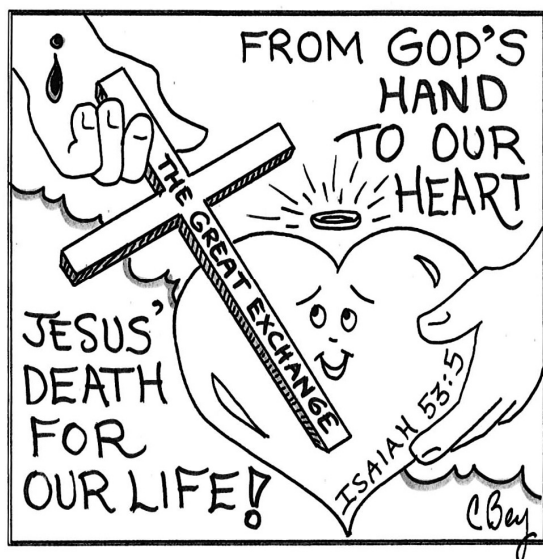

The Great Exchange

*He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities;
the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.
Isaiah 53:5*



Life is filled with exchanges. Employees choose to exchange forty hours for a paycheck. Fans choose to exchange forty dollars for a seat at the game (and then exchange another ten dollars for a hotdog and drink!). Every day we choose to exchange time, money, effort and emotion for what we hope brings us joy, peace and satisfaction.

The Bible speaks about exchanges, too. A very important truth that God makes clear for us in his word is that he does not want us to have any sin. In fact, he says that if we do sin, we cannot live with him because he is a sinless, holy God. Sin is so serious to God that he pronounces the death penalty for anyone who sins. He says,

“The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23) and “The soul who sins is the one who will die” (Ezekiel 18:20). So who can ever hope to stand in God’s presence and enjoy his favor? For try as we do, we are not perfect. Sinful thoughts, words and acts clutter our lives.

There is good news, however. In love for us, God made an exchange. Instead of holding us under his judgment for all our wrongdoing, he placed his Son under judgment instead of us. The Bible is speaking about Jesus when it says, “He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.”

That is a great exchange! Jesus came and exchanged his life for ours. Our transgressions (times when we fail to live according to God’s holy will) were taken away when Jesus was pierced on the cross. Our iniquities (all the things we think or do that don’t measure up to God’s perfect will) were taken away when Jesus was crushed in death. Our punishment was paid for by Jesus.

Through Jesus you have peace with God. Through his wounds you are given life with God. Through Jesus you are forgiven and loved by God. Yes, you! God chose to make that exchange for you.