Date: 3/10/18

Title: The Weight of Sin

Theme: Don’t let the weight of sin break you off from Jesus.

Object: End of Austrian pine branch broken off by a foot of heavy wet snow on March 8, 2018. Picture of giant maple branch broken by the weight of snow.

Text: John 15:6 (NIV) 6 If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

Here Jesus says that He is like the trunk of a tree and his disciples are like the branches.

In order for a branch to live and grow, it has to stay attached to the trunk.

If we don’t stay attached to Jesus we are like a branch that is broken off and gets dry and withered up.

The broken off branches are good for nothing but to be burned up in a fire.

Did any of you see any branches broken off of trees this week?

What did the snow do the many branches that were growing on the trees?

Take a look at this picture of what the snow did to this maple tree in our front yard.

[Describe size, show break where it broke off trunk, blocked whole driveway, cut up for fire wood.]

[Show Austrian Pine branch end. Explain how the strongest branches grow closest to the trunk.]

You can imagine how light a little snowflake is.

But if you get enough snowflakes on the branch, the snow is so heavy that it breaks the branch.

Now let’s pretend that Jesus is the trunk of the tree and we are the branches.

What do you think it is that weighs us down and tries to break us off from Jesus? (It’s sin.)

When we disobey God’s commandments, that’s sin; when we tell lies or take things that belong to others, that’s sin; when we disobey our parents, that’s sin; when we’re selfish and mean, that’s sin.

And if we don’t care about sin, we’ll soon get to the place where we don’t care about Jesus, and when that happens, SNAP, our branch gets broken off from Jesus the trunk.

That’s bad news, isn’t it? You don’t want that to happen, do you?

But here’s the good news, Jesus can take the snow off your branch.

If I went out in the storm when it was snowing and shook the snow off a branch every few minutes, there would never be enough snow on the branch to break it.

Jesus does something like that: it’s called forgiveness.

Here’s how it works:

Jesus died on the cross for our sins, right?

That means He can forgive our sins when we love Him and trust Him and tell Him we’re sorry for them.

When we realize we have sinned and made God sad, we need to pray and tell Jesus we’re sorry and ask Him to forgive us.

And the Bible promises that if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

It’s like taking all the snow off our branch.

When we ask Jesus to forgive us, sin can never break us apart from Him.

We don’t want to be broken off and end up in the fire place, do we?

How many want to stay attached to Jesus so they can grow to be all that God wants them to be?

Let’s ask Jesus to be our savior, to take away our sins, and keep us attached to Him, what do you say?