

## Responding to articles (mostly pro Roman Catholic) sent anonymously to me and received 14<sup>th</sup> June 2011: (3): 'Is the Mass a Propitiatory Sacrifice'

This article is my third response to the package of articles sent anonymously to me and received by me on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2011. My first response that dealt with the question –

### 'Does Christ's sacrifice continue?'

is located on [http://www.takeheed.info/Assorted\\_Articles/Ecumenism/response-to-articles-part-one.pdf](http://www.takeheed.info/Assorted_Articles/Ecumenism/response-to-articles-part-one.pdf)

My second response dealt with the question –

### 'Is Robert Sungenis right on "being saved"?'

is located on [http://www.takeheed.info/Assorted\\_Articles/Ecumenism/response-to-articles-part-two.pdf](http://www.takeheed.info/Assorted_Articles/Ecumenism/response-to-articles-part-two.pdf)

## Responding now to Article 3

This third response relates to an article sent to me that was written by Shane Coombs, and is entitled '**The Mass is a Propitiatory Sacrifice**'. Right at the outset I have to state that my response to this article has ended up as being much longer than I had ever envisioned but I do hope you will 'stick with it' (perhaps read it in segments rather than in one go) and find it helpful.

Mr Coomb's article is located on <http://www.soladeiverbum.com/massmain.shtml> and herewith is the text as it currently appears on that link and as it was printed and sent to me anonymously –

## The Mass is a Propitiatory Sacrifice

One of the greatest difficulties Protestants have with the Catholic Church is the teaching that the Mass is a propitiatory sacrifice. The Church does teach that the Mass is a real and true sacrifice, a sacrifice which propitiates for sins because it is the sacrifice of Christ who alone can make propitiation for sins. The idea that the Mass is a propitiatory sacrifice is offensive to Protestants for three primary reasons. First, it seems to suggest that Christ's offering on the cross was insufficient to save us from our sins. Second, because Christ is the victim in the sacrifice of the Mass, it seems to require Him to die again and again. Finally, another difficulty Protestants have is that the Scriptures clearly teach that Christ was sacrificed once for all (Heb 7:25-27, 9:24-26, 10:10-14). One thing to consider about this last objection is that the phrase 'once for all' is a shortened statement of one of two things. It could either mean once for all *time*, or it could mean once for all *people*. The phrase itself doesn't specify. In fact, the adverb used here does not actually say once *for all*, but simply 'once.' Translators put "for all" in to

clarify the statement, but it is really reading into the text. Nevertheless, it is still a troubling point for most Protestants.

Bishop Fulton Sheen, a popular televangelist of the 1960s and 1970s, once said that there were not one hundred people in America who hated the Catholic religion, but there were countless who hated what they mistakenly thought the Catholic religion to be. If Catholicism really were what these people thought it was, he pointed out, Catholics would hate it too. This statement is especially significant here. Each of these objections is founded on a misunderstanding of what the Catholicism teaches about the Mass. This misunderstanding is that the Mass is a *different* sacrifice from the cross. In fact, it is not. The Mass is understood to be the very same sacrifice of the cross re-presented in a different manner:

“[Christ], our Lord and God, was once and for all to offer himself to God the Father by his death on the altar of the cross, to accomplish there an everlasting redemption. But because his priesthood was not to end with his death, at the Last Supper “on the night when he was betrayed,” [he wanted] to leave to his beloved spouse the Church a visible sacrifice (as the nature of man demands) by which the bloody sacrifice which he was to accomplish once and for all on the cross would be re-presented, its memory perpetuated until the end of the world, and its salutary power be applied to the forgiveness of the sins we daily commit.”(Council of Trent Session 22, Chapter 1)

“And since in this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and offered in an unbloody manner, the holy Synod teaches... this sacrifice is truly propitiatory.... The victim is one and the same: the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different.”(Council of Trent Session 22, Chapter 2)

There are many other important things to consider in these quotations. One is that the sacrifice of the Mass exists because Christ’s priesthood was not to end with his death. This is a point which is explained by Hebrews 7:23-24:

The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever.

Another point is that the Mass is an unbloody sacrifice: Christ does not die again in the sacrifice. Most people tend to think of a sacrifice as a death, as though it is the death of the sacrificial victim which constitutes a sacrifice. Therefore, it is common for the sacrifice of Christ to be reduced to His death alone. However, the death of the victim is only the first part of a sacrifice, with the presentation of the sacrifice being the second, more important, part. If an Old Covenant priest had slain an animal and then failed to present it to God, there would have been no sacrifice. Christ’s sacrifice was presented to the Father when His risen body ascended into Heaven, and is continually presented so long as Christ is there in Heaven with the Father. The death of Christ was in our time, but the presentation is not and can not be by definition.

Simply by being present in Heaven, Christ is presenting Himself to the Father. Hebrews 9:24 makes reference to this, saying, “For Christ has entered... into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf.” This is why the book of Hebrews says that Christ “is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.” (7:25) This intercession is not a different work from the sacrifice. It *can’t* be, because that would mean

that His sacrifice was not sufficient. Protestant commentators stress this point. The intercessory work of Christ is not a different work from His sacrifice; it is part of the sacrifice. It is the eternal presentation of Christ before the Father. This appearing as a perpetual presentation is so that He can perpetually be propitiation for our sins, as 1 John 2:1-2 says.

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

The verb 'is' here in "He is propitiation" is in the present tense, meaning that Jesus is currently the propitiation. Protestant Greek commentators are often very perplexed by this because they cannot understand how Christ could *currently* be propitiation, since Protestant theology understands Christ's sacrifice on the cross to be the only propitiation for sins. It is correct to understand Christ's sacrifice as the only propitiation for sins. However, it is incorrect to understand the death on the cross to in and of itself be the sacrifice. It is because Christ's sacrifice consists of both the death on the cross *and* His eternal presentation to the Father that John can write that He *is* currently the propitiation for sins.

The eternity of Christ's presentation is made clear by other Scriptures as well. As was already cited, Hebrews 9:24 says that Christ "now" appears in the presence of God "on our behalf." There is the ongoing work of intercession in Hebrews 7:25, intercession which is a part of His sacrificial work. In Revelation 5:6, He is depicted as "a lamb, standing as though slain. He is in Heaven a slain lamb, a sacrificial victim, yet He is standing because He is risen. Heaven is not bound by time, it is in eternity. Hence, elsewhere in Revelation He is called the "lamb slain before the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). The reason John can say He was slain before the foundation of the world even though He clearly died at a given moment in the first century is because His sacrifice is an eternal one, a sacrifice which is in its Heavenly part (the presentation) present in eternity. For this reason, men like Moses and Elijah, who appeared at the transfiguration, could be saved even though Christ had not yet died. The propitiation of Christ's sacrifice is eternally present in Heaven and thus was efficacious even for men living before the incarnation. Hebrews 4:3 works along the same theme, stating that God's works were completed "from the foundation of the world." The Mass is no more contradicting the once for all nature of Christ's offering than His earthly death on the cross was contradicting the fact that God's work was already done before the foundation of the world, and that Christ was already slain before the foundation of the world.

Reading Hebrews 9:24-26 in this context, the nature of Christ's sacrifice becomes much clearer:

For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

It is the *suffering* which occurred once for all, never to be repeated. Christ's once for all *offering*, however, is perpetual and eternal. In fact, it could even be said that the reason it is once for all is because it is eternal; one cannot repeat something which has no beginning and no end. Given all of the statements the Scriptures make concerning the eternity of Christ's presentation, it is clear that Hebrews cannot possibly mean that Christ's offering was a one time, momentary act. Rather, it is the suffering which was a one time and momentary occurrence, which is why the writer to the Hebrews explicitly states that Christ's suffering would have been required to happen again were He to be sacrificed again.

When the writer to the Hebrews speaks of the offering in this passage, he is referring specifically to the high priest having to go in and out of the Holy of Holies. That is why he writes, "Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, *as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own.*" That is also another reason why he emphasizes the suffering so much. When sacrifices were made in the Old Covenant, the priest would slaughter the animal outside of the Holy of Holies and then enter into it. It was by the blood of this slaughtered animal that the priest could enter the Holy of Holies, so if Christ were to go in and out of the Heavenly Holy of Holies, He would have to suffer each time, but He does not, because "he entered once for all into the holy places, *not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood*" Once Christ is in the Holy of Holies, His presence before the Father is the presentation of the sacrifice to the Father. The actual killing of the animal in the Old Covenant was only part of the sacrifice - the other part was the presentation, which Jesus accomplished at the Ascension.

