

## PASTOR DOUG'S FAVORITE BIBLE VERSES

### Hebrews 10:14

For the past couple of months we have been examining my favorite Bible verses. We began with a series of my "life verses" (Romans 8:1; Matthew 5:6; Isaiah 66:2b; and finally Job 42:12a). Since then we have been looking at **other favorites** even if they were not selected as "life verses."

And today – on this day when we particularly remember our Savior's death on the cross for sinners – we want to again look at Hebrews 10:14. I say "again" because in our study of the book of Hebrews we looked at this verse many months ago.

#### Hebrews 10:14

It is impossible to put our selves in the shoes of the Jews living prior to the time of Jesus coming into the world. We may **try and imagine** how they thought or lived, but we can't really do it. For those Jews who took the law of God seriously lived lives that were so highly structured – following a pattern of behavior that while very predictable was also very grueling – that we truly cannot relate to what they went through. Just imagine a life where EVERYTHING was structured for you...

- What you could eat
- How you could dress
- What you might do
- And definitely how you would act.

In the world around us probably the Amish life comes as close to that of the Jews as anything we might know. Among the literally HUNDREDS of laws that the Jews were obligated to keep was a long, long list of laws regarding the sacrifices that they were to make to God:

- Sin offerings
- Guilt offerings
- Peace offerings
- Burnt offerings
- Meal offerings

On and on and on. The writer of the book of Hebrews tried to stress this **unending process** of offering sacrifices when he wrote in Hebrews 10:11 "*And every priest stands **DAILY** at his service, **OFFERING REPEATEDLY** the **SAME SACRIFICES**, which can never take away sins.*"

These words "daily...repeatedly...the same sacrifices" are used to stress the **unending MONOTONY** of what was going on.

While a student at Arizona State University, majoring in psychology, I got a job working for a swimming pool company not far from my parents' home. As school was cheap (\$320 a semester – that wasn't per credit hour but for the entire semester of 18-20 credits) and I was living at home, the work at the pool company was really to aid me in my car buying. (And to think among the many cars I had at that time I was driving a 1953 Jaguar XK120 drop head coupe!)

I had grown up with an inground pool so I knew a bit about pool maintenance even before I got the job. But at the job I did everything from cleaning pools to building

pools. My **favorite job** was on instructing homeowners on how to maintain their newly built inground pool.

My last day at the pool company was a hot summer Saturday when few men were working. I had come into the office and instead of being sent out on an installation job or a cleaning job I was sent to a pool to **scrub off the calcium buildup** that had accrued on the tile at the water line. A pumice stone is used for this. It is **hard, tedious work** that is INCREDIBLY MONOTONOUS. And so there I was, in the blazing sun, bent over the edge of a large pool, scrubbing...scrubbing...scrubbing at the calcium. As the hours went by, and as I got hotter and hotter and more weary, I began talking to myself. "Why am I doing this? This is the kind of job you give someone just starting out. I've been working on pools for years now. Why would they have me doing this grunt work? I've had it; I quit!"

And so it was then that I did something that I have regretted ever since: I simply got up, walked away from the pool, drove the company truck back to the office (no one was there), left a note that I had quit and then went home. It was very unlike me. I should not have done it.

But it was **the MONOTONY of the job** that was killing me...or so I felt.

Now **much of life IS monotonous**. I shower every day, shave nearly every day, brush my teeth several times a day, eat 2-3 meals every day. If we really think about it **MOST OF LIFE** is monotonous. Yet we each do it.

**Life is full of monotony**. Adam, in the garden (I reference this in today's Heartbeat article), was told to work six days and then take a day off. **Work six, rest one; work six, rest one; work six, rest one**. If Adam and Eve hadn't sinned presumably Adam would still be in that **same routine** back in the garden.

So life has a degree of monotony built into it. That's one reason to thank God for the seasons, and for the changes in weather. It helps break up the monotony.

But the Jewish people were in this monotony of sacrifices for sins. Can you even imagine being a Jewish priest in those days...with that endless repetition and sacrificing of animals? "Man...when is this every going to end?" That's what I would have been thinking.

(It's good I wasn't a Jewish priest. I might have some hot summer day said to myself, "I've had it; I quit!" and then simply gotten up, walked away from the job, ridden the temple camel back to the office, left a note that I had quit and gone home.)

Well, the Bible teaches us in Galatians 4:4 that "when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son..." That is, **when the time was right**, Jesus came into this world.

Some Bible commentators have suggested that this "fullness of time" was tied to things like the Roman conquest of the world (which allowed a Roman citizen like Paul to **freely travel** bringing the gospel to that world) or the prior domination of the world by the Greeks, thus providing a **common trade language** that could be understood by all.

But I have wondered if this "fullness of time" wasn't much more tied to the Jewish people having reached a **point of near exhaustion** with their endless repetition of sacrifices. Maybe the priests were by the time that Christ finally came ALL pretty much ready to say, "I've had it; I quit!"

