

Chains
Original Stage play by Cleveland O. McLeish

St. John 8:32 *“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”*

CHAINS

Original Stage play

By

CLEVELAND O. McLEISH

Cleveland O. Mcleish
42 Claremont Drive
Old Harbour P. O.
St. Catherine
JA W.I.
Tele: (876) 352-2650
cleveland@christianplaywright.org

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SYNOPSIS

The essence of this play is captured through the preceding passage and forms the very foundation upon which this testimony is built...**PSALM 107: 10-17**, “Some lived in darkness and gloom, in prison, bound with chains, Because they rebelled against God's word, scorned the counsel of the Most High, Who humbled their hearts through hardship; they stumbled with no one to help. In their distress they cried to the LORD, who saved them in their peril, Led them forth from darkness and gloom and broke their chains asunder. Let them thank the LORD for such kindness, such wondrous deeds for mere mortals. For he broke down the gates of bronze and snapped the bars of iron.”

LIST OF CHARACTERS

David
Marco
Joseph
Debra
Cassandra
Pastor James
Jesus (Non-Speaking)
Chain Master (Non-Speaking)

SETTING

Apartment.

Chains
Original Stage play by Cleveland O. McLeish

THE SCRIPT

SCENE 1

LIGHTS UP

David is chained to a chair at CS. Each chain carries a label and there are two Chains in all at this point, labelled Pornography and Sexual Impurity.

Debra and Joseph enters.

DEBRA: See, Joseph...look at him.

DAVID: Mom...

DEBRA: I told you this would happen...I told you.

JOSEPH: Calm down, dear.

DEBRA: Our son has brought judgment down on this house. How can you tell me to be calm?

JOSEPH: He just needs a little help.

DAVID: I'm fine.

DEBRA: Fine...look at you, all wrapped up in those chains. Which part of you is fine?

DAVID: I'm not a child anymore. I can take care of myself.

DEBRA: Okay, okay. Fine.

Debra leaves.

Joseph looks at his son with a little more passion.

JOSEPH: When he gets here...just talk to him. Okay. Please.

DAVID: When who gets here?

JOSEPH: Just talk to him.

Joseph exits.

David starts to wrestle with the chains trying to get free...but he is unable to Break them. He continues to wrestle...pausing only to catch his breathe.

DAVID: If only I can free my hands...I know I will be able to get myself free. I know I can do this. *(continues to struggle)* I got my self into this mess, I can get myself out. God helps those who help themselves...*(continues to struggle)* I refuse to be bound by these chains....

Pastor James enters and stands a little way off watching David struggle with The chains.

David turns his head to see him standing there.

DAVID: What are you doing here?

PASTOR JAMES: I heard you needed a little...help.

DAVID: I'm fine, sir and you shouldn't go chasing every rumour you hear.

PASTOR JAMES: Well, I have good reason to.

DAVID: You do?

PASTOR JAMES: Your attendance has dropped significantly over these past months. I'm worried about you.

DAVID: I have been a little...tied up.

PASTOR JAMES: I see what you mean.

DAVID: But I'm fine. This is my fight and I intend to win.

PASTOR JAMES: I see...you're strong enough to overcome those chains on your own.

DAVID: Yes I am.

PASTOR JAMES: And you don't need any help.

DAVID: No I don't.

PASTOR JAMES: I see.

DAVID: Save your sarcasm for the weak and feeble. I can take care of myself and I sure don't need anyone's pity.

PASTOR JAMES: Alright...Okay. *(pause)* I'll be praying for you.

DAVID: You do that, sir.

Pastor remains for a beat, then exits.

CHAINMASTER appears offstage carrying a few more chains labelled 'PRIDE' 'LIAR' and 'INGRATITUDE'

He proceeds to wrap these chains around David.

David struggle against these chains, but he knows it is hopeless. He hangs his Head.

DAVID: I'll never be free.

CHAINMASTER finds another chain 'DOUBT' and add this to the lot.

CHAINMASTER waits...David remains silent. Chainmaster exits.

Enter Marco. He has some CD's in his hand.

MARCO: I brought you some more juicy CD's, man. These ought to get your adrenaline pumping in the right direction, know what I mean.

He holds the CD's out to David, but soon realizes David is unable to reach for Them.

MARCO: Okay...I'll put these over here for yah.

He puts the CD's among other CD's and magazines on a nearby table.

MARCO: You really should do something about those chains, man.

DAVID: You make it sound so easy.

MARCO: It is. I mean, look at me...I'm in control. I rule sin...I don't let sin rule me.

DAVID: Whatever you say.

MARCO: You need to stop hearing and listen man. I've been there, done that...know what I mean.

DAVID: I told you before, you cannot get rid of something by going deeper into it.

MARCO: Psk! Tell that to the hand, man. *(pause)* Hear me out...once you find that perfect girl, that perfect picture, that perfect moment...your mind will be satisfied and just let go. Then you will be free.

Chains
Original Stage play by Cleveland O. McLeish

DAVID: I have been searching for that perfect moment...but it doesn't exist. Look at me now. I'm worst off than before. I can't even move because of these chains. My ministry is dying because of these chains. Do you understand?

MARCO: Hey, I can only show you the door. You have to decide if you want to open it or not.

Marco waits a beat, and then exits.

David starts to struggle with the chains again.

Enter housekeeper, Cassandra is her name. She starts to dust and wipe down the Place occasionally looking over at David as he struggles unaware that she is there.

David continues to fight, then gives up. At this point he now realizes someone Else is in the room.

CASSANDRA: You should do something about those chains.