The Mass is a Sacrifice because it re-presents that eternal sacrifice by making it present on the altar of the Church. The Sacrifice of the Mass is simply the ongoing, eternal offering of Christ in Heaven. Hebrews is such an important book in terms of the Mass because it was written to explain the superiority of the New Testament sacrifice to the old sacrifices, and in chapter 8 it provides further insight into the nature of the Mass:

Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man. For every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices; thus it is necessary for this priest also to have something to offer. (1-3)

Even though He is sitting down, Christ is still a minister. He is still offering that one sacrifice which is made once for all; otherwise He would no longer be a minister. In fact, the passage makes this clear by stating that it is necessary for Him to have something to offer. Just like 'is' in 1 John 2:2, the verb 'have' is present tense, meaning it *is* currently occurring: Christ *currently* must have something to offer. (If He had only had something to offer at one time, an aorist or more likely a perfect tense would have been used.) This passage teaches that Christ's offering is going on even now, and that He is still ministering at the Heavenly altar. It is this present offering which is made at the altar at the Mass. This is the altar Hebrews refers to in saying, "we have an altar from which those who serve the tent have no right to eat." (13:10) This reference to the priests of the Old Covenant having no right to eat at this altar shows that the writer had in mind an earthly altar on which this sacrifice was presented. He could not have meant, by referring to eating from this altar, to be speaking symbolically of spiritually receiving Christ or the salvation His sacrifice earned, because these priests had as much a right to receive these things as those who were receiving them. All persons have as the same right to salvation through Christ. (In fact as Christians we understand that nobody has a right to salvation, but nonetheless all who come to Christ in faith may receive it). There truly is an altar which Christians alone may eat from, and this is the altar of the Mass.

That the Mass is a re-presentation of the eternal sacrifice of Christ is also evident from the Last Supper accounts. The last supper was the Passover meal. Passover meals, then as now, had a very specific "program." This would involve the reading of particular Scriptures, singing of particular hymns, and the consecration and drinking of four cups of wine. The Gospels record this meal progressing as normal. The third cup was the one Christ raised and said, "This is the New Covenant in my blood." (Luk 22:20) This can be seen by studying the gospel accounts and because Paul refers to the cup of the Lord's Supper as "the cup of blessing" in the first letter to the Corinthians (10:16), which was the name given to the third cup of the Passover meal. After this, the Passover called for the singing of a hymn (called the Great Hallel, which consists of Psalms 114-118) before drinking from the fourth cup, which was called the "cup of consummation."

However, Jesus didn't drink from the fourth cup. Instead, the gospels say that after blessing the third cup, Jesus specifically said He was not going to drink wine again until He did so "anew in the Kingdom of God." (Mark 14:25) Immediately after this it says that "when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives." (25) This would have been a major defect in the Passover meal, not a minor omission. The fourth cup was so important that the Passover meal was not complete until it was drunk. After this, in Gethsemane, Jesus asks the Father to let the *cup* pass from Him (Matthew 26:39). When a no doubt very thirsty Jesus was offered wine while carrying the cross up to the mountain, He refused (Mark 15:23). Jesus finally drank vinegar (a type of wine) from the hyssop branch and said "it is consummated" at the moment of His death. The 'it' meant the Passover meal. That Passover meal which He had began the previous night and never finished He was now complete. It could not have ended until then, because the fourth cup of wine had yet to be drunk.

The sacrifice was not begun on Calvary. Calvary began with the Passover and the Passover ended with Calvary (see *A Father who Keeps His Promises*, Scott Hahn, Servant Books 1998, p. 234; a more thorough analysis of the above facts is also available therein. The above material on the Passover is from Dr. Hahn's work) This ties together a number of items which pertain to the Last Supper and its having been a Mass.

First is the sacrificial language Jesus used during the Last Supper. The Greek word translated 'remembrance' in Luke 22 and 1 Corinthians 11 is *anamnesis*, which has great sacrificial overtones. There are at least 9 other Greek words for 'remembrance' which could have been used, however this sacrificial word was chosen instead. In fact, *anamnesis* can literally mean 'memorial sacrifice'; it is used this way in the Greek Old Testament and is often translated this way in English Bibles. Hebrews 10:3, where it is also used in a sacrificial context, is the only place in which the word is used in the New Testament: "But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin every year." The passage would actually make much more sense if *anamnesis* were translated as it is in the Old Testament here, so that it would read: "But in these is a memorial sacrifice for sin every year." In fact, in the original Greek it does not say "but in those *sacrifices*," because the word 'sacrifices' is not in the text. It is added because without it the passage makes no sense in English. Rendering the word consistently here cleans up the passage immediately, cutting the need for translators to add words to Scripture. The Greek word for "do" used in these passages, '*poiein*,' is also a word with sacrificial overtones, used over 75 times in the Old Testament to mean 'offer.' It would be a completely accurate translation of 1 Corinthians 11:23 (and Luke 22:19) to render Jesus' words as "offer this as a memorial sacrifice of me," and in fact, Jewish readers who were very familiar with the Septuagint would very likely have understood it this way.

Second is the Jewish understanding of the Passover meal. Many Jewish traditions believed that those who were eating the Passover were not simply remembering the first Passover, but were literally taking part in the literal, one time event of the first Passover. They were understood to be literally taking part in the Exodus as if they were there themselves in Egypt following Moses to the promised land. This is extremely interesting because the redemption is extremely parallel to the Exodus. There are countless parallels. This is because the Exodus from physical bondage was a foreshadowing of the true Exodus from *spiritual bondage* that is found in Jesus Christ. Jesus is called the Lamb of God because He is the Passover lamb that was sacrificed to save the firstborn from death. When a person enters into Christ through baptism, he or she becomes a child of God (Mat. 5:9, 5:45, Luk 6:35, 20:36, John 12:36, Rom. 8:14-15, 8:23, 9:26, 2 Cor 6:18, Gal. 3:26, 4:5-6, Heb. 12:7-8) The paschal sacrifice of the lamb saved the lives of the firstborn of the people of God during the first Passover, and now the sacrifice of the Lamb of God saves the lives of all children of God.

There are many other parallels as well. Like the Passover lamb, Christ was to be without blemish (Ex 12:5 / Heb 9:14). The Passover lamb was examined on the 14th day of Nisan to ensure that it was unblemished, and Christ was examined on the 14th day of Nisan with no fault being found in Him (Luke 23:4,14; John 18:38; 19:4,6) The Passover lambs' bones were not to be broken, just as Christ's bones were not broken (Ex 12:46, Num. 9:12 / John 19:36) The blood of the Passover lamb was put on the

posts of the Israelite's doors, and the blood of Christ was put on the post of the cross. (Ex 12:7) There are other parallels beyond this, and many other connections that are not strictly parallel. For instance, it was a hyssop branch that was to be used to spread the blood of the Passover lamb, and it was a hyssop branch that was used to give Jesus a drink of wine on the cross (Ex 12:22 / John 19:29).

Other traditional Jewish aspects of the Passover were also incorporated into the sacrifice of Christ and the Last Supper. One example is the breaking of the *Afikoman*, which is the second of three cakes of unleavened bread which were eaten during the Passover meal. In many Jewish traditions, the bottom cake was understood to represent Abraham, the top cake to represent Jacob, and the middle cake, the *Afikoman*, to represent Isaac. While God stopped Abraham from sacrificing his son Isaac, (Gen 22:10-12) the Father Himself did allow His son to be sacrificed. It was the *Afikoman* that would have been broken during the Passover celebration when Christ broke bread, saying, "This is my body which is given for you." (Luke 22:19) The Mass extends this parallel, because just as the *Afikoman* was broken and all would eat a piece of the one bread during the Passover, so too is the [Eucharist](#), the body of Christ, broken and given to all to eat during the Mass. In fact, the parallel between the sacrifice of Christ and the Passover makes it necessary that Christians eat of Christ's body, because the Passover lamb was required to be eaten by all after its sacrifice and no part left over. (Ex 12:8-10, 34:25, Num. 9:12) Therefore Paul writes, "Christ our Passover lamb is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast..." (1 Cor 5:7-8)

Jesus' sacrifice began at the Last Supper, and was the eternal Passover sacrifice that can be experienced today through a literal participation at the sacrifice of the Mass, just as the ancient Jews literally participated in the Exodus by their Passover meal. The Last Supper was the first Mass in which Christ first made present on Earth His eternal sacrifice. (More information on the Last Supper being the beginning of Christ's sacrifice can be found [here](#).)

God Bless,

Shane Coombs 2006

First of all – who is Shane Coombs?

On this link <http://soladeicaritas.blogspot.com/2007/06/memorial-st-justin-martyr.html>

Shane Coombs writes of himself – **'I am a Catholic convert from Protestantism who believes that everything is Love, and that all true Love is the very Love of God poured into man's heart'**. Then on this link <http://www.bostoncatholicdirectory.com/Parishes-And-People/Mini-Site.aspx?id=4416> we read that at this Roman Catholic Parish the 'Youth Minister' is a Mr Shane Coombs and I would suspect that this is the person who wrote the article here in question.

Let me straight away begin by explaining why in the lead up to publishing the text of the article in question by Mr Coombs I phrased it as follows – 'herewith is the text as it currently appears on that link'. Why did I use that terminology?

Well, on the web site of Alpha & Omega Ministries, the ministry of leading Evangelical apologist, James White, there is a very interesting article that addresses something that Mr Coombs appears to have originally included in his article, but search as I have done, it no longer seems to be included in his article.

