

Sermon Growth Guide

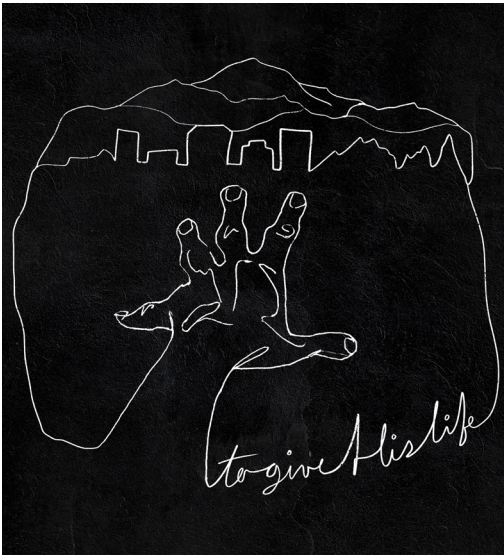
April 4, 2021

To Give His Life - He Gave His Life

John 19:17-30

Key Verse: John 19:30 “When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.”

Big Idea: Jesus paid what we could not pay to fix what we could not fix.



Foundations

The presence of evil is self-evident. We continue to ache over the tragedies in Atlanta and Boulder. The world hurts and we cry out for a cure. If there is a cure, what is it and how much will it cost us?

Our Scripture this week speaks not to a what, but to a who. The Apostle John writes, “This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins,” (1 John 4:9-10).

In the final analysis, it's not so much the far off (or near) gunman that is the immediate root of harm around us, it's us, it's you and me. Culturally, it's easy to downplay our sin and ignore God's holiness and presume we're “good enough,” but in Christ we are reminded that our sin is worse than we allow ourselves to imagine. But praise be to God, who reminds us that we are loved to the fullest in Christ—on the cross Jesus paid what we could not pay to fix what we could not fix.

The best news of all is that the gospel not only rings true, but is true, truly true! Christ is not dead, He is risen!

In Christ, your sins are forgiven, you are empowered to walk as a child of God, and you are filled with the very hope of heaven.

O, may you feel the life of the Resurrection this day and every day!

Understanding God's Word

Why do the chief priests protest in verses 19-22?

What prophecy is fulfilled in verses 23-24? Discuss Jesus' final interaction with His mother in verses 25-27.

Applying God's Word

On the cross Jesus paid what we could not pay to fix what we could not fix.

One common error we make in responding to God is to try and earn or pay back God's free gift of salvation. Take time to discern areas in your life where you may be replacing the grace of God and the salvation of God with your own sense of self-saving, of self-sufficiency.

Pray with one another, asking God to give you hearts that understand and live out of the true grace of God. Consider how you may behave differently if you were to move from a posture of self-sufficiency to Christ-sufficiency. How will this effect your pursuit of God on a daily basis this week?

Witnessing God's Word

In John 20, Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene and instructs her to share the good news of the Resurrection. What a joy to have such precious news to share with someone. Who can you share this good news with this week?

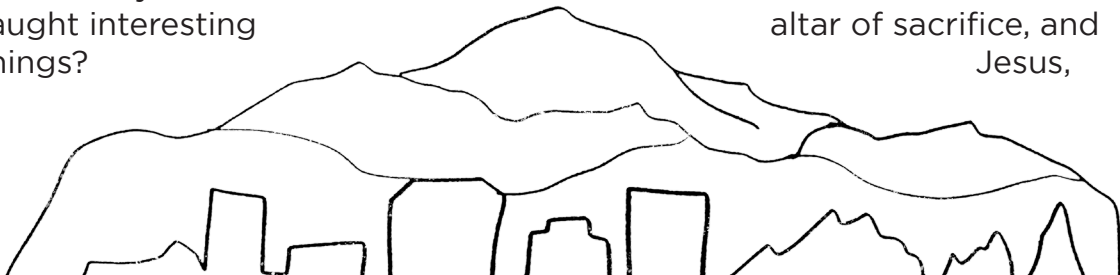
My Jeep was about 10 years old. It was a very reliable car for me, until this year. A few months ago the horn started going off randomly, just sitting in the parking lot! I had to disconnect the battery to leave it. The problem was not the battery, which I replaced. It was not the horns, which I replaced. It was not the instrument panel, which I replaced. It was the cruise control switch ... which I replaced. Now the phrase most associated with that Jeep is not “very reliable” but “how much will that cost”? Got a car like that? No, you *had* a car like that! Me too. “How much will it cost to fix that? What will it take to make it right again?”

