



SHARING GOD'S STORY

WEEK 4

Talking about sin and judgment is not a topic we want to stay in for very long. It's really discouraging. But hopefully, it gave us insights into the troubles of this world. We live as broken people in a broken world with other broken people. But there is massive hope. God doesn't leave us in our despair. He provides a way out. Just as He made clothing out of skins to cover Adam and Eve's nakedness, guilt, and shame; He's been providing a way to cover and forgive our sins. It involved a sacrifice. And Jesus became the perfect sacrifice because He is God. God took our place. He died on the cross for the forgiveness of sins. He rose again 3 days later showing His power and victory over death. And He ascended into heaven where He is advocating on the behalf of those who accept His gift of salvation. It's the greatest love story of all time.

DON'T WORRY, JUST SAY IT

GOD'S REMEDY: JESUS

DAY 1 / BLOOD PAYMENT REQUIRED

"According to the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" Hebrews 9:22

God knew before the moment of sin entering the world that there would be a price to pay for its forgiveness. From Adam and Eve to present day, there was always going to be a price to pay. It could not be overlooked. We looked at sin's destruction last week. Yet, in God's mercy and love for us He has always made a way for us to be saved. He has always provided a way for us to be clean and holy in His presence. He would not leave us without a remedy for our sin. We call that an atonement.

As Adam and Eve first sinned against God, God provided them a covering for their nakedness with animal skins (Genesis 3:21). Making clothes from animal skins would of course require the animal to die. This animal would die, and its blood would be shed because of their sin. Throughout the Old Testament, God taught that blood would cover over, cleanse, redeem, pay the penalty, and appease the requirement for sin.

It is through a blood sacrifice that we are saved. There is no other substitute that will suffice. It's not by our good works. It's not by going to church. It's not by helping our neighbor. All are good things, but they do not take away our sins. We may think of this as kind of a gruesome process. But we are reminded that there is life in the blood and that lifeblood is being sacrificed for our atonement. A life was given, so that we may be saved.

God shows us that He is willing to always find a way to maintain a relationship with the ones he loves. Have you ever thought of the price paid so that you can live with forgiveness of your sins?

Take a moment to thank God for the price that was paid for you.

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GOD'S REMEDY: JESUS

DAY 2 / SUBSTITUTION

"If his gift is a burnt offering from the herd, he is to bring an unblemished male. He is to lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering so it can be accepted on his behalf to make atonement for him." (Leviticus 1:3-4)

In the Old Testament of the Bible animal sacrifice atoned for humanity's sins. Though it was the sinner who deserved to be removed from the world, an animal would take their place. The animal's blood would then be sprinkled by a priest in a symbolic cleansing of evil's indirect consequences throughout the community. This process was called purification and it was able to make things right between the Israelites and God. However, this was only a temporary solution and would need to be done often until Christ. It's important to note that God provided and allowed substitutes in place of the sinner.

Let's look at portions of Genesis 22.

"Abraham, take your son...offer him there as a burnt offering...Isaac said, 'the fire and the wood are here, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?' Abraham answered, 'God Himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son'... Abraham reached out and took the knife to slaughter his son. But the Angel of the Lord called to him from heaven... Abraham looked up and saw a ram caught in the thicket by its horns. So, Abraham went and took the ram and offered it as a burnt offering in place of his son."

Allow yourself to imagine for a moment that you are Abraham. Could you do what God is asking? As a parent myself I would be willing to sacrifice my own life for my son. However, would I sacrifice my son's life for a person who chose not to listen, love me or for people I haven't met yet? This is exactly what Christ has done for us. He has substituted His Son in our place. Jesus Christ's life was laid down for us. No longer will we have to offer a sacrifice because the price has been paid once and for all.

Ask yourself, how would I respond? What could I change in my day to day life that could reflect God's remedy for my life?

For further study: Genesis 3:21; Exodus 12:13; 2 Corinthians 5:21

DON'T WORRY, JUST SAY IT

GOD'S REMEDY: JESUS

DAY 3 / PERFECT SACRIFICE

“(Jesus said) For this is My blood covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” Matthew 26:28

In a world and culture that tells us that being a good person should be enough to go to Heaven, many people hope that their good deeds outweigh the bad. We keep fooling ourselves. No matter what we do we could never fill the chasm of sin that is in our lives. God who is holy and without sin could never have a relationship with us without a Savior that is the perfect sacrifice. There is nothing in this world that could ever fill that void except His Son. Everything we try would fall so short, it would be like trying to fill the Grand Canyon with an eye dropper.

