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**Life in 6 Words – Week 5 - “EVERYONE”**

*“Everyone who trusts in him alone has eternal life.”*

Review God. Our. Sins. Paying.

Everyone…

Repelling for the first time in Glendo, Wyoming….(repelling rope)….lean over…lesson on Faith

This statement sets Christianity apart from every other world religion. This statement is unique on at least three different levels: It is explosive, exclusive and extensive!

1. It’s explosive (“Everyone who trusts”)
   1. Because it is open to all!

“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13

Over the years I’ve come across numerous people who got hung up on the “who” and the “how” of salvation. It has been common for me to talk to people who believe that they could never be saved. They think of that as something only for “good” people, and assume they are too bad. But the Bible makes it clear that EVERYONE who calls on the name of the Lord – Jesus—can be saved.

Maybe those of us who have known Jesus for years have struggled with this. Even a murderer? Child-molester? Think of the vilest sinner...and yes, through the power of the gospel, if they trust in Jesus alone to save them, they can and will be saved. “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” “Everyone who trusts in him alone has eternal life.” EVERYONE!

* 1. Because it’s by trusting, not trying!

This is what burnt up the Pharisees and other religious leaders of Jesus’ day. It was explosive and offensive because it made us totally dependent on Jesus and totally self-loathing of our own efforts.

*“Brothers and sisters, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished.”* Galatians 5:11

The offense of the cross is that it has nothing to do with what we do and everything to do with what he has done. The offense of the cross is that we receive it, we don’t achieve it. The offense of the cross is that our belief, not our behavior. The offense of the cross is that Jesus gets all the glory because he did all the work.

* + 1. Romans 4:5 reminds us that it’s by trusting, not trying.

“*However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.”* Romans 4:5

**“…does not work but trusts God.”**

Illustration: (Adapt if you have a similar story or insert your own personal illustration.) We have 2 children, a boy and a girl, now both teenagers. When my daughter was only 6 years old she constantly demonstrated a child-like “leap of faith,” quite literally. It was my fault, because she was so young and I led her to believe that I could and would always catch her if she jumped off the stairs. It started as a fun game one day, when she was only about 3 steps up, and I was on the floor. I said “jump and I’ll catch you!” She was very reluctant at first, but she did. And of course, being fully focused (and only being a few stairs up) I easily caught her. Then 3 stairs up turned into 4...then 5...then 6...and well, it was getting dangerous and my back was giving out. From that day on, there were several occasions when I would be walking by the stairs and suddenly look up to see my daughter already in the air heading towards me, totally unwarned, expecting me to catch her! And I did catch her, thank God. I finally convinced her that she had to stop, because I was human, and it was dangerous because she might catch me off guard and I could drop her. But it amazes me how she had absolute trust that I would catch her because I was her Daddy, and I could never drop her. Talk about faith. This is how we are saved. Not by good works, not by depending on anything that we can do, but by fully trusting Jesus alone to save us.

* + 1. Ephesians 2:8,9 reminds us that it’s by trusting, not trying…

*“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.”* Ephesians 2:8,9

We are saved BY grace. God’s amazing grace. Grace means “unmerited favor.” In other words, we don’t deserve it, we can’t earn it, and we could never repay it. That’s what makes it grace, and that’s what makes it amazing. We are saved BY grace, THROUGH faith. In God’s wonderful plan of salvation, we receive His grace, through faith.

Illustration: Christmas gift of a bike from my grandparents. And I remember saying, “Grandma and Grandpa, thank you!!” Grandma said, “You’re welcome, Greg, and now you owe us $100.” (Give a moment to see the surprised look on the faces of the audience). And then say, “No, of course she didn’t say that! Because it was a GIFT!!!” You don’t earn a gift, and you don’t repay someone for a gift. Why? Because...it’s a GIFT!

Ephesians says that it is a gift of God, not of works – not of good deeds – so that NO ONE can boast. Have you ever thought about that? There will be NO ONE in heaven boasting as to how they got there on their own. There will only be boasting in Christ and Christ alone. I often think of the thief on the cross who believed and received this gift shortly before he died, as he hung on the cross next to Jesus. Have you ever thought about how the thief had a 0% chance for spiritual growth? Didn’t get to follow in baptism obedience. Didn’t get to join a church, a small group, memorize the Bible, or even tell anyone about his decision. He received salvation as he was being executed for his crimes. There is no way he could boast of any good that he had done for salvation, yet he is in heaven, with Jesus, today. As far as salvation is concerned, I am no different than that thief on the cross. If you have trusted Jesus and received his gift of salvation, then neither are you. Our good works have NOTHING to do with our salvation. Just like the thief, one day we will be in heaven, boasting only of God’s amazing grace.

* + 1. Luke 18:9-14 reminds us that it’s by trusting, not trying

*“Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer[: ‘I thank you, God, that I am not like other people—cheaters, sinners, adulterers. I’m certainly not like that tax collector!**I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.’ But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, ‘O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.’**I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”* Luke 18:9-14

At the root of trying is pride.

At the root of trusting is humility.

1. It’s exclusive (“Everyone who trusts **in him alone**”)

***“****Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”* John 14:6

*“Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”* Acts 4:12

Jesus is the only way. There is no other name

Stories of preaching in India….40 hour flights…tired preaching…that was not the offering…slapping cows… worshipping cows and cobras (honored god…hire Muslim hitman…give Jesus a chance…)

Using the chair as the illustration of full trust! (“Stand upon the chair!”)

Faith in Jesus is our only hope.

It’s explosive. It’s exclusive.”

1. It’s extensive (“Everyone who trusts in him alone **has eternal life**.”)

* I’m sure we’ve all heard the saying, “Too good to be true”. When it comes to God’s plan of salvation, as I have described to you based on what the

Bible says, people may often respond with those very words: “It just sounds too good to be true”.

The reality is this: If the gospel you preach doesn’t sound too good to be true then it’s not good, and it’s not true!

* Maybe today this truth has hit you in such a way that you realize that you’ve never actually received salvation, because you’ve been trusting in yourself or someone/something else.
  + Trust in Jesus right now!
* Maybe you are a Christian but not walking in ongoing trust in Jesus. The same faith that saves you sanctifies you!

*“For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith****from first to last*** *just as it is written: ‘The righteous will live by faith.’*” Romans 1:17

***“****I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”* Galatians 2:20

To use that repelling illustration. It’s not just that initial lean over, it’s trusting that rope all the way down. Learning not to fight it, just to trust!