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

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

Introduction: Today, we continue our journey through the “Life in 6 Words” series. Here’s what we’ve covered so far (possibly have audience recite these with you if it fits your setting):

**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.

So, for the last 2 weeks we’ve been focusing on some bad news. Who’s ready for some good news?!

After learning that God, the Architect of the universe, also created us for a personal relationship, we learned that because of our sins, we are separated from our Creator – very bad news, because these means spiritual death, physical death, eternal separation – and the bad news got worse. Sins cannot be removed by good deeds. So, this week its GOOD NEWS! “Paying the price for sin, Jesus died and rose again.”

In 2003 I crashed my poor 1997 Honda Accord…again. I’ve been in nine car crashes since I got my license twenty something years ago. And for the first time I got a ticket…following too close. And I was. The guy in the car in front of me slammed on his brakes and crashed into the van in front of him. Then I did the same thing to him. When the police officer questioned me I offered no excuses and he offered no leniency. Two points, $110, no questions asked.

But then something happened that shocked me.

A few weeks later I received a notice in the mail from the city and county of Denver…a ticket cancellation. I have never even heard of such a thing. Attached to the cancellation was a copy of the ticket and my check. The only explanation was a “No offense charged” box that was checked and a smiley face that somebody had drawn on the cancellation notice. It didn’t make any sense to me. It still doesn’t. I have no idea why my ticket was cancelled and my check was returned. But I am grateful.

But the crazy thing about salvation is this. We have a ticket against us…a long list of violations against the King of heaven…but he didn’t just cancel it. He paid for it with the blood of his own Son.

Talk about a smiley face!

We could not pay off our own sin debt, we were destined for eternal doom in hell, separated from God forever, but God made a way! Today, we talk about gospel of Jesus Christ, and it is truly good news!

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

* The book of Isaiah, often referred to as the “5th Gospel”, paints a vivid 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

* As I’ve shared the gospel with unbelievers, and even had deep conversations with believers, this question has come up…maybe a question you’ve asked yourself as well: “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 cancel tickets. Blood must be shed. Why? Because he demands justice be done. Like we long for justice to be done. You can’t watch Taken with Liam Neeson without wanting the bad guy to get it. Justice is wired into our DNA.

Like driving down the street and seeing someone cut everyone else off and then seeing that person getting pulled over by the police and the ensuing fist pump we do in the air. Why? Because justice must be done! We feel it in our bones.

This innate sense is further proof that we were made in the image of God. He, too, requires justice be done, but on a much grander level! He requires blood to be shed.

* 1. 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,[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=hebrews%209&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30117a)*] 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[*[*b*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=hebrews%209&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30118b)*] 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,[*[*c*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=hebrews%209&version=NIV#fen-NIV-30120c)*] so that we may serve the living God!”* Hebrews 9:11-14

* Explain Old Testament day of Atonement verses what Jesus did.
* Once is enough. As a human he could die for other humans. 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

The theological doctrine of Propitiation…God’s wrath was satisfied!

* But sometimes we forget that God is not just loving, he is just AND loving. Because He is a righteous judge, true and holy, he *must* punish sin. There is a price to pay for sin, which we have already discovered is DEATH. And not

just physical death, but a spiritual death…separated from God and doomed for destruction. BUT GOD loved us so much, that He sent His Son to die in our place!

Illustration: Imagine that you were walking across a busy street, and in just a brief moment of distraction you failed to see the truck quickly approaching, and unable to stop in time before it hits you. And being the loving pastor and friend that I am, I dash out into the street in time to push you out of the way, where I instead get hit, and die in your place. That IMPACT illustrates the CROSS.

* The Cross is the place where God’s love and justice collided, and Jesus took on my deserved punishment to pay the price and die in my place. A price had to be paid.
	1. It was a price that was paid out of love.

Jesus Himself shares the heart and mission of God the Father in His conversation with Nicodemus in the most popular Scripture ever memorized or quoted, 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.”* John 3:16

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

In 1967 Dennis e. Hensley published “To Sacrifice a Son: An Allegory.” It goes like this,

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, if you comprehend the emotions that went through this man’s heart, you can begin to understand the feelings of Our Father in Heaven when He sacrificed His Son to bridge the gap between us and eternal life.

Can there be any wonder that He caused the earth to tremble and the skies to darken when His Son died? How does He feel when we speed along through life without giving a thought to what was done for us through Jesus Christ?

A price had to be paid

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

Activity/Illustration: Pull out a $10 bill (or for if you’re feeling super generous, a $20 bill) and show it to the audience. Now ask those in the audience to search, on their person or in their belongings, for the most worthless item they can find (gum wrapper, piece of lint, etc.). Ask a few volunteers to share what they’ve come up with, and narrow it down to the most worthless item in the room (you can have fun with this and even ask the audience to chime in as an informal vote on which item is the most worthless). Once you have determined the owner of the most worthless item, say, “Ok, (name), it appears that you have the most worthless item in the room. Now, I will give you this $10/$20 bill in exchange for that item. All you have to do is believe me and receive it.”

Let them ask questions if they like, but emphasize that there are no strings attached, they only have to agree to it. Once they do, give them the money and take their item, congratulate them, and allow them to sit down. DO NOT let them give it back…it’s a done deal.

Now share with the audience: “This probably seems crazy, that I would give money for a piece of trash. But check this out…”

*“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 crazy love for us, that through the cross, he offers his righteousness in exchange for our sin!!
* The fact is that we could never get to heaven on our own…as we talked about before, our righteousness is as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). But when we trust Christ as our Savior, this beautiful exchange is made, and 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

Wool pants story preaching at church…you got to have the right clothes on!

It's not just enough to be invited to the banquet, you must have the right clothes on…robe of righteousness

Isaiah 61:10: 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.

A price had to be paid.

An exchange had to be made. And, finally,…

1. **A victory had to be displayed.**
	1. The Victory of the Cross

*“When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Colossians+2%3A13-16&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29508a)*] alive 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 (canceled the charge….that ticket!)
* The defeat for Satan:
	+ He was disarmed…how many times do we re-arm Satan with that baton that he used to be able to wield…roofing with a guy
	+ He was disgraced.
	1. 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 of this event although many have tried to disprove it. Our entire belief system hinges on this event (1 Corinthians 15:14-15), which is why it is no wonder so many have attacked and attempted to explain an alternative over the years. But the proof is there.

**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 Jesus’ sacrifice was sufficient, and our salvation in Christ alone is assured, because the payment was complete.

* 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, Jesus’ death would have no power to apply the payment required to for our forgiveness.

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

* Thank God He did come back to life, so that we may have eternal life in Him.
* The apostle Paul describes the gospel as the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. “Gospel” literally means “good news”. Think of someone in your life who needs to hear this Good News, and ask God to give you the burden, boldness, and opportunity to share it with them. Pray for them right now.
* 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….

D-Day: A bright and shining moment for liberal democracy Seventy years ago on 6 June 1944, the Western allies launched the Great Crusade across the English Channel on to the beaches of Normandy to free Europe from what Churchill called the ‘new Dark Age’ of Nazism.

* Battles still had to be fought but ultimately already won!

Our D-Day is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus…there are still battles that must be fought but our ultimate victory has been won