God knew He needed the perfect sacrifice for our sin. The cup that Jesus talks about in Matthew 26:28 foreshadows the shedding of Jesus' blood and his absorbing of God's wrath on the world. This opened the way for the redemption of all people through the new covenant relationship with God and the promise to the people of Israel (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Jesus was a perfect sacrifice equal to God's holiness. Remember, sin must be punished. There is no exception to this rule. Anyone with unforgiven sin in life faces the horrifying prospect of eternal separation from God. No forgiveness exists unless someone capable of forgiving our sins pays the penalty of shedding his blood. Hebrews 9:12 “He entered the most holy place once for all, not by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption.”

Jesus was the perfect sacrifice because only His blood could roll backwards to the first sinner and forward to the last. Whatever sacrifice was used before Christ to secure forgiveness was temporary. Christ alone was eternally slain as the perfect sacrifice for sin. This is why death exalted Jesus from being a normal man to the universal Lord.

Spend time thanking Jesus for bridging the chasm of sin that separated us from God.

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GOD'S REMEDY: JESUS

DAY 4 / CHRIST CONQUERS

1 Peter 2:4 "He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; you have been healed by his wounds."

The message of the cross is that Jesus paid our penalty for death when He chose to die on our behalf. He took our place so that we could be saved. He was the ultimate sacrifice because He never sinned, not once. He was the only one who could make the way for a great rescue of mankind. The power of His resurrection means this: He didn't stay dead. He's not still in the tomb. Death couldn't hold Him back. Darkness couldn't bury His love for us and hold Him in the grave.

Jesus' power broke through all that and His nail-scarred hands that reached out to rescue a lost world are still reaching out today. It's more than just knowing the facts in your head; it's about believing the truth in your heart. This is where the change takes place. This is how we are affected by the gospel and power of Christ and His resurrection. He came to seek and to save all who were lost. This is the message of the resurrection power.

We need not trust our righteousness, nor fear our sins. Christ's resurrection guarantees our freedom from sin if we believe. Since His sacrifice was all sufficient, there is nothing we can do to deserve it. Since His resurrection verified His sacrifice, his sacrifice is enough.

Allow yourself a moment to think about your freedom from sin and thank God for your salvation because of his resurrection. Spend some time praying for someone that you know that could use freedom from sin.

For further study: Romans 8:1-2, 1 Corinthians 15:55-57

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GOD'S REMEDY: JESUS

DAY 5 / OFFERED TO ALL

Romans 3:23-24 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. They are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

God's offer of salvation to everyone is a radical way of thinking. Why is the gift of salvation offered to someone who doesn't go to church or live a moral life? We need to understand that God doesn't view our lives through the lens of a human. When we do think this, we are limiting the power of Salvation and Christ himself. We often think that God views us and compares us to the sin of our neighbor or the person who is far from God. We find ourselves saying, "God I am not this person or that person."

God views us all as sinners. He is Holy and we are not. God's love for us is limitless and has the power to save all who call open His name. Romans 10:13 says "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

The Lord doesn't discriminate. When He looks upon all of us, He doesn't see race, color, gender, social status, economic standing, or church affiliation. He sees people who are broken and burdened with sin and in need of a Savior.

John 3:16 says "For God so loved the world, that He gave His One and Only Son, that whosoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life." Many of us have recited this verse since we were children, we have seen signs adored with John 3:16 at sporting events and other places. We often forget the saving grace that is offered in this verse. This is an opportunity to save the world with one verse. God asks us to do this one thing "Believe." We should never fail to remember the gift that is offered in one verse. Salvation is offered to the world.

Open your Bible to John 3:16. Please don't just recite it but open your bible and read it. Pick a word or words out that stand out above the rest for you. Then spend time in prayer asking God to make those words be part of your journey with Him.

For further study: Romans 3:22-24; 1 John 2:2

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