The article by James White is located on <http://www.aomin.org/aoblog/index.php?itemid=1480> and these are the relevant portions of what Mr White wrote –

Now, the same Shane Coombs issued a debate challenge to me... So I wonder about Mr. Coombs' background: Is he published? Books? Articles? Teaching experience? Language capacity? Has he shown himself capable of handling scholarly material?

So I went to his website and took a look at his materials. He has an article attempting to respond to me on the Korban issue that I found very disappointing... and, if time allows, I will reply to it in full. But I wanted to see some evidence that Mr. Coombs is truly capable of handling the Greek language properly. So I found an article on the topic of the Mass and Hebrews 10, [found here](#). In the midst of this discussion we find the following paragraph:

**The problem with verse 14 is that it doesn't translate into English well at all. The Greek text says, literally, "For by a single offering He has perfected into continuity the being sanctified." The Greek word that is translated in most Bibles as "those who are being sanctified" is a`giazome,nouj (agiazomenous), a present passive participle. It is a verb form being used as a noun substantive. The actual word doesn't actually include 'those' or 'the ones' or anything of that sort. It is translated into English with those words added so that it makes sense in English. The Greek language uses participles like this quite often, but they do not translate well. In the original language, the verse says only that the process of being sanctified is perfect. a`giazome,nouj, the being sanctified, is in the accusative case, which means that it is the object of the verb 'perfected.' However, the verb 'perfected' does not apply to the "those who are" or "the ones who are"; it only applies to "the being sanctified," the process of sanctification which is applied to the 'those.' This is taught by Hebrews because in the Old Covenant, a person could offer all the proper sacrifices for sins, they could do everything they were required to and the process could fail because it was imperfect. This verse teaches that the process now is perfect thanks to the sacrifice of Christ and will not fail as long as a person remains in the process. This is perfect given that overall theme of Hebrews of the superiority of the New Covenant sacrifice over the sacrifices of the Old Covenant.**

Now, given what passes for apologetics so often in various forums, I am almost tempted to say "thank you!" for even attempting to engage the text on this level. But I will stop short of so doing, because this is a very poor attempt. Why? Any basic reader of the Greek language immediately caught the simplistic error in Mr. Coombs' words. Evidently, he cannot read Greek at all, for he cannot recognize the difference between a singular and a plural, and, he cannot recognize the definite article. Here is the text:

**mia/| ga.r prosfora/| tetelei,wken eivj to. dihneke.j tou.j a`giazome,nouj**

The relevant phrase is tou.j a`giazome,nouj (*tous hagiazomenous*) the present passive participle *accusative masculine plural* form. Evidently, Mr. Coombs has not spent a lot of time with Greek participles. They are my favourite portion of the language, and my former Greek exegesis students can testify of the gleam in my eyes when we got to that portion of our studies. In any case, when someone who is just using Greek tools looks at a text, they see nothing but words; single units, not phrases, not

clauses, not sentences. Just words. A Greek student sees that *τοις* sitting there and realizes it is his friend. It is a definite article, and it tells us what we want to know about this participle, which is functioning as a substantive. Since this participle is a masculine plural accusative, this tells us it is properly translated "the sanctified ones" (taking one syntactical interpretation of the present) or "the ones being sanctified" (taking another). In either case, "the ones" is right there in the form of the participle (seen in the definite article).

Mr. Coombs is just plain wrong to say, "The actual word doesn't actually include 'those' or 'the ones' or anything of that sort. It is translated into English with those words added so that it makes sense in English." Since it is a plural substantive participle, it is appropriately translated "the ones being sanctified." "The ones" comes from its plurality and its function as a substantive in this context. Coombs is simply wrong to render it "the being sanctified." Such a rendering would be marked "wrong" on any first year Greek test.

The problem for Mr. Coombs becomes clear as soon as this basic fact of Greek grammar is recognized. His entire presentation is based upon this misunderstanding. The entirety of his point collapses immediately as soon as the most basic facts of the underlying text are noted. **It is not a "process" that has been perfected. This is a term referring to those who are sanctified, not to a process.** Coombs is simply in error. So his entire explanation is gone. So what will he do now? Will he amend his article, add a footnote admitting his error, admitting that his error was pointed out by a Protestant apologist, and seek to deal with the text as it actually stands? We shall see.

Of course, what this means is I would need from Mr. Coombs considerably better examples of his ability to handle the text than I have seen so far. That would be the first step in determining if Mr. Coombs would represent the Roman Catholic side in a debate appropriately. Then we would need to see if the Roman Catholics themselves would accept his services. Many who challenge me to debate do not seem to recognize that it is a two-way street. Their side needs to "step up" and that requires the Roman Catholics in a given area to support their particular debater. If a person is utterly unknown, it may be very difficult to get the Roman Catholics to support the debate and get folks out to advertise and promote it. In any case, **I await Mr. Coomb's correction of his error documented above**, and would be interested in his new "explanation" for the text in light of its accurate translation.

The portion quoted by Mr White (in red) from the article written by Mr Coombs is no longer in the version available on the Internet link – James White wrote – **'I await Mr. Coomb's correction of his error documented above'** – could it be that for Mr Coombs **'correction of his error'** was effected simply by the removal of his error? Whatever the reason it appears clear that his command of Greek is not as 'expert' as he would like readers to believe and in that case just how trustworthy is the rest of his article?

Turning now to what Mr Coombs wrote, the reality is that **from an Evangelical Christian standpoint, discussion and analysis of his article are irrelevant and meaningless.** Why do I say that? For this simple reason. For Rome, the 'sin problem' is dealt with and solved to a degree through their man-orchestrated Sacramental System. The sinner is merely brought, at the behest of others, or, of their own volition turns up, and, with the help of the priest, is then party to **'works of righteousness'** like baptism, confirmation, confession, the Mass etc. Rome claims that these 'sacraments' help in some measure to solve the candidate's 'sin problem' and are declared by Rome to be essential for salvation according to paragraph 1129 of the 1994 Catholic Catechism.

**One verse of New Testament scripture totally repudiates this false 'gospel' and hope extended by Rome to those participating in her 'works of righteousness' sacramental system.**

In Paul's letter to Titus he addresses how Titus should deal with various problems associated with the early church-plant on the Island of Crete. In chapter 1 verse 10 he warns Titus of 'deceivers' and in particular he highlights those 'of the circumcision'.

William Hendriksen in his commentary says of 'the circumcision' – **'They probably regarded their circumcision as a mark of superior excellence'** Harry Ironside in his commentary writes - **'Never having been fully delivered from (a belief in the need to slavishly obey) the law, they prated of their greater privileges and sought to bring the Gentile believers into bondage'**. John MacArthur writes in his Study Bible – **'These were Jews who taught that salvation required the physical cutting of circumcision and adherence to Mosaic ceremonies'**.

Crete was just another example of the long-running battle that Paul fought against the false 'gospel' of the Judaisers - a gospel that required **'works of righteousness'** to be mixed in with faith in the work of Christ. The details of the false 'gospel' of the Judaisers are succinctly set out in Acts 15:1 **"And certain men who came down from Judaea taught the brethren and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved"** and Paul denounced that 'gospel' in severest of terms in Galatians 1:6-9.

As for his instruction to Titus on how to deal with these 'deceivers of the circumcision' – Paul lays it out in plain terms in verse 11 **"their mouths must be stopped"**. William Hendriksen wrote – **'In telling Titus what should be done with such people, Paul uses a rare verb which has as its primary meaning "to stop the mouth by means of a bridle, muzzle or gag". The deceivers then must not be tolerated but silenced'**. Harry Ironside wrote – **'Paul commands Titus to rebuke them sharply'**. In the text of the sermon located on [http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/56-10\\_Men-Who-Must-Be-Silenced-Part-1](http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/56-10_Men-Who-Must-Be-Silenced-Part-1)

John MacArthur said - **'It's not hard to come up with a title for this particular text. I've chosen the title, "Men who must be silenced," as it indicates in verse 11. And what the text is saying there is they must be gagged. Their voices must be made inaudible. They must be muzzled. They must be restrained from speaking, they must be forbidden to talk.'**

Later on in chapter 3 verse 5 Paul sets out clearly the futility of anyone seeking to obtain salvation by mixing into 'the equation' their personally observed **'works of righteousness'**. He wrote **"NOT by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, HE SAVED US by the WASHING of regeneration and RENEWING of the Holy Spirit"**.

Here, in this verse, is the clear teaching of how and when a sinner is cleansed from all the eternal consequences of sin. It is when the sovereign HOLY SPIRIT regenerates them and they are converted. This action of being 'born again' is declared to be a **WASHING** and a **RENEWING**. At conversion, a sinner is 'washed' completely clear of the consequences of their sin on the sole grounds that Christ shed His blood on the cross to save that soul. John expressed it well in Revelation 1:5 **"Unto him that loved us and WASHED us from our sins in his own blood"**.

