefactor? Why shouldn't he have for himself all that his master had?**

**The man had everything except peace. He had no peace because he could not stop thinking of that room from which he was forbidden. He was sure that the secret was in that room. If he could just get into that room, he would be able to figure it all out and get out from under this benefactor. He would be able to be his own man and would no longer be dependant on the master for all his wants and needs. So he waited quietly for his chance to get into that room.**

**The door was a large solid wood door with two gigantic deadbolt locks on it. Late in the night, he searched the benefactor's office for the keys and found them in the desk, so he waited. Soon the master announced that he would be leaving for a trip to the city for two days. This was the window the man needed to get into the secret room. Then**

**he was certain that it held the answer to his questions. Then he would be free to earn his own living and make his own way. Then he would have the peace of knowing all the parts of the puzzle – what the master really wanted – why he was willing to provide such beauty and luxury for a homeless wino – what the long term plan was for him.**

**So the master left in his long white car early in the morning and the man moved restlessly through the house all day. He had to wait until nightfall when the household staff would be in their apartments and the night watchman would be making his rounds outside. When the time had come, he crept with great stealth to the secret room with the keys in hand.**

**He reached out and touched the door knob. It was cool to the touch and he cherished the moment. Just for fun he turned the knob and the door opened. The master had not locked it. Slowly the man began to swing the door open. Here was the moment. Here was when he was going to know the secrets of the master and soon he would be the master! Soon he would not need to beg his living from a rich man but he would be the master of his own destiny.**

**He entered the pitch-black room. Immediately an old, dirty, foul smell assaulted his nostrils. He felt for the light switch and finding the switch, he flipped on the light and there was his prize. The room was completely empty; just an empty store room except for one thing. In the**

**middle of the empty, windowless room was a straight chair with his dirty, foul smelling clothes folded neatly upon it. His greasy, dirty overcoat was hung on the back of the chair. The empty wine bottle lay on the floor next to the chair. Across the back wall of the store room was written these words:**

***"Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."***

**The master of the house, standing behind the man, placed his hand on the man's shoulder and said,**

**"Change back into your own clothes my son and leave this place. It was not Adam's sin that cursed you. It is your own sin that robs you of all your peace and all your freedom. You were given everything and still no peace; no freedom because you reject the gifts of the son and sell yourself into the slavery of sin."**

**The man wept. He took the foul clothes and greasy overcoat. He took that which was rightfully his and left paradise, enslaved again to his old master.**