**Life in 6 Words – Week 4 – “PAYING”**

*“Paying the price for sin Jesus died and rose again.”*

We are in the “Life in 6 Words” series. Here’s what we’ve covered so far:

**Week 1** – God created us to be with him. **Week 2** – Our sins separate us from God. **Last week** – Sins cannot be removed by good deeds.

Two weeks of bad news. So, some good news?

God, the Architect, the Creator of the universe, created us for a personal relationship. But because of our sins, we are separated from our Creator – very bad news, because this means spiritual death, physical death, eternal separation – and then worse news. Sins cannot be removed by good deeds.

But the GOOD NEWS! “Paying the price for sin, Jesus died and rose again.”

We cannot not pay off our own sin debt. We are destined for eternal doom in hell. Separated from God forever. But God made a way! The Gospel of Jesus Christ is truly good news!

**“PAYING THE PRICE FOR SIN JESUS DIED AND ROSE AGAIN.”**

The book of Isaiah, paints a vivid and graphic picture of the pain Jesus endured to die in our place:

*“But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”* Isaiah 53:5-6

Have you ever asked yourself the question: “WHY?”

**If God is really so good, so powerful, and so loving, why would His Son have to die for us to be forgiven? Because…**

1. **A price had to be paid.**

*“…without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.”* Hebrews 9:22

God doesn’t just snap his fingers for our forgiveness…blood must be shed. Why? Because God demands justice be done. And we long for justice to be done.

We demand justice because we are made in the image of God. God requires that justice be done. God demands justice on a greater level. God requires that blood must be shed.

***It was a price to be paid in blood.***

***“****But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here] he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, is not a part of this creation.****12****He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption.*

***13****The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean.****14****How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!”* Hebrews 9:11-14

The Old Testament day of Atonement took place once a year for the nation of Israel. The High Priest would offer sacrifices to atone or to pay for all the sins that the people of Israel committed.

But Jesus, through his death on the cross, made a sacrifice one and for all. Because once is enough. And as a human he could die for all humans. And

as God his payment for sin was infinite.

*“For Christ did not enter a sanctuary made with human hands that was only a copy of the true one; he entered heaven itself, now to appear for us in God’s presence. Nor did he enter heaven to offer himself again and again, the way the high priest enters the Most Holy Place every year with blood that is not his own.*

*Otherwise Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But he has appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself.* *Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.”* Hebrews 9:24-28

“Propitiation” means God’s wrath was satisfied!

God is a loving God. But God is also a righteous judge, true and holy.

The Cross is the place where God’s love and justice collided. The cross is where Jesus took on my deserved punishment to pay the price and die in my place. A price had to be paid.

***It was a price that was paid out of love.***

The heart and mission of God the Father can be found in John 3:16:

*“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that*

*whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”*

God’s love led to action…he loves us so much that He GAVE…

**Read:** In 1967 Dennis E. Hensley published “To Sacrifice a Son: An Allegory.”

“There was once a bridge that spanned a large river. During most of the day the bridge sat with its length running up and down the river paralleled with the banks, allowing ships to pass through freely on both sides of the bridge.

But at certain times each day, a train would come along and the bridge would be turned sideways across the river, allowing the train to cross it.

A switchman sat in a shack on one side of the river where he operated the controls to turn the bridge and lock it into place as the train crossed.

One evening as the switchman was waiting for the last train of the day to come, he looked off into the distance through the dimming twilight and caught sight of the train lights. He stepped onto the control and waited until the train was within a prescribed distance. Then he was to turn the bridge.

He turned the bridge into position, but, to his horror, he found the locking control did not work. If the bridge was not securely in position, it would cause the train to jump the track and go crashing into the river. This would be a passenger train with MANY people aboard.

He left the bridge turned across the river and hurried across the bridge to the other side of the river, where there was a lever switch he could hold to operate the lock manually.

He would have to hold the lever back firmly as the train crossed. He could hear the rumble of the train now, and he took hold of the lever and leaned backward to apply his weight to it, locking the bridge. He kept applying the pressure to keep the mechanism locked. Many lives depended on this man’s strength.

Then, coming across the bridge from the direction of his control shack, he heard a sound that made his blood run cold.

“Daddy, where are you?” His four-year-old son was crossing the bridge to look for him. His first impulse was to cry out to the child, “Run! Run!” But the train was too close; the tiny legs would never make it across the bridge in time.

The man almost left his lever to snatch up his son and carry him to safety.

But he realized that he could not get back to the lever in time if he saved his son.

Either many people on the train or his own son – must die.

He took but a moment to make his decision. The train sped safely and swiftly on its way, and no one aboard was even aware of the tiny broken body thrown mercilessly into the river by the on rushing train. Nor were they aware of the pitiful figure of the sobbing man, still clinging to the locking lever long after the train had passed. They did not see him walking home more slowly than he had ever walked; to tell his wife how their son had brutally died.

Now, try to understand the emotions that went through this man’s heart. Then think about the feelings Our Father in Heaven had when He sacrificed His Son to bridge the gap between us and eternal life.

A price had to be paid.

1. **An exchange had to be made.**

Illustration: Imagine a homeless person, a beggar, his most worthless item, sold for R1000.

*“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”* -2 Corinthians 5:21

God has such amazing love for us, that through the cross, he offers his righteousness in exchange for our sin!

He takes away *our* sin and clothes us in *his* righteousness!

*“Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. So go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ So, the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, the bad as well as the good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.*

*“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. He asked, ‘How did you get in here without wedding clothes, friend?’ The man was speechless. “Then the king told the attendants, ‘Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are invited, but few are chosen.”* -Matthew 22:8-14

Being invited to the banquet is not enough. You must have on the right clothes…the robe of righteousness.

*“I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He has clothed me with the garments of salvation,****He has covered me with the robe of righteousness****, as a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.”* - Isaiah 61:10

A price had to be paid. An exchange had to be made. And, finally…

1. **A victory had to be displayed.**

***The Victory of the Cross***

*“When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made youalive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,****14****having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.****15****And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” -* Colossians 2:13-15

*The victories for us:*

We were made alive (God brought us from death to life). We were forgiven (The charges against us were dropped, cancelled!)

*The defeat for Satan:*

He was disarmed and defeated!

***The Victory of the Resurrection***

*“After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days*

*and spoke about the kingdom of God.”* Acts 1:3

We have clear evidence that Jesus rose from the dead.

**He was SEEN over the course of 40 days, 12 different times, by over 500 witnesses!**

**Jesus is ALIVE!!!**

The apostle Paul describes the death, burial, and resurrection as of “first importance” (1 Corinthians 15:3).

His resurrection reveals that the sacrifice of Jesus was sufficient.

Quote from the “Life in 6 Words” video (shown at beginning of series): “At

the resurrection we all cheered because that meant the check cleared!”

Without the resurrection, the death of Jesus would have no power to apply the payment required for our forgiveness.

*“And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins.”* - 1 Corinthians 15:16

“Gospel” literally means “good news”.

Paying the price for sin, Jesus died and rose again. He paid for it and offers it freely to anyone who calls upon His name. Have you received the gift of eternal life by trusting in Christ alone to forgive you of your sins? You can today….