

## ILLUSTRATED MESSAGE

**TITLE:** Ball and Chain

**OBJECT:** Ball and Chain

**DOCTRINE:** Redemption

### STORY WITH THE OBJECT

In August, 2009, a ball and chain from the 17th or 18th century was discovered perfectly preserved in the Thames River in London. It is believed to be from a prisoner who drowned while attempting an escape from a ship. Imagine how horrible it would be to have this weight pull you down to your death at the bottom of the river!

### TRANSITION TO THE SPIRITUAL

Many here have balls and chains attached to their ankles. They are not physical chains, but spiritual ones.

### THE PROBLEM (LAW)

When we break God's laws, our conscience weighs us down. Our past follows us wherever we go. We walk through life pulling a ball and chain behind us. For example, a child steals something from a store and his conscience bothers him so much that it's obvious he's done something wrong. His ball and chain follow him. A husband is unfaithful to his wife and his conscience bothers him so much he can't look his wife in the eye. His ball and chain follow him. A girl decides to abort her baby and later mourns the death of her child. Her conscience bothers her and she lives in depression. Her ball and chain follow her.

### THE CONSEQUENCES (ETERNITY)

Because we've broken God's laws, our conscience weighs us down, and our chains will one day pull us down to an eternity far from God in hell. Is there any way to be set free from our ball and chain? Yes! There is a way!

### THE SOLUTION (CROSS)

Jesus Christ knew we would break his law and that our ball and chain of sin would pull us down to an eternity far from him. Because of his love, he came and took all our chains upon himself so that we could be free from condemnation, from our sin, and from hell and an eternal separation from him. On the cross, Jesus broke the power of sin and rose again, testifying of his power over sin and shame. Jesus can remove the weight from your conscience today.

### THE CALL (REPENTANCE AND FAITH)

How? Call out to Jesus so he will break the ball and chain of sin over your life. Tell him you don't want to live anymore pulling sin around behind you. He gave his life for you. You must give your life to him and follow him.