

The Wednesday Word, January 11, 2023: Once (Part 3)

3) Hebrews 9:26.

*For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now **once** in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*

Gospel Christianity is not a matter of following a set of rules. In fact, the gospel is not about what we do but rather about what Christ has already done. Unfortunately, our default mode is one of legalism, that's why we very often lean strongly and quietly toward rule-keeping in a futile attempt to find acceptance with God.

There's an old story about a man who fell down a well. When he called out for help a passer-by, hearing his cries, leaned over the well and asked him what he wanted. The man said he wanted to get out. The passerby thought for a moment, and finally took out some paper and wrote something on it and dropped it down into the well. When the man picked it up, he read: "Ten Rules on How to Keep Out of Wells."

Religion is like that. It tells us that we must do something to get out of the well we've fallen into. However, that is not the Gospel. The Gospel tells us of a Saviour who has appeared ONCE to put away the deep well of sin by the sacrifice of Himself. One more time then! How many times has He appeared to put away sin? ONCE, only ONCE.

Jesus was and is unique. No one had been like Him in the past, no one can match Him in the present and no one will surpass Him in the future. Of course, there were priests and prophets back in the Old Testament yet none of them could bring salvation to their people. They could not deliver from the wrath to come. But the ultimate priest, Christ Jesus, appeared ONCE and saved us by His doing, dying and rising again.

There is no one like Him. No church, no priest, and no Bishop can make a sacrifice for our sins. Why? Because Jesus appeared ONCE to put away sin. His sacrifice for sin requires no repetition yet, according to Rome, he is offered daily in the Mass. That He needs to be offered repeatedly is a Romish fiction.

As we have said, there was no one like Him and will be no one like Him in the future. He appeared to put away sin (literally abolish sin). Since this is true, we have no need to look for a new messiah or a future leader who will redeem us. Redemption has already been accomplished. There is no need to repeat the sacrifice. Jesus did not come here as an amateur redeemer. Far from it! When our Master came here, He successfully redeemed us by shedding His own precious blood.

He appeared ONCE and put away sin. It is not easy for sin to be put away. – No carnal sacrifice could do that.

As the hymn writer said,
"Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain

Could give the guilty conscience peace
Or wash away the stain.
But Christ, the heav'nly Lamb,
Takes all our sins away;
A sacrifice of nobler name
And richer blood than they.

His putting away of our sins happened ONCE. This doctrine of ONCE needs to be 'writ large' on our minds. These truths about ONCE completely dismantle the Roman Catholic doctrine of the *Mass*. In the mass, Jesus Christ is offered again and again for the sins of the people. Every time the priest lifts the wafer to consecrate it and breaks it before the congregation, he is, according to them, offering Jesus Christ as a bloodless sacrifice for the sins of the people. A bloodless sacrifice? But how can that be? The scriptures are clear, only a blood sacrifice can put away sin. (Hebrews 9:22).

And that's the Gospel Truth!