That is a question we have been asking all year. A new virus breaks out over the globe. 2.8 million people have lost their lives. Entire nations shut down. Companies. Restaurants. Schools. Churches. How much will it cost to fix that? U.S. government spending toward COVID is approaching 7 trillion dollars. Will that do it? How about the toll on kids out of school? What about the anxiety and depression, the rising alcoholism and drug use? Or the marriages that have crumbled in the stress? What will it cost to fix this? What will it take to make it right? Whatever the cost, we can't afford it. There is no way you and I can pay it.

We are here today to celebrate Jesus. Why? Because He taught interesting things?

Because He did kind deeds for a few people 2,000 years ago halfway around the world? Is that why millions of Christians are gathered in every city? Is it because Jesus led an inspiring life and we hope to live one just like it? The passage we just read has nothing to do with any of those things. It shows us Jesus on the cross, and it's the most important thing about Jesus. Around the world, what symbol represents Jesus most? The cross. Why? Because on the cross Jesus paid what we couldn't pay. Jesus was not some nice teacher or inspiring spiritualist who accidentally ran into the buzzsaw of Roman crucifixion. Jesus went to the cross. Jesus gave His life. Jesus paid what we could not pay to fix what we could not fix.

It looked like this: “Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha)” (John 19:17). Jesus wasn't dragged there. It says He carried His own cross. He went. Earlier, Jesus had explained to His disciples that He intended to give His life away. “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep... I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again” (John 10:11,17-18). Jesus didn't accidentally die; He gave His life. The cross was an altar of sacrifice, and Jesus,



the Good Shepherd, made Himself the sacrificial lamb. “There they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle” (John 19:18).

Well, if Jesus gave His life, who did He die for? The passage gives us some clues. The first clue is the sign. Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, had a sign attached to the cross. It said, “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.” It was a show of power. “Here’s what Rome does with so-called kings.” But it meant more than Pilate knew. Jesus was actually King of the Jews. He was the head and leader of the special people of God through whom God intended to reach and bless every nation and people. He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek. Anybody who read it could understand it. Who did Jesus die for?

The next clue is the seamless garment. Four soldiers on crucifixion detail got to split up the valuables. Jesus didn’t have much. Two sandals. A belt, maybe. A cloak He wrapped around Himself. But His tunic was woven in one piece, one solid piece from top to bottom. It fulfills prophecy that the murderers gambled for His clothes, but is there something else to this seamless garment? All that work to make something one. Who did Jesus die for?

The third clue is what Jesus says to His grief-stricken mother and broken-hearted friend. “When

Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to her, ‘Woman, here is your son,’ and to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ From that time on, this disciple took her into his home” (John 19:26-27). From that day they were family. Some say that’s the start of church, the family of God. Who did Jesus die for?

A sign for every language, all peoples and all nations, in every language it is known. A seamless garment; whoever feels separated, ripped apart at the seams, there is unity in Christ. A broken-hearted mother and a broken-hearted friend; there is new family in Christ. The orphan has a home, the alone is never alone. Who did Jesus die for? He died for you. Broken-hearted, separated, alone and distant. Jesus calls you home. For you He gave His life.

“Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, ‘I am thirsty.’ A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. When he had received the drink, Jesus said, ‘It is finished.’ With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit” (John 19:28-30). He gave up His spirit. He gave His life. He had authority to give it and authority to take it up again. He gave it. In fact, the whole life of Jesus was a giving away. Like a little filament between the two wires in a lightbulb that lights up when the electricity

runs through it, the entire life of Jesus suspended between His miraculous birth and astounding death lights up and burns in the glory of a giving away, a giving away of Himself, a giving away for you and for me. But why did He give His life away?

The dying words of Jesus are in this passage. Just before He gave up His spirit, Jesus said, "It is finished." What is finished? There is a problem in this world too big for us to fix. There is a cost to be paid too high for us to pay. There is something wrong in the world and it isn't just a virus. A man and woman drive up to a church on a motorbike as people walk out of Palm Sunday worship in Indonesia. When security approaches, they blow themselves up. A young man drives from massage parlor to massage parlor in Georgia gunning down eight people, trying to kill the sickness in his own soul. A man walks into a King Soopers in Boulder and unleashes hell on earth, a hell that community will feel for the rest of their lives. Should I go on? Who will stand up and argue that there is nothing wrong in the world?

