

“Once for all”

Do you know of a vaccine that after only one shot you never have to have another one? The closest such vaccine I found is the mmr vaccine. After a child gets one regimen of two of these vaccines, that child is immune forever from measles, mumps and rubella. That’s close enough for me. I’ll take that as a once-for-all vaccine.

This past week I googled the COVID19 vaccine hoping to discover that once you took the two-shot regimen you would be set for life. I was hoping it would be a once for all kind of vaccine. But, alas, it isn’t. The truth is, no one, not even the scientists and medical professionals who developed the vaccine, know how long it might be effective. And to take that one step further, they really aren’t sure it’s going to work. They hope this will fix this modern-day plague once and for all, but quite frankly, it’s too soon to tell. And you can see this in their eyes as they keep an eye on folks who have gotten the vaccine. What are the side-effects of this new vaccine? Are there any?

So, personally, I’m going to get the vaccine and hope it works, but honestly, it’s just so my daughter will let me hold my new grandson when he arrives in March. She has already told me, and rightly so, that without my getting the shot, she will not even let me come into her home. And if you are concerned about how to reconcile your faith in God and this vaccine, remember what someone said not long ago, “I trust God, but I lock my house.” I trust God, but I’m going to get the vaccine.

This past week a Biblical phrase that I have loved for as long as I can remember kept coming to mind. That phrase is “once for all.” I did a search on my Bibleworks program on my computer for the word “once” as it occurs in the New Testament. I discovered that the word occurs only 47 times. That isn’t very much. But what I was really interested in seeing was how many times the phrase “once for all” occurs and where it occurs, and that turns out to be in only 7 places.

Why am I preaching on this idea of once for all? Because it can profoundly effect our faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. And why do I think that’s important? Because our peace of mind and

Our faith in Jesus and our life in the Spirit all depend on the finished work of Christ on the cross.

Faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross is like a once-for-all vaccine against sin and death for those who believe in Him and are born of the Spirit. It doesn't mean that sin has been eradicated from our existence. We are still carriers but with the God-given ability by the indwelling presence of the Spirit, we are no longer to our old nature.

I'm going to make several observations on the once-for-all's that occur in the Bible. And here's the first one I see.

First, Christ died to sin once for all

¹⁰ *For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.*

¹¹ *Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (Rom. 6:8-11 NAU*

Do you see how the Holy Spirit through the apostle Paul brings us into the picture immediately? Since we are alive to God in Christ Jesus, it makes sense that we are also dead to sin. ¹¹ *Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

The difference between Christ's death and His dying to sin and our dying with Him and our being dead to sin is that Jesus was, is and always will be God and was always without sin, we were not and are not, not even now. That's why I continually emphasize that it's all about Jesus. We are involved by the grace of God, but it's all about Jesus. ¹¹ *Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.* We are alive to God in whom? Christ Jesus. It's all about Jesus. Our faith is in Him, not ourselves.

Scripture makes it abundantly clear that after being born of the Spirit we still sin. And as long as we are in these flesh and blood bodies, "the body of this death" as Paul describes our bodies in Romans 7:24, we will sin. That's what he concludes in Romans 7:25. The glorification

of our flesh and blood, mortal and corrupt bodies will not take place until the rapture has been completed. In the meantime, even after our vaccination against sin and death, we are still carriers.

So, **Christ died to sin once for all** That is not saying that Christ died to sin once for all as though He had sin to die to. It is saying that His death to sin was the Atonement for sin, it was the once-for-all payment for our sins. May I remind you that Jesus was and is God and therefore did not sin and could not sin. In Him there is no darkness at all. (1 Jn. 1:6)

His death is our death. His burial is our burial. His resurrection is our resurrection. His life is now our life. His righteousness is our righteousness. In Him there is no darkness at all and that is how God now sees us in Christ. We are raised up, righteous children of God!

Second, Christ offered Himself as a once-for-all sacrifice once for all

²⁶ *For it was fitting for us to have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens;*

²⁷ *who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because **this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.*** (Heb. 7:26-27 NAU)

What's done is done, and it is done. Jesus made the once-for-all sacrifice for our sins and it cannot and will not be repeated because God is satisfied with His sacrifice on our behalf.

Third, Christ entered the holy place once for all through His own blood for our eternal redemption.

¹² *and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.* (Heb. 9:12 NAU) What kind of redemption? "Eternal redemption." How long does our redemption last? Eternally! Forever!

The blood of Christ has eternal significance for those who are in Christ. "Once redeemed, always redeemed."

Fourth, Christ put away sin by sacrificing Himself once for all

²⁶ *Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.*

²⁷ *And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,*

²⁸ *so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him. (Heb. 9:26-10:1 NAU)*

You and I put away stuff every day. We put away our laundry and our dishes. We put away the vacuum cleaner when we're through with it. We put away the lawnmower and our weedeater and our rakes. But then we have to get them all out again. That's where my analogy breaks down. Beloved of God, Jesus will never bring our sins out again. Never! Read this, ⁵ *But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,*

⁶ *just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:*

⁷ *"BLESSED ARE THOSE WHOSE LAWLESS DEEDS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN, AND WHOSE SINS HAVE BEEN COVERED.*

⁸ *"BLESSED IS THE MAN WHOSE SIN THE LORD WILL NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT." (Rom. 4:5-8 NAU)*

And this, **Romans 8:1** *Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.*

² *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. (Rom. 8:1-2 NAU)*

There is therefore now and never will be condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. He will never bring our sins out again.

Read this, ¹⁰ *He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.*

¹¹ *For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him.*

¹² *As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. (Ps. 103:10-12 NAU). I never grow tired of saying, “It’s all about Jesus.”*

Fifth and finally, Christ sanctified us through the offering of His body once for all

¹⁰ *By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all**. (Heb. 10:10 NAU)*

In case you may have forgotten what it means to be sanctified, I’m going to remind you. It means that God has sovereignly set us apart for Himself for His glory and for His purposes because of His great love with which He loved us. As vile and as wicked and as dead-in-our-trespases-and-sins as we were, He took us just as we were and made us into new creations in Christ Jesus.

Read this, ⁹ *Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.*

¹¹ *Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. (1 Cor. 6:9-11 NAU)*

Beloved, you and I are dead to sin but alive to God IN CHRIST JESUS! And all the glory for our being washed and sanctified and justified goes to Him. Do I need to say it again? It’s all about Jesus.

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Christ offered Himself as a once-for-all sacrifice

Christ entered the holy place once for all through His own blood for our eternal redemption.

Christ put away sin by sacrificing Himself once for all

Christ sanctified us through the offering of His body once for all

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¹³ for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Rom. 10:13 NAU)

In Jesus' name. Amen.