



FREEDOM | SUNDAY

CHILDREN'S SERMON



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ARE FREE



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I want you to imagine for a moment, what it would be like if all of your toys could actually come to life. Imagine, that whenever you left your room, or left your house to go to school, or went on vacation, that your toys sprung to life and had all sorts of adventures. They talked to each other, they ran all through the house, they held meetings and made decisions about who was in charge of different jobs in your room, and different chores. What if your toys had a secret life that you didn't know about? Now, raise your hand if you've seen the movie called Toy Story.

Toy Story is the story that I've just described to you. There's actually three Toy Story movies, and each one tells the story of boy named Andy and his toys. One toy, named Woody, is a cowboy doll, and he thinks that he's Andy's *favorite* toy. How many of you have a toy or something really cool that you got as a gift, that's one of your favorite things? Well, that's Woody. But then, Andy's parents buy him a new toy, named Buzz Lightyear. Buzz is a space action figure. He wears a space suit, and has lights, and can fly. Woody and Buzz are just learning to get along as the two favorite toys, when something unexpected happens.

Andy and his family move to a new home, and Woody and Buzz accidentally get left behind. And then...Sid finds them. Who's Sid? Sid lives next door. He's unkind. Sid is basically a bully. He takes Woody and Buzz to his house and keeps them locked in his room.

So Sid becomes Buzz and Woody's new owner, but they're miserable at Sid's house. Sid doesn't take care of them. He thinks that he can treat them badly because he owns them. He leaves them outside, where it's cold and raining. He treats them cruelly, beats them up, and he even tries to set Buzz on fire. Andy treated Buzz and Woody like friends. But Sid treats them like property.

Now, I want you to imagine something else. I want you to imagine that there are people like Sid around the world, who are mean bullies. They hurt people instead of helping them. They treat other people like things, instead of like friends. Like Buzz and Woody, these people are trapped. But they're not toys. They're real people. Many of them are children. They want to go to school, and ride their bike, and play with friends. They want to think about where they'll go to college and what job they'll do when they get older. Many of them are just like you. But they're forced to spend their days working from early in the morning until they go to bed late at night. What do they do if they want to go to school or a birthday party? They aren't allowed to go. What if they get hurt and need help? They can't go to the doctor. They are trapped in slavery, and forced to work by the bullies that keep them there.

Now, what should we do about this? First, we should understand what God thinks about this. God cares deeply for people who are trapped in slavery. He says that slavery makes him angry, and that he hears the cries of people who are suffering. We know that he loves these people, and He wants them to be free.

Second, we should know that God has a plan! He has a super, amazing rescue plan for people trapped in slavery. How many of you think you know what God's plan is? Let's see what it is. God tells us what to do in Micah 6:8. He says that He's told us what is the *good* thing to do: we should treat people fairly, love being

compassionate, and not think too highly of ourselves. Then, in Isaiah 1:17, he tells us to look for justice. We should help people who are trapped, and people who have no parents or anyone to protect them. So, as it turns out, God's plan to help people in slavery...is US! Let's all pat ourselves on the back and say "You're the plan!"

How many of you know what happened to Buzz and Woody? They were able to become free! And you know what? God wants all stories for people in slavery to end the way that they did for Buzz and Woody. He wants people to live in freedom. And he wants each one of us to help rescue people in slavery.

As you go into your class today, you're going to hear two stories. The first is a story from the Bible about someone who did what God wanted him to do. He was compassionate, and saw something that wasn't fair, and he helped a person that was suffering. He was a friend, and not a bully. And that made him famous! We all still talk about him! And then you'll hear a story about Kumar, who was trapped in slavery. He thought he was going to be forced to work making bricks in a factory forever. But his story has an exciting ending, so make sure you're listening to what happens!

I hope we can all leave here today knowing that we are a part of God's rescue plan for the world. People are people. They're not property. So, let's be friends, and rescuers, and heroes for those who need freedom. And let's do it together!

These resources are meant to be a guide for you as you share about God's heart to end slavery with your church community. Please feel free to modify as desired to fit your churches worship style.