Hebrews 10:11 gives us a small glimpse into the monotonous repetition that the priests and the people had been going through.

And so it was that at the right time Jesus came. And while he came to show us how to live, and to clarify our thinking on what it was and is that God is looking for, **his primary reason for coming wasn't as much to TEACH or to MODEL as it was to REDEEM**. When Joseph was told that he was to give Mary's son the name Jesus, it was because the name meant "He shall SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS." The name wasn't given to imply that he would **teach** us or **model** righteousness for us (though Jesus did both those things) but it was that he was to **SAVE US FROM OUR SINS**. And Jesus did that by his sacrificial death on the cross.

So instead of there continuing to be ENDLESS OFFERINGS,  
**Jesus made a ONCE AND FOR ALL TIME OFFERING of Himself for sinners.**

The valedictorian of what would have been my high school graduating class (had our family remained in Michigan and not moved to Arizona between my sophomore and junior years of high school) was a fellow named Eric. Eric's dad, who died just this past February, was a Baptist minister. And so it was that, growing up, I – a PK (preacher's kid) – got to know Eric, another PK.

Eric went on to become the **world's leading expert on transistor radios**. He personally owns more than 1,000 such radios and has written many books on that subject as well as other subjects.

Several years ago I corresponded a bit with Eric and learned at that time of his marital woes and overall spiritual depression. I'm not sure what Eric would claim today, but it became clear to me at that time that Eric was at least cynical of Christian faith if not having already crossed the line into unbelief.

Well, Eric again came to mind this past week so I wrote him a short note. I finished the note with the words "I sincerely believe we have a great hope in Christ."

And isn't that the truth?

For if we don't have Christ...if we don't have an offering for our sins...what do we have?

Hebrews 10:14 is one of my favorite verses because of **the hope** that it gives me. For there it goes on to teach that by that single offering, Jesus "perfected for all time those who are being sanctified." Some versions read, "he made perfect forever those who are being made holy."

That means that in this single verse we have both the concepts of  
JUSTIFICATION – being made perfect, and  
SANCTIFICATION – being made holy.

Justification has to do with our **legal standing** before God: how God will view us on the day of judgment. Justification has to do with the question as to whether are we going to be condemned or not. And the answer to that question is **NO, we will not be condemned.** And the reason for that is NOT that God is just merciful and kind and willing to look over our sins. Far from it! Indeed, if God was simply willing to look over or look past our sins then Jesus would never have needed to come and DIE for our sins!

God's not blind in regards to our sins, and  
God's not just a nice man willing to "let it go."

No. Our sins were and are a GRIEVOUS AFFRONT to God. And  
being so, they **needed** to be dealt with.

But that is where Jesus came in. HE paid the penalty for OUR sins.

2 Corinthians 5:21

1 Peter 2:24

1 Peter 3:18a

By that death Jesus "perfected" or made righteous those for whom he died!  
Hallelujah! What a Savior!

So my standing before God has been set, and yours as well – if Christ is your redeemer!

I have nothing to fear. God's grace has proven to be greater than all my sin!

But someone says, "But look at my life! I'm a FAILURE as a Christian.  
The things I don't want to do, I do. And the things I  
should be doing...well, I'm not doing so well there  
either."

And it is here that Hebrews 10:14 gives me even MORE hope, for it doesn't say that Jesus has "perfected for all time those who **have been** sanctified. Rather it says that he has perfected for all time those who **are BEING SANCTIFIED** or **BEING MADE HOLY.**" Meaning, that he has perfected those who are **still in process...those that aren't yet finished.**

This past week I restored the carved legs and bottom rails on an antique loveseat that Ruth and I own. The piece was old and worn when we bought it at an antique shop nearly 40 years ago and it has gotten worse since. But within the next month or so it will be completely redone (Rick's Upholstery Shop is doing it). But I have redone the nicely carved legs and bottom rails.

Now I have redone **a lot of furniture** and various antiques through the years. And one of the things that I've learned is to not rush things. When using spray paint, for example, when it says to put on a second coat within the first hour or else wait 48 hours, they're not kidding.

And in the case of the loveseat, while it now has four coats of satin varnish on the legs, it took me **nearly a week** to put on those coats: allowing each coat to sufficiently dry

and then finely sanding between the coats. And it will be several weeks still until that varnish is truly cured.

For some things just take **a long time to cure**.

Well, our justification before God was **secured in just a few days** when Christ died for us on the cross and then was raised from the dead (Romans 4:25). But our sanctification – our BEING MADE HOLY – **is a lifelong process**. And while you can say, "I've been justified!" you cannot say "I've been sanctified" in the same way.

For **being made holy has a long cure time**: much more than 48 hours, 48 days or maybe even 48 years. It is has a cure time that goes on right up to the day that God knocks at our door and says, "Time's up!"

That day is coming for each of us. Sooner or later, it's coming. Until then we're in process of being made holy. We're **already right** before God because of Jesus while we're **getting made right** – being cured – in our everyday lives.