Then also at conversion a sinner's mind is 'renewed' to appreciate God and His ways and Paul exhorts fellow believers in Romans 12:2 **"And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the RENEWING of your mind that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God"**. Prior to conversion the mind of the believer was 'dead' to God and His ways because **"the god of this world had blinded the minds of them who believe not"** [2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4:4].

The following are some relevant excerpts from John MacArthur's sermon located on - [http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/56-25\\_He-Saved-Us](http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/56-25_He-Saved-Us)

'Now I want you to notice that statement again in verse 5, **"He saved us."** Simply it reflects the fact that salvation is totally the work of God. That's what it's saying...He saved us. Paul is emphasizing the independent, uninfluenced sovereignty with which God saves, totally outside of us, He saved us. The point being that we couldn't do anything about our condition. We were hopeless, dead in trespasses and sins. We could do nothing, He saved us... He saved us by His mercy. Not only by His kindness, by His love but now we move to His mercy. His kindness caused Him to feel strong affection. His strong affection, compassion and pity caused Him to be merciful. And so we look to verse 5, He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy... Grace is a judicial concept that forgives the crime. Mercy is a compassionate concept that helps the criminal recover. Mercy looks at misery, grace looks at guilt. And here he's talking about mercy. And he says it was God's mercy, He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness.

My dear friend, you make no contribution to your salvation. You have no capacity to make a contribution. In no way can you earn your salvation, deserve your salvation, or contribute to it. Your rescue and your transformation, your deliverance from sin and death and hell come from God and God alone. Paul, you'll remember, spent most of his life before his conversion trying to accumulate enough religious righteousness to purchase his own salvation, didn't he? Philippians chapter 3 he says, **"Look, I was circumcised the eighth day, when it comes to ritual I had the ritual. I was of the people of Israel, the race of Israelites. I was of the tribe of Benjamin. I had tribal privilege as well as racial heritage. When it comes to being a Hebrew I was a Hebrew of the Hebrews."** What does that mean? I was a traditional orthodox Jew. When it comes to the law I chose to be a Pharisee because I wanted to take it to the inth degree. When it comes to righteousness, there wasn't one thing in the law for which anybody could hold me blameable. I had done all of it. I had covered every conceivable human base of righteousness and then I realized it was all rubbish. And all those things that once were counted gain to me, he says, I count it loss for the sake of Christ...skubalon, manure, dung, rubbish, garbage, trash, filth. The best of the deeds that I have done were nothing but trash. He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, that's trash.

Philippians 3 Paul says, **"I threw it all aside for the surpassing value of knowing Jesus Christ my Lord from whom I received a righteousness not my own on the basis of works but the righteousness of God."** And that's mercy...that's mercy. We deserve wrath, we receive salvation.

Verse 5, **"He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we've done in righteousness but according to His mercy by the washing of regeneration."** The word regeneration, palingenesia means to be born again, to receive new life. And only God can do that. That's what Jesus called being born from above in John chapter 3. You must be born from above He

said to Nicodemus, born again. Only God can do that. Here is the sinner dead in trespasses and sin, hopeless, can't pick himself up, can't rescue himself. God comes from the outside and regenerates him, gives him life. And in the process cleanses that old dead life so that regeneration...**regeneration is called a washing. The old life was filthy, a dead filthy vile corpse, it is washed and regenerated, new birth.**

The end of verse 5 looks at our salvation and says, "He saved us by renewing by the Holy Spirit."... **The Holy Spirit is the one who renews us. This is a radical renewal.** Second Corinthians 5:17 says, **"If any man be in Christ he is a new creation."** What does Paul say? **"Do you not know your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which you have of God, you're not your own, you're bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and your spirit which are God's."** We are whole new creations, we walk in newness of life, we have put on the new man. **Life is totally renewed.** It's not like it used to be in any way, shape or form. We have new identity. We have new longings, new aspirations, new desires, new passions, new affections. And that's the work of the Spirit. Would you please notice the beginning of verse 6. He says of the Spirit, **"We were renewed by the Holy Spirit whom God poured out upon us richly."** We couldn't do anything to get the Holy Spirit on our own. You remember Simon in Acts who tried to buy the Holy Spirit? And Peter said, "May your money perish with you." There's nothing you can do to get the Holy Spirit. There's nothing you can do to gain or earn the renewal work of the Holy Spirit. That's something God pours out and it tells us in verse 6 He poured out the Spirit upon us richly... So by the new birth God poured out an abundance of blessing in and through the presence of the Holy Spirit who gave us life, sustains that life, empowers that life, ultimately guarantees our eternal glory. We are regenerated through the work of the Spirit. Jesus said you have to be born of the Spirit. And then the Spirit is poured out upon us in all His fullness and we become the temple of the Holy Spirit. **What a tremendous thing it is to contemplate what God has done. He saved us by His kindness, His love, His mercy, His regeneration, His Spirit. He did it all.**

A good practical outworking of Titus 3:5 where it speaks of the – **"WASHING of regeneration and RENEWING of the Holy Spirit"** - can be found in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:9-11. In verses 9-10 Paul details how unregenerate sinners will not inherit the Kingdom of God and he lists in detail many of the sinful practices that abound in the world (then and today). Then in verse 11 Paul writes **"And such WERE some of you; but YE ARE WASHED, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God"**.

A good confirmation of Titus 3:5 where it says – **"according to his mercy"** - can be found in 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 2:10 – in the preceding verse Peter reminds the Christians to whom he is writing that they are **"a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people"** who are to **"shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light"**. On what basis did God do this for these Christians? We read this in verse 11 that they are **"now the people of God which (in their unregenerate state) had not obtained mercy, but now (as regenerate Christians) have obtained MERCY"**.

God's gracious salvation is totally, from beginning to end, His work and His alone with no provision for any **'works of righteousness'** like baptism, confirmation, confession, the Mass etc being included otherwise His gracious, sovereign and saving work would be fatally polluted as it was in the case of the false 'gospel' of the Judaisers' A precious promise for true believers to cling to and take comfort in is found in Philippians 1:6 where Paul writes **"Being confident**

**of this very thing, that he (God) who hath begun a good work in you (conversion and salvation) will perform it (complete/perfect it) until the day of Jesus Christ".**

Titus 3:5 alone totally and completely exposes the false 'gospel' of Roman Catholicism and so in reality, as I said earlier, **'from an Evangelical Christian standpoint, discussion and analysis of Mr Coomb's article are irrelevant and meaningless'**.

However, I do think it might be useful to take some time to look at what certainly is the scripture-contradicting element in the article and also to look at what appears to be a catholic-contradicting element contained in the article (but is it?).

## **1. Mr Coomb's article is scripture-contradicting**

Let me now turn to the main claim for the Mass, as advanced by Mr Coombs, analyse it and demonstrate that it does not line up with what the Scriptures truly teach. The opening lines of Mr Coomb's article read

**'One of the greatest difficulties Protestants have with the Catholic Church is the teaching that the Mass is a propitiatory sacrifice. The Church does teach that the Mass is a real and true sacrifice, a sacrifice which propitiates for sins because it is the sacrifice of Christ who alone can make propitiation for sins'.**

Right at the outset I think we need to address the words **'propitiation'** and **'propitiatory'** – what precisely does their meaning encompass?

An official Roman Catholic explanation of the terminology is located on <http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/dictionary/index.cfm?id=35850> and reads –

### **PROPITIATION**

**To placate or appease an angry person.** It is one of the three fruits of every good work; the others are impetration and merit. **It is also one of the four ends of the Sacrifice of the Mass, whose propitiatory power extends to sin, to satisfaction and punishment for the living, and to punishment for the dead.** (Etym. Latin propitiare, to render favorable.)

All items in this dictionary are from Fr. John Hardon's *Modern Catholic Dictionary*, © Eternal Life. Used with permission.

An Evangelical Christian definition of the meaning of 'Propitiation' from the 'Dictionary of Theological Terms' by Alan Cairns reads in part –

### **PROPITIATION**

**The appeasement or turning away of God's wrath** against sinners by means of an atoning sacrifice. In Romans 3:25 Christ is said to be a propitiation. The Greek term is *hilasterion* which is translated "mercy seat" in Hebrews 9:5.... **Christ, by the shedding of His blood, turned away God's wrath**

From these two definitions we see a both a similarity and a disparity. The similarity is in the acknowledgment that **'propitiation'** is **'appeasement of anger or wrath'** – in this case God's anger and wrath against sin – but the disparity is in what constitutes an acceptable **'propitiation'**. In the Catholic definition it is clearly something that is 'ongoing' and is found everywhere that **'The Sacrifice of the Mass'** is carried out on a daily basis worldwide whereas in the Evangelical definition it is 'finished' and found solely in **'The Sacrifice of Calvary'** almost 2000 years ago just outside Jerusalem.