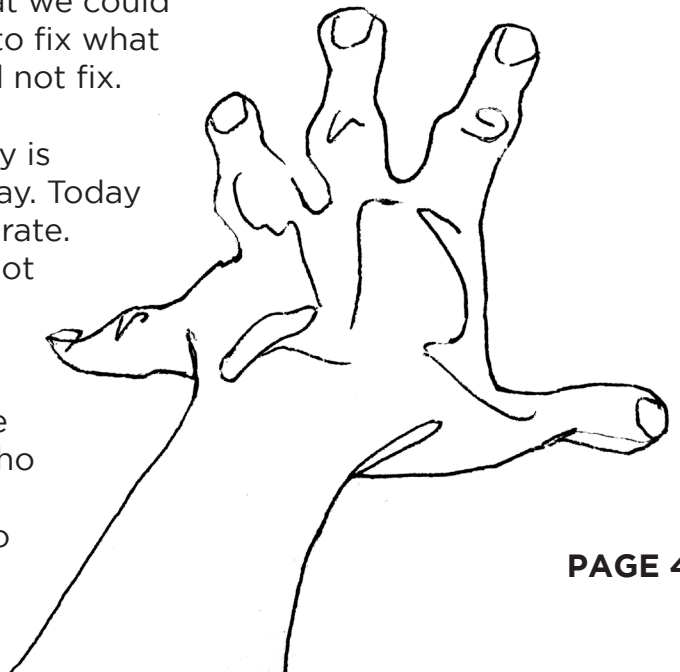
It's not just out there in those evildoers and murderers. Every time we turn from God's goodness and choose evil we block light and cause shadow, we threaten health and introduce sickness, we stop life and start death, at least in some small way. When a paper asked for submissions from famous authors to answer the question "What is wrong with the world?" G. K.

Chesterton submitted a two-word essay: "I am." Every turning from God's way, every investment in the shadows and withdrawal from the light, every flight from good and race toward evil causes a debt of corruption to grow. There is something wrong in the world too big for us to fix and too costly for us to pay. For that, Jesus gave His life.

That is outrageous! What does a man hanging on a cross outside of Jerusalem 2,000 years ago have to do with any of these problems? The claim is this: these problems all have one root, our rejection of God. But even when God is rejected, His love never wavers. The same John who wrote this Gospel later wrote to his church: "This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:9-10). An atoning sacrifice, a death to pay for the death we unleashed on the world. Jesus paid what we could not pay to fix what we could not fix.

But today is Easter Day. Today we celebrate. We are not here to

celebrate a man who died for us, but to



celebrate a man who rose from the dead. After Jesus died on the cross, after all that we have just read and studied took place, the most incredible thing happened. They took the dead body and put it in a tomb on Friday night. On Sunday morning, they came to find the tomb was empty, the body was gone, and people started seeing Jesus again—hundreds saw him—alive after He was dead. Jesus paid the debt, He gave his life, He sacrificed it all, and then He rose again from the dead into eternal life! He is not dead. He is risen! Our Jesus is very much alive. New life has begun. Although we still feel the sickness unto death, the cure has been unleashed, the new life has started, the redemption has begun.

John Stott wrote there are three things we gain by the resurrection of Jesus: forgiveness, power, and ultimate triumph. “It enables us to face our past (however much reason we have to be ashamed of it), confident of God’s forgiveness through him who died for our sins and was raised; to face our present (however strong our temptations and heavy our responsibilities), confident of the sufficiency of God’s power; and to face our future (however uncertain it may be), confident of God’s final triumph, of which the resurrection is the pledge.” Forgiveness for the past—Christ died for you! It is finished. There is now no condemnation. All is paid. Only believe and be forgiven. Power in the present—the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is active in you by the Holy

Spirit. Hope for the future—the final triumph is secured. The resurrection of Jesus is a down payment and guarantee. Christ has died. Christ is risen! Christ will come again.

How much will it cost to fix that? Jesus paid what you could not pay to fix what you could not fix. He gave His life away. It is finished. But we still feel the problem. Yes. We do. The world is still spinning out in disorder and evil, right up to this moment, right up to this moment in your heart, in my heart. But the victory is secured. The debt has been paid. We have forgiveness for the past, power for the present, and triumph for our future. Every heart that willingly receives Jesus Christ receives that cure. Every one of you who puts your faith in Jesus Christ begins living out the joy of the restoration. New life won by Christ goes rushing through your veins and you start to be a force for the fix. For this reason He came, to give His life and save yours.

*Lord Jesus; I say to you now;
Thank you for giving
your life; Now I
give you mine;
I believe in you;
I trust you; You
are my Lord; You
are my Savior.
In Jesus
name;
Amen.*

