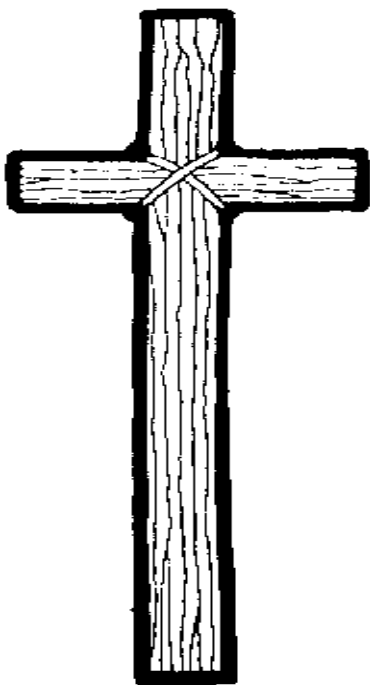


**Once
In a Lifetime**



by Charles Wages

We are told by philosophers that “history repeats itself.” Is this always true? Are there no once-in-a-lifetime occurrences? Someone has aptly observed that if you put your foot in a flowing stream of water that you could never accomplish the same thing in the same water again. We often repeat the same words over and over again or tell the same funny stories or jokes. Consider what could be said of our first parent, Adam.

*“Whatever troubles Adam had,
No one in days of yore;
Could say when he told a joke,
I've heard that one before.”*

DIED ONCE

In great contrast to human history or human writings and speech, God accomplishes great deeds only once for His planned and promised purposes. Consider the great events and truths concerning the birth, death, and resurrection of Christ.

“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. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”
—Hebrews 9:26-28

In the passage above, the word “once” appears in each verse. In the book of Hebrews, as a whole, the word “once” appears

eleven times. This gives great emphasis to the truths that are taught. The Lord Jesus Christ “appeared once in the end of the world (age) to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself” (vs. 26). It is appointed that men should die once (vs. 27). When Christ died on Calvary it was a one time dying for the sins of humanity (vs. 28). The Son of God will never die on the cross again! In Romans, chapter 6 we are told,

“For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.”

This great act of God was sufficient to save the whole world from sin. It doesn't have to be repeated! This brings us to our next point, that is, we only have to be

SAVED ONCE

Saved once? Yes, we don't have to be saved over and over again. In Romans 6:23, it is stated,

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

In Colossians 2:10 we find our “completeness” in Christ.

“And ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power.”

And in John 10:28, the Lord Jesus said,

“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my

hand.”

Another great “once for all time” event that God accomplishes in the life of a believer is, we are

BAPTIZED ONCE

Oftentimes we come in contact with persons who tell of being “baptized” several times. Also, we hear of some being “rebaptized” when joining a different church or denomination. Also, there are several different ways to be baptized in or with water. Even if we consider our Lord, He was only baptized once in water. However, later He said to His disciples,

“But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened (pressed) till it be accomplished!”

He was referring to His “baptism” on Calvary. His once for all death for sinners!

When we consider Ephesians 4:5 which says,

“One Lord, one faith, one baptism,”

we should ask ourselves, what is this “one baptism?” In 1 Corinthians 12:13, we are told what it is.

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

This is a once for all baptism by the Holy Spirit. This brings us to our final

thought. We are,

PLACED IN THE CHURCH ONCE

Again, it is commonplace for some people to join several churches in their lifetime. There might be good and justifiable reasons on their part. However, if only they could see once and for all that when they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, the Holy Spirit baptized them into God's one church, the Body of Christ, what a difference it would make in their life. Christ is the head of His church and we are members forever.

“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” —Eph. 1:22-23

How wonderful to see that Christ died “once” for the sins of the world; that when we, as sinners, trust His finished work at Calvary, we are saved “once” and eternally; that the Holy Spirit baptizes us “once” into the Church, which is His body; and we are added to that Church “once” and forever.

Our prayer is that believers and unbelievers will read this article, not once, but twice; especially the Scriptures given. May God richly bless His Word.

*“Once for all, O sinner receive it;
Once for all, O brother believe it;
Cling to the cross, the burden will fall,
Christ hath redeemed us, once for all.”
(P.P. Bliss)*

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