DAVID (*rolls his eyes. He's heard it many times before*): You think!

CASSANDRA: For what it's worth...I don't think you deserve to be in those chains.

DAVID: Yeah...who decides that exactly?

CASSANDRA: Some say God...others say (*pause*) otherwise.

DAVID: What do you say?

CASSANDRA: I believe there are more than one way to God. We all have the power of the universe inside us and if we want badly enough, we can do all things.

DAVID: The power of the universe?

CASSANDRA: Yes, it's an energy surrounding us that you feel all the time. We can draw from that energy to overcome every chain.

DAVID: You believe all this?

CASSANDRA: Do you see me in chains?

DAVID: Do you think I choose to be like this?

CASSANDRA: Does it really matter what I think?

Chains
Original Stage play by Cleveland O. McLeish

DAVID: Yes...you seem intelligent enough.

CASSANDRA: Well, in that case, yes...it may have been your choice. You enjoyed the sins you're now accused of, don't you?

DAVID: That's not something I'm willing to admit.

CASSANDRA: Yes, I see the reason for PRIDE. (*touches the chain labelled PRIDE*)

DAVID: I didn't choose this for myself. Why would I?

CASSANDRA: Temporary pleasure. It's why we all choose to sin every now and again.

DAVID: But in the end, we have to ask ourselves...is it worth it?

CASSANDRA: Maybe not.

Cassandra finishes her chores and exits.

DAVID: If I believe hard enough...I can do anything...okay, here goes.

*He closes his eyes for a second, then tries to break the chains. This is hopeless
Of course.*

He closes his eyes and tries again.

DAVID: If I believe hard enough...believe what hard enough?

Chainmaster enters with chain labelled FEAR.

DAVID: No...please....no more chains...

Chainmaster wraps the chain around David and exits.

David breaks down in tears.

DAVID: Help me, somebody. Help me please!

LIGHTS OUT.

SCENE II

LIGHTS UP

David wakes up and realizes that nothing has changed, but he has somehow Given up the fight.

Pastor James enters with Bible tucked under his arm. He stands a few feet away From where David is sitting.

PASTOR JAMES: You asked to see me.

DAVID: Yes sir. *(hangs his head embarrassed)* I have some... 'issues' I wanted to discuss with you.

Pastor James comes a little closer.

PASTOR JAMES: Go ahead.

DAVID: This is not really easy for me.

PASTOR JAMES: I know. I will listen, I will give you biblical counsel if necessary...but I'm not here to judge you.

David finds comfort in his words.

DAVID: I have deceived you. I have deceived the church. I have been living a double standard life while proclaiming God's word and I now stand convicted of my sins.

PASTOR JAMES: We're but sinners saved by Grace, my brother.

DAVID: I know...but how can I effectively run this race carrying all these baggage.

PASTOR JAMES: Cast your cares on the Lord...He cares for you.

DAVID: Would you believe me if I told you I don't know how to do that.

PASTOR JAMES: I know you're a man of scripture David...there only remains for you to apply what you know to your life.

DAVID: I have wandered far from God's presence. I have been a slave to habitual sins and now I am bound by these sins...I am a slave in Chains and I cannot get free.

PASTOR JAMES: Because you have been trying to free yourself.

Chains
Original Stage play by Cleveland O. McLeish

DAVID: But I got myself into this mess.

PASTOR JAMES: What happens when you try to break yourself free?

Pause. David considers.

DAVID: I sink deeper....more chains are added.

PASTOR JAMES: Haven't you learnt anything from that?

DAVID: I'm not so sure. I keep thinking that the only way I'm gonna be free is if I freed myself.

PASTOR JAMES: And who would get the glory?

Pause.

DAVID: I guess I would take the glory for myself.

PASTOR JAMES: And God never shares his glory with anyone. If you truly want to be free...allow God to do His own work and stop trying to help Him. I assume that's about the only thing you haven't tried.

DAVID: Yes.

PASTOR JAMES: Then I've done just about all I can to help. The rest is up to you.

Pastor James turns and exit.

David remains silent, but only for a moment.

DAVID: Lord, forgive me of my sins. I am truly sorry I hurt you and I am now willing to turn away from these habitual sins. Help me to cast off this sin that so easily besets me that I may not be entangled in these chains anymore. I submit to your authority and to your will. Fill me where I'm empty...strengthen me where I'm weak...I'm yours Lord completely from this day onward....

Chainmaster enters with two new chains.

He's about to put these on when a voice echoes from offstage.

VOICE: No more Chains.

Chainmaster stops in his tracks. He looks around trying to determine the Source of the voice.

Chains
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VOICE: NO MORE CHAINS!

Chainmaster starts to shake in his boots. The chains fall from his hands.

Jesus enters in sparkling white and starts to release the chains one by one.

When He is done, he exits.

*David now realizes that he's free. He stands to his feet, raises his eyes and hands
To heaven and start to glorify God.*

VOICE: Who the Son has set free...is free indeed.

Enter Pastor James.

PASTOR JAMES: There only remains one thing for you to do.

DAVID: Yes sir...I know. I must rid myself of everything that will cause me to stumble.
Hebrews 12: 1-2...Therefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud
of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and
let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and
finisher of our faith..."

PASTOR JAMES: Now you know.

Pastor exits.

David radically takes the CD's and Magazines and stuff them in a bag.

He finds himself a box of matches and exits.

*Chainmaster enters. He picks up his chains one by one, throwing them over
His shoulders.*

*He looks out into the audience...trying to locate another victim...He points at
Someone as...*

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK.