

Inspirational Thought—October 3, 2024—Duff Gorle

At church this weekend, we're celebrating The Lord's Supper (Communion). I've been preparing a message: "Purification of Sins" based on **Hebrews 1:1-4**: *"Long ago God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom he also created the worlds. He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being, and he sustains all things by his powerful word. **When he had made purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.**"*

Sin is serious reality. It's a power in the world. When you read the book of Romans you see that sin is an ever-present power that moves in the heart of humans. It moves in the will. It moves in the world. Sin has a grip on every human being. Sin is an awful brokenness—it brings division in relationships and causes strife and violent destruction between nations and in organizations and families. Each one of us is infected with sin.

The seriousness and darkness of the sin reality leads me to utilize a bit of humor to help us bear-up under this heavy truth. I hope these humorous thoughts give you a lift:

**Jesus said, "Let he who is without sin throw the first stone." As the stones began to fly, Jesus realized he might have made a mistake by including the local narcissists.

**(Clueless) Dude said to St. Peter: "Well, I spent most of my life drinking, drugging and consorting with lewd women. I did stuff I regret too."

**A man in Amsterdam went to his priest to confess: "Forgive me Father, for I have sinned. During WWII I hid a Jewish man in my attic." "Well," answered the Priest, "That's not a sin." "But I made him pay me 20 gulden for each week he stayed." The Priest replied, "I admit that wasn't good, but you did do it for a good cause." The Dutchman thanked the Father for easing his mind, and then asked one last question: "Do I have to tell him the war is over?"

Sin is rooted in unbelief—all sin flows from a lack of trust in God. We might struggle to believe for intellectual reasons, or perhaps for emotional reasons like fear. Augustine wrote of his own struggle to believe and the power of his will and its habits. Jesus wants us to believe that our salvation comes exclusively from him and not the other things, that by means of habit, we have made necessary in our lives.

Verse 3: *"When he had made purification for sins...."* I commend to you Jesus Christ:

1. **The Person**—The real person who offers us a real relationship, a friendship accessed by belief, by faith, based on God's love, mercy, grace and kindness toward us!

2. **The Purification of sins**—the healing of our sin-disease that has been triumphantly accomplished by our beloved Savior!

Hebrews 10:10 *“By this we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”*

We will never come up with enough belief to talk ourselves out of the habit of unbelief. Salvation does not come through resolve, but through surrender. Surrender is difficult. It requires that we believe that God does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. The changes that are needed in our lives, our church, and our world will only happen when we stop trying to make them happen and surrender in full belief that the Holy Spirit will do what we cannot do!