In her 1994 Catechism, Paragraph 1387 Rome declares

**'The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are *one single sacrifice*. The victim is one and the same; the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different. In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner'.**

Consider these thoughts –

1. Rome says that a 'sacrifice' carried out hundreds or thousands of times every day on a worldwide basis and a 'sacrifice' made almost 2000 years ago just outside of Jerusalem are **'one single sacrifice'**.
2. Apparently this **'one single sacrifice'** involves a **'victim'** who, on the one hand, almost 2000 years ago was a man of flesh and bones but who, on the other hand, (literally!) is today contained in a wafer of bread.
3. Apparently this **'one single sacrifice'** was offered almost 2000 years ago by the one sinless **'victim'** Himself but today it is offered by countless thousands of sinful ministering **'priests'**.
4. Apparently this **'one single sacrifice'** was made on the **'altar'** of the wooden cross at Golgotha, just outside Jerusalem, almost 2000 years ago but today it is made on countless worldwide Roman Catholic stone **'altars'** [containing as they must 'relics' – **'The custom of putting relics of saints under an altar to be dedicated is to be retained. But it is important to verify the authenticity of such relics'**. Vatican Council: Volume 1: General Instruction on the Roman Missal: Paragraph 266: Page 191.].
5. Ignoring the reality of the first 4 points Rome states that this **'one single sacrifice'** that was made almost 2000 years ago near Jerusalem and apparently also continues to be made on a daily worldwide basis **'ONLY'** differs in **'the manner of offering'** namely that almost 2000 years ago it was **'bloody'** but today it is **'unbloody'**.

If ever there was a case of monumental doublespeak then this Paragraph 1387 in Rome's Catechism must rank as being very close to the top of the list.

I want now to focus on point 5 that highlights what for me is THE most important issue at stake here. Rome affirms that her Mass is an **'unbloody'** sacrifice whereas the sacrifice at Calvary was **'bloody'**.

The question I want to put is simply this – **'Is blood essential or not essential for a sacrifice to effectively "propitiate" God's anger and wrath against sin?'**

I want to answer that by going back to the time when sin first entered into the world. How did God deal with the perpetrators? Did He in anger and wrath immediately strike them dead or did He graciously take the initiative and do something that would appease, turn away, **'propitiate'** His own just anger and wrath against their sin?

From the book **'The Gospel in Genesis'** that documents the writings of Henry Law, a leading Evangelical Anglican who lived 1797-1844, we read (at times in what would be viewed today as somewhat 'quaint' language) the following from his comments on Genesis 3:21 **"Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins and clothed them"** –

**'It may be that hitherto you have seen nothing in these garments but a warmth for the body and a screen from the blast. But be assured the meaning is far larger. It is spiritual. It tells us of the robe of Righteousness which God has provided to adorn and beautify the naked soul... We gain light on the subject by examining the substance of which the coats were made. It was not leaves joined together, - nor twisted bark, - nor plaited roots. It was the skin of lifeless animals. Death then must have commenced its desolating work within the garden. But how did it approach its earliest victims?... The wastings of age were yet far off. These beats of the field must have fallen by the hand of violence. But why? Not to supply man with food. Before the flood herbs alone sufficed for nourishment... They were slain then for some other purpose. It could have been no unholy purpose for God regarded their slaughter with no displeasure. This He testified by using their skins.**

**If then they died according to the will of God, but not to feed man, there remains only the solid conclusion, that they were offered in sacrifice. And hence we learn that in Eden VICTIMS BLED. Yes, the first drop, which stained the earth, the first expiring groan proclaimed in the most intelligible terms "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23) and "WITHOUT shedding of blood is NO REMISSION" (Hebrews 9:22). The doctrine of these rites is the doctrine of the Cross.**

This wonderful exposition demonstrates clearly that **ONLY** a blood sacrifice can effectively **'propitiate'** God's anger and wrath against sin. It exposes the deceitfulness and soul-damning claims made by Rome for their 'Sacrifice of the Mass' that an **'unbloody'** sacrifice can be an effective **'Propitiatory Sacrifice'**.

The ongoing testimony of the Old Testament also confirms the absolute necessity for suitable sacrificial shed blood to be visibly present for God's anger and wrath to be turned away, diverted, **'propitiated'**.

In the text of my gospel tract, designed for Muslims, and entitled **'Dear Muslim neighbour'** that can be viewed in its entirety on <http://www.takeheed.info/dear-muslim-neighbour/> I wrote the following –

**'According to The Bible, what turns away God's anger? In Exodus 12:13 God said to His people "when I see the blood, I will pass over you". The applied blood of a sacrificed lamb ["without blemish" v 5] was able to deflect the anger of God poured out upon the land of Egypt. It was in biblical, theological terms what is known as a 'propitiation' for God's anger.... The Apostle Paul wrote the following concerning the death of Christ on the cross at Calvary, "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood" [Romans 3:25]**

and the Apostle Peter said of the death of Christ that it was **“as of a lamb without blemish”** **1 Peter 1:19**. The substitutionary death of Christ on the cross [**“the just for the unjust”** **1 Peter 3:18**] was able to fully deal with the problem of God’s anger because of **“sin”**.

The whole Tabernacle and Temple sacrificial systems that were instituted by God for His Old Testament people bear additional testimony to the need for a suitable **‘blood’** sacrifice to be offered to God in order to **‘propitiate’** His just wrath and anger against sin.

In Leviticus 17:11 we read **‘For the life of the flesh is in the blood and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul’**.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary states in relation to this verse **‘The fact that God said “I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls” rules out the view that blood was inherently efficacious. Its atoning value was only because God had “given it” for this purpose. He had chosen it as a fitting symbol of the reality of atonement and forgiveness’**.

One of the great Old Testament festivals was ‘The Day of Atonement’ that is outlined and detailed in Leviticus 16. This Day of Atonement sets out clearly a view of the 2 essential aspects of ‘atonement’ namely **‘propitiation’** and **‘expiation’**. In my article on the problems associated with Seventh-day Adventism I deal with this matter in some detail as you can read on <http://www.takeheed.info/news-from-the-front-sept-1999/> In that article I reaffirmed the necessity of **‘blood’** sacrifice in these words –

‘On the Day of Atonement the SACRIFICED blood of “the Lord’s goat” served as a **‘propitiation’** and pictured the visible shedding of the precious blood of Christ [“as of a lamb WITHOUT BLEMISH” 1 Peter 1:19] at Calvary. Paul wrote concerning the work of Christ at Calvary “whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood” [Romans 3:25]

As I come to the conclusion of this section let me quote something I wrote back in my September 1999 ‘News from the Front’ located on <http://www.takeheed.info/news-from-the-front-sept-1999/>

In the 1994 CATECHISM OF THE [ROMAN] CATHOLIC CHURCH we read the following in Paragraph 1377 ‘The Eucharistic presence of Christ begins at the moment of consecration...Christ is present WHOLE and ENTIRE in EACH of the species’.

Then in Paragraph 1413 we read ‘By the consecration the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Body and BLOOD of Christ is brought about. Under the consecrated species...Christ himself...is present in a true, real and substantial manner: his Body and HIS BLOOD, with his soul and his divinity’.

Having clearly identified that ‘Christ himself is present in a real manner’ [including His BLOOD] we then read in Para.1367 ‘The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one

**single sacrifice:...In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once [that's ONE sacrifice] in a bloody manner on the altar of the Cross is contained and is offered [that's ANOTHER sacrifice] in an unbloody manner'.**

**How can an element which supposedly having been 'consecrated' and now contains 'BLOOD' be offered in an 'unbloody manner' and how can a 'bloody' sacrifice and an 'unbloody' sacrifice possibly constitute 'one single sacrifice'?**

The Roman Catholic claims for their Mass are truly a minefield of theological double-speak that fly in the face of what the Scriptures teach about what constitutes a suitable and acceptable **'Propitiatory Sacrifice'** in the sight of God.

Let me now just give some other quotes by Mr Coomb's that clearly contradict the Scriptures. He wrote –

**'Most people tend to think of a sacrifice as a death, as though it is the death of the sacrificial victim which constitutes a sacrifice. Therefore, it is common for the sacrifice of Christ to be reduced to His death alone. However, the death of the victim is only the first part of a sacrifice, with the presentation of the sacrifice being the second, more important, part.... The intercessory work of Christ is not a different work from His sacrifice; it is part of the sacrifice. It is the eternal presentation of Christ before the Father. This appearing as a perpetual presentation is so that He can perpetually be propitiation for our sins as 1<sup>st</sup> John 2:1-2 says... it is incorrect to understand the death on the cross to in and of itself be the sacrifice... '**

The Scriptures are quite clear that, contrary to what Mr Coombs asserts, **'it is the death of the sacrificial victim which constitutes a sacrifice'** and the place of **'the presentation of the sacrifice'** is the very altar upon which the sacrifice dies.

Once the finished sacrificial offering has been made on the altar, the subsequent intercessory work of the priest is that he takes the blood of the sacrifice FROM the altar, enters 'within the veil' and sprinkles the blood of the sacrifice in the presence of God to demonstrate to God that a suitable sacrifice has been made. On that basis he then seeks from God the forgiveness of sins – this intercessory action is NOT part of the sacrifice, but is the pleading, in the presence of God, that a suitable sacrifice has earlier been offered on an altar, so that remission of sins can be graciously granted by God.

In Old Testament times the priest went 'within the veil' and sprinkled the blood of the sacrificed animal in the manner prescribed by God who declared **'there I will meet with thee and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat' [Exodus 25:22]**. We glean more of what happened 'within the veil' when we read **Leviticus 16:15** **"Then shall he [Aaron the High Priest] kill the goat of the sin offering (the sacrifice on the altar) that is for the people and bring (from the altar, the place of sacrifice) its blood (the evidence of sacrifice) within the veil... and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat"**.

The **'mercy seat'** was a place of 'meeting', of 'mercy' and of 'communion' – it was NOT a place of 'sacrifice. In the case of Christ, the altar of His sacrifice was the Cross of Calvary. In the case of Christ His presentation of the evidence of His sacrifice takes place in Heaven itself and HE is the evidence. In Revelation 5 John describes events in heaven in these words **"And I beheld and lo, in the midst of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain... and the four living creatures and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb... And they sang a new song saying... thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood" (v 6-9).**

Mr Coombs is wrong to assert that Christ's present intercessory work for His people, as beautifully described in 1<sup>st</sup> John 2:1 "**And if any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous**", is 'part and parcel' of His 'sacrifice'.

Having written this particular portion I decided to email it to my good friend and brother in Christ, **Rob Zins**, to ask for his opinion on it. Rob, a former Roman Catholic, heads up the ministry '**A Christian Witness to Roman Catholicism**' and his web site is located on [WWW.CWRC-RZ.Org](http://WWW.CWRC-RZ.Org)

The following astute and perceptive comments contained in Rob's email response will I trust also prove to be helpful and enlightening –

I do not know exactly what angle Mr Coombs is taking but it sounds like he is sneaking up on the idea of a constant re-presentation of a once and for all sacrifice that is just as important as the sacrifice itself. Sounds to me like he might be saying that the presentation is ongoing and hence opens the door for the Roman Catholic re-presentation of Christ on their non Christian altars.

This is typical Roman Catholic double-speak. They will tell us that the re-presentation is not a new sacrifice. They will say it is the original sacrifice only re-presented. But then they say the re-presentation has the same value as the original sacrifice of Christ even though void of real blood and suffering. This is blasphemy since the value of Christ's atonement rests squarely on the essential aspects that it was real suffering, and real blood, and really finished!

The text of Scripture is direct: "**nor yet that he should offer himself often**". The Roman Catholics know this but they concoct an imaginary way to re-present the atonement of Jesus Christ, and then they link their imaginary priestly rite to an admission into heaven. Christians know that there is no such thing as a re-presentation of the sacrifice of Christ. It is all a hoax to hold power over poor lost souls.

The Roman Catholics make their alleged salvation dependent upon a re-presentation of something that not only is eternally finished (hence no need to re-present) but also contrary to Scripture since it constitutes another gospel. Christ was offered once. The suffering of Christ is linked to the offering of Christ. If Christ is to be offered often then He must suffer and die often. This is the link that Rome ignores in her fallacious Mass. Rome thinks she can have an offering without an actual suffering and dying. Rome holds her people in bondage to a false atonement of make believe!! It is utterly anti-Christ!

Christians proclaim His once for all time death until He comes. Christians are not duped into thinking that we can re-present His death as a remedy for sin. Nor can Christians even begin to think that "presentation", either the original bonafide presentation of Christ in the heavenlies, or the bogus anti-Christian re-presentation of Christ on earth by Rome, is in any way the same as the sacrifice of Christ.

As you have well stated the sacrifice of Christ stands alone with the presentation to satisfy the heavenly exigencies a separate event that is meaningless without the one sacrifice in time and for all time that precedes it. The sacrifice and the presentation of the sacrifice are not the same nor can they be so closely associated with each other so as to lose the separate and distinct identity of either. First the horse, then the cart. How could this possibly make the cart more important than the horse? Perhaps only in Rome!

#### **Hebrews 9:23-28**

**(23) It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. (24) For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: (25) Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; (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. (27) And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: (28) 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.**

When interceding, Christ is not re-presenting His sacrifice but rather He is representing (as our **“advocate”**) His people and pleading their case for acquittal on the grounds of His finished sacrifice that was offered once at Calvary. The evidence that the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross WAS accepted by God as **“the propitiation for our sins” [1<sup>st</sup> John 2:2]** was His resurrection.

In Romans 4:25 we read that Christ **“was raised again for (because of) our justification”**. In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 15 we read **“if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, and ye are yet in your sins”**.

Commenting on Romans 4:25 in his Study Bible, John MacArthur writes –

**‘The resurrection provided proof that God had accepted the sacrifice of His Son and would be able to be just and yet justify the ungodly’.**

In heaven, Christ is accepted by God as **‘propitiation’**, not because He continues to sacrificially re-present Himself, but because His sacrificial work at Calvary was fully accepted by God when He offered it then and there. As we have just seen, His resurrection confirmed this truth, and so Christ is therefore qualified to be the **“advocate”** for His people on the grounds of that finished sacrificial work that does NOT continue in heaven as Mr Coombs would claim.

Mr Coombs also wrote –

**‘it is clear that Hebrews cannot possibly mean that Christ’s offering was a one time, momentary act... Even though He is sitting down, Christ is still a minister. He is still offering that one sacrifice which is made once for all; otherwise He would no longer be a minister’**

Clearly Mr Coombs believes that the Sacrifice of Christ continues – that erroneous assertion was earlier dealt with and refuted fully by me in my first response located on <http://www.reformedworship.org/article/march-2007/ascension-talk> so I will not add anything to that.

I would however also state that when Mr Coombs wrote - **‘Even though He is sitting down, Christ is still a minister. He is still offering that one sacrifice’** - he is very wrong. The Old Testament priest, when he entered ‘within the veil’ on the Day of Atonement was not allowed to and in fact could not ‘sit down’ because the evidence for the sacrifice he was presenting had no ‘eternal’ redemptive or ‘eternal’ cleansing benefit and so would have to be repeated by him or his successor the following year.

In stark contrast, when Christ entered into Heaven itself, He did sit down because His sacrifice, OFFERED ON THE CROSS, **“obtained eternal redemption” [Hebrews 9:12]**. Again that was in complete contrast to the Old Testament priests who on a daily basis had to **‘STAND’** as they continually offered animal sacrifices that could never fully, finally and forever deal with the problem of sin as we read in **Hebrews 10:11 “And every priest (Old Testament) STANDETH daily ministering and offering the same sacrifices which can never take away sins”**.

Again by way of contrast listen to these other lovely verses that speak of the finished sacrificial work of Christ on the Cross **“when he had by himself purged our sins, SAT DOWN on the right hand of the Majesty on high” [Hebrews 1:3] “But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, SAT DOWN on the right hand of God” [Hebrews 10:12].**

Did this ‘purging sacrifice’ really take place here on earth on the cross or does it continue in heaven as Mr Coombs claims? **Hebrews 9:26- 28** answers that – **“But now, once in the end of the ages HATH HE APPEARED [HERE on earth] to put away sin by THE SACRIFICE of himself (on the cross). And as it is appointed unto man once to die so Christ (died and) was once offered to bear the sins of many (here on earth) and unto them that look for him shall he appear (from heaven) the second time without sin unto salvation”.**

Mr Coombs also wrote –

**‘Jesus’ sacrifice began at the Last Supper, and was the eternal Passover sacrifice that can be experienced today through a literal participation at the sacrifice of the Mass, just as the ancient Jews literally participated in the Exodus by their Passover meal. The Last Supper was the first Mass in which Christ first made present on Earth His eternal sacrifice’.**

There is no doubt that Mr Coombs has a very lively but a very faulty imagination. The ‘Passover’ was instituted by God to enable the ancient Jews to literally participate in the Exodus in this manner. That first ‘Passover’ meal was preparatory to the coming judgment of God upon Egypt and in faith the ancient Jews sacrificed a lamb and sprinkled the ‘protective’ blood from it on the entrance to their homes in the manner prescribed by God – see Exodus 16:6-7. The details of the meal to then be eaten by them were then outlined in verses 8-11. It was only in the wake of the events of the ‘Passover’ night that the actual Exodus then took place as we read from Exodus 12:37 onwards.

The subsequent observance of the ‘Passover’ by succeeding generations of Jews was not a literal participation in the Exodus but was to be a **“memorial”** of events that led to the great deliverance from slavery as we read in **Exodus 12:14 “And this day shall be unto you for a memorial”**. John MacArthur in his Study Bible comments –

**‘The details of how this Passover Day was to be memorialised in future years were laid down (vv14-20) and then repeated in the instructions to the elders (vv21-27). Prescribing the eating of unleavened bread for 7 days, demanding a thorough house-cleaning from leaven (v 15) issuing a stern warning of banishment for eating leaven (v15) and bracketing the 7 days with special holy days (v 16) served to proclaim the high importance of the nation’s REMEMBERING this event’.**

The ‘Passover’ was designed to keep alive the memory of God’s preservation of people from His judgment and His subsequent great deliverance of His people from slavery in Egypt. The meal then eaten was a reminder to the Jews of the Lamb that had been sacrificially slain, the applied blood of which saved them from God’s judgment.

At that first ‘Passover’, the meal reminded the people of a sacrifice that had already been made. In contrast, at the last supper, the meal of bread and wine, instituted by Christ, spoke symbolically that night of a sacrifice yet to be made (by Him) – it was preparatory to the coming judgment of God upon sin that He would have to bear and in anticipation He invited His disciples to **“this do in remembrance of me” [Luke 22:19].**

The actual meaning of “**remembrance**” is very interesting. In Vine’s Expository Dictionary we read ‘**used in Christ’s command in the institution of the Lord’s Supper, Luke 22:19, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 11:24- 25; NOT ‘in memory of’ BUT in an affectionate calling of the Person Himself to mind’.**

As Christ and His disciples ate that Last Supper together, the actual Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross of Calvary had not yet taken place. However, in anticipation, Christ applied new symbolic sacrificial meanings to the bread and wine elements of that ‘Passover’ meal to explain the coming judgment of God upon sin that He would bear on the Cross. He then invited His disciples and all future believers to ‘**call Him affectionately to mind**’ as they would observe this meal and consider Him and the events of Calvary.

The Last Supper was a pictorial precursor to the events of Calvary – it was not as Mr Coombs claims ‘**the first Mass in which Christ first made present on Earth His eternal sacrifice**’ – how could Christ, who at that Last Supper was present with His disciples in His flesh and blood body, possibly also ‘transubstantiate’ the bread and wine of the ‘Passover’ meal into His body and blood etc – that simply defies all God-given common sense and much more importantly totally contradicts what the Scriptures teach.

As I near the end of this section I want to make a few comments on something else Mr Coombs wrote in his article that in my view contradicts the Scriptures. He wrote –

However, Jesus didn’t drink from the fourth cup. Instead, the gospels say that after blessing the third cup, **Jesus specifically said He was not going to drink wine again until He did so “anew in the Kingdom of God.” (Mark 14:25)** Immediately after this it says that “when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” (25) This would have been a major defect in the Passover meal, not a minor omission. The fourth cup was so important that the Passover meal was not complete until it was drunk. After this, in Gethsemane, Jesus asks the Father to let the *cup* pass from Him (Matthew 26:39). When a no doubt very thirsty Jesus was offered wine while carrying the cross up to the mountain, He refused (Mark 15:23). **Jesus finally drank vinegar (a type of wine) from the hyssop branch and said “it is consummated” at the moment of His death. The ‘it’ meant the Passover meal. That Passover meal which He had began the previous night and never finished He** (Cecil – should this read ‘it’?) **was now complete. It could not have ended until then, because the fourth cup of wine had yet to be drunk.** The sacrifice was not begun on Calvary. **Calvary began with the Passover and the Passover ended with Calvary** (see *A Father who Keeps His Promises*, Scott Hahn, Servant Books 1998, p. 234; a more thorough analysis of the above facts is also available therein. The above material on the Passover is from Dr. Hahn’s work) This ties together a number of items which pertain to the Last Supper and its having been a Mass.

Personally I do not agree with Mr Coomb’s assertion about the 4<sup>th</sup> cup of the Passover finding fulfilment in his assertion that Christ ‘finally drank vinegar (a type of wine) from the hyssop branch’. John MacArthur in his Study Bible comments as follows on this verse in John 19:29 –

**‘The drink here is not to be confused with the “wine mixed with myrrh” offered to Him on the way to the Cross (Matthew 27:34) intended to help deaden pain. The purpose of this drink (cf Mark 15:36) was to prolong life and increase the torture and pain. It was a cheap sour wine used by soldiers. The use of this word recalls Psalm 69:21 where the same noun occurs in the LXX. Hyssop is a little plant that is ideal for sprinkling (see Exodus 12:22).**

Does that incident really sound like a fulfilment of Christ saying in Mark 14:25 “**Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new**

**in the kingdom of God”?** For me, Christ drinking ‘sour wine’ as He hung, close to death on the Cross, is not such a fulfilment.

But I have a second reason why I believe Mr Coomb’s teaching here contradicts the Scriptures. When trying to get the meaning of scripture the rule is that all relevant portions of scripture on the subject must be taken into account. Is the incident as recorded in Mark 14:25 recorded anywhere else in scripture? Let me quote Matthew 26:29 **“But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new WITH YOU in my Father’s kingdom”**. This record of what Christ said totally refutes Mr Coomb’s teaching for the ‘sour wine’ drunk by Christ on the cross was most certainly not **“with you”** in other words not with His disciples.

When do I think that promise and prediction by Christ will find its fulfilment? I believe it will be at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb that we read about in Revelation 19:7-10. Matthew Henry in his commentary on the verse in Matthew wrote –

**‘He takes leave of such communion; and assures them of a happy meeting again at last; "Until that day when I drink it new with you", may be understood of the joys and glories of the future state, which the saints shall partake with the Lord Jesus. That will be the kingdom of his Father; the wine of consolation will there be always new’.**

In the Scripture Union: Bible Study Books: St Matthew by F. F. Bruce DD (published 1970) we read this comment on the verse from Matthew –

**‘Verse 29 suggests that Jesus Himself did not take the cup: He looks forward to a renewal of table-fellowship with them on the other side of death, in the new age’.**

In the light of all this I believe that once more Mr Coombs is clearly guilty of having contradicted the Scriptures by what he wrote and taught.

In final overall conclusion to this section let me return briefly to **‘The Gospel in Genesis’** and I’ll close with these few but very astute words penned by Henry Law –

**‘We live too in days when countless fallacies court men in garb of truth. How shall we meet, expose, expel them? Wisdom is needed for theological error is shrewd and bold... The conquering champion’s panoply (the entire equipment of a warrior) is full intelligence of Christ. Christ is the sword, before which Roman frauds and neologic sophistries fall low’.**

**‘Neologic’** - (employing new words; .. or containing, new words or new doctrines - as defined on <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Neologic>)

**‘Sophistries’** - (1. Plausible but fallacious argumentation. 2. A plausible but misleading or fallacious argument – as defined on <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/sophistries>)

## **2. Mr Coomb’s article appears to be catholic-contradicting – but is it?**

The claims advanced for the Mass by Mr Coombs are not only scripture-contradicting but they also appear to be catholic-contradicting when statements in officially approved Roman Catholic documents are examined.

In his article Mr Coombs wrote –

**‘Another point is that the Mass is an unbloody sacrifice: Christ does not die again in the sacrifice’.**

Let’s just refresh our minds with what Rome officially teaches in Paragraph 1387 of her 1994 Catechism as quoted earlier in this article – Rome declares

**‘The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are *one single sacrifice*. The victim is one and the same; the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of offering is different. In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner’.**

Any right thinking person would immediately say to themselves – Rome claims that Calvary and the Sacrifice of the Mass are **‘one single sacrifice’**. The **‘victim’** is supposedly **‘one and the same’** as are supposed to be the sacrificial events that took place **‘on the cross’** and are now continued/perpetuated **‘through the ministry of priests’**.

Did Christ, the sacrificial victim, DIE on the cross? Well of course He did so if the Mass replicates Calvary in every aspect bar one (the ‘blood’ issue) as Rome claims then surely this must mean that in the Mass, the victim, Christ Himself, DIES.

Let me quote from **‘The Encyclical on the Holy Eucharist’, *Mirae Caritatis***, which was issued on 28 May 1902, the author of which was Pope Leo XIII. This document can be viewed on

<http://www.catholicliturgy.com/index.cfm/FuseAction/DocumentContents/Index/2/SubIndex/1/DocumentIndex/242>

In Paragraph 17 we read the following –

**‘In no age has the spirit of contumacy (obstinate and wilful resistance to authority) and an attitude of defiance towards God been more prevalent than in our own; an age in which that unholy cry of the enemies of Christ: "We will not have this man to rule over us" (Luke xix., 14), makes itself more and more loudly heard, together with the utterance of that wicked purpose: "let us make away with Him" (Jer. xi., II); nor is there any motive by which many are hurried on with more passionate fury, than the desire utterly to banish God not only from the civil government, but from every form of human society. And although men do not everywhere proceed to this extremity of criminal madness, it is a lamentable thing that so many are sunk in oblivion of the divine Majesty and of His favours, and in particular of the salvation wrought for us by Christ. Now a remedy must be found for this wickedness on the one hand, and this sloth on the other, in a general increase among the faithful of fervent devotion towards the Eucharistic Sacrifice, than which nothing can give greater honour, nothing be more pleasing, to God. For it is a divine Victim which is here immolated; and accordingly through this Victim we offer to the most blessed Trinity all that honour which the infinite dignity of the Godhead demands; infinite in value and infinitely acceptable is the gift which we present to the Father in His only-begotten son’**

Let me now quote from the document 'On the Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist', *Dominicae Cenaе*, dated 24 February 1980, the author of which was Pope John Paul II and which can be viewed on –

<http://www.catholicliturgy.com/index.cfm/FuseAction/documentText/Index/2/SubIndex/37/ContentIndex/115/Start/107>

In Paragraph 3 we read the following –

**'This worship** (of the Eucharistic Mystery) **is directed towards God the Father through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit... And this adoration of ours contains yet another special characteristic. It is compenetrated by the greatness of that human death, in which the world, that is to say each one of us, has been loved "to the end."**[12] **Thus it is also a response that tries to repay that love immolated even to the death on the cross'**

On the Catholic Encyclopaedia web site there is a short item on what is known as the **Stripping of an Altar** – it can be viewed on <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01349a.htm>

The item reads as follows –

'On Holy Thursday the celebrant, having removed the ciborium from the high altar, goes to the sacristy. He there lays aside the white vestments and puts on a violet stole, and, accompanied by the deacon, also vested in violet stole, and the subdeacon, returns to the high altar. Whilst the antiphon "Diviserunt sibi" and the psalm "Deus, Deus meus" are being recited, the celebrant and his assistants ascend to the predella and strip the altar of the altar-cloths, vases of flowers, antependium, and other ornaments, so that nothing remains but the cross and the candlesticks with the candles extinguished. In the same manner all the other altars in the church are denuded. If there be many altars in the church, another priest, vested in surplice and violet stole, may strip them whilst the celebrant is stripping the high altar. The Christian altar represents Christ, and the stripping of the altar reminds us how He was stripped of his garments when He fell into the hands of the Jews and was exposed naked to their insults. It is for this reason that the psalm "Deus, Deus meus" is recited, wherein the Messiah speaks of the Roman soldiers dividing His garments among them. This ceremony signifies the suspension of the Holy Sacrifice. **It was formerly the custom in some churches on this day to wash the altars** with a bunch of hyssop dipped in wine and water, **to render them in some manner worthy of the Lamb without stain who is immolated on them**, and to recall to the minds of the faithful with how great purity they should assist at the Holy Sacrifice and receive Holy Communion. St. Isidore of Seville (De Eccles. Off, I, xxviii) and St. Eligius of Noyon (Homil. VIII, De Coena Domini) say that this ceremony was intended as an homage offered to Our Lord, in return for the humility wherewith He deigned to wash the feet of His disciples.

Three official Roman Catholic documents, two of which were authored by Popes, making reference to **‘the divine victim WHICH IS HERE IMMOLATED’**, **‘the love IMMOLATED even to the death on the cross’** and to **‘washing the altars... to render them in some manner worthy of the Lamb without stain WHO IS IMMOLATED ON THEM’**

This language would appear to indicate that in the sacrifice of the Mass, Christ, the victim is clearly **‘immolated’**. In **‘Collins English Dictionary: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Edition’** the word **‘immolate’** is defined as follows – **‘to kill or offer as a sacrifice’**. Does Rome acknowledge the **‘killing’** aspect of **‘immolation’** in the Sacrifice of the Mass for if so then Mr Coombs would clearly to be at odds with what Rome teaches when he wrote **‘Christ does not die again in the sacrifice’**.

To answer that let me turn to the **Catholic Library: Quick questions’** as located on [http://www.newadvent.org/library/almanac\\_thisrock93.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/library/almanac_thisrock93.htm) . Just over half way down the page we read the following question and answer –

**How can Catholics say that Christ does not die again on the altar when the Council of Trent states that he is immolated in the Mass?**

Simple. **"Immolate"** does not mean "kill." It is a synonym for "sacrifice," a concept which does not require the sacrificial gift to be killed (Num. 8:11-21, Rom. 12:1).

According to its root-words, **"to immolate"** means to sprinkle with sacrificial grits or meal. In ancient times the sacrificial gift was sprinkled with this meal as part of the ritual. Eventually the word **"immolate,"** which originally referred to only part of the ceremony, was extended to cover the whole act of sacrifice, and so it became detached from its original meaning of "to sprinkle with meal" and became a synonym for sacrifice.

**Because sacrifices often involve killing, the term immolate can have this association, but that is not the way in which the Church is using it.** This is obvious from the language Trent uses, that in the Mass "Christ is contained and immolated in an unbloody manner" (session 22, ch. 2) -- an unbloody manner being one that does not involve killing.

So, here Rome states clearly, that in the Mass, Christ, although **‘immolated’** is not killed so Mr Coombs has not contradicted official Roman Catholic teaching. But let’s take a closer look at Rome’s reasoning.

She states **"Immolate"** does not mean "kill." It is a synonym for "sacrifice," a concept which does not require the sacrificial gift to be killed (Numbers 8:11-21; Romans 12:1).

These two scripture references do certainly speak of “sacrifice” that does not require the sacrificial gift to be killed. Why is that? Because the “sacrifice” being spoken of in these portions is the “sacrifice of service” and not a ‘sacrifice for sin’– in the case of the passage in Numbers it is the service to the Lord rendered by the Levites and in the case of the verse in Romans it is the service to the Lord being rendered by New Testament Christians.

**These portions are not remotely relevant to or applicable to a “sacrifice” that seeks to ‘propitiate’ God’s just anger and wrath against sin and to obtain “remission” of sins and that certainly was what the sacrifice of Christ DYING on the Cross of Calvary secured and supposedly what, according to Rome, the Sacrifice of the Mass is likewise supposed to secure.**

Irrespective of whether the claims of Rome for the Mass were to be true or not, the reality is that there is absolutely no way that her Sacrifice of the Mass could possibly ‘propitiate’ God’s just anger and wrath against sin and obtain “remission” of sins if Christ does not DIE when supposedly being ‘immolated’ on Roman Catholic altars during the Mass. In addition, to state that the ‘non-killing’ meaning of ‘immolation’ is “obvious from the language that Trent uses” is quite frankly ridiculous in the extreme.

From the Introduction to Rome’s ‘Instruction on Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery’ on

<http://www.catholicliturgy.com/index.cfm/FuseAction/documentText/Index/2/SubIndex/11/ContentIndex/339/Start/338>

we read this in Paragraph 3 (e) –

**‘The celebration of the Eucharist in the sacrifice of the Mass is truly the origin and the purpose of the worship that is shown to the Eucharist outside Mass. For the sacred elements that remain after Mass come from the Mass and they are reserved after Mass so that the faithful who cannot be present at Mass may be united to Christ... Hence the Eucharistic sacrifice is the source and the summit of all the Church’s worship and of the entire Christian life’.**

Rome claims that her consecrated wafer of bread can be brought to those who cannot attend the Mass in person and that the reception of it will ‘unite *them* to Christ’. Rome also exalts her Sacrifice of the Mass as being the pinnacle of Christian worship and the source of Christian life. What blasphemy. In both cases God has been replaced by corruptible bread.

The so-called ‘sacred elements’, whether received in a Roman Catholic chapel or at some other location have no power to unite anyone to Christ and have no influence or effect upon someone’s spiritual life and condition.. This is clear when the Lord said to those who did believe that food had an effect upon someone’s spiritual condition **“Do not yet ye understand that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the stomach and is cast out into the draught” [Matthew 15:17]**. The Lord was teaching that ingested food only serves to affect a person’s physical condition and not their spiritual condition.

As for the Sacrifice of the Mass or the Eucharistic Sacrifice being ‘**the source and summit of all the Church’s worship and of the entire Christian life**’ nothing could be further from the truth. In my view it is **‘the summit of Satan’s deception and the source of the greatest lie concerning being united to Christ and receiving power to lead a Christian life’**.

In 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2 Paul writes about the revelation of **“the man of sin”** and **“the son of perdition” (v 3)**, one linked to **“the mystery of iniquity” (v 7)**, one whose coming is **“after the working of Satan with all power and signs and LYING wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness” (vv 9-10)**.

This speaks of ‘antichrist’ who basically **“sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself (falsely of course) that he is God”** – what a vivid description of Papal Rome and all her deceiving rituals, particularly ‘The Sacrifice of the Mass’, dreamt up by unrighteous and unregenerate men over many centuries.

Just as with the unrighteous referred to in Romans 1:18, so the unrighteous and unregenerate leaders of Papal Rome **“hold the truth in unrighteousness”** (Vine’s Expository Dictionary – “hold down” – speaks of unrighteous men who restrain the spread of truth by their unrighteousness) with their **‘lying wonder’** claims that ‘The Mass is a Propitiatory Sacrifice’.

Speaking of Roman Catholicism, C H Spurgeon said **“I question if hell can find a more fitting instrument within its infernal lake than the Church of Rome is for the cause of mischief”**.

On other occasions, referring specifically to the Mass, firstly Mr Spurgeon said simply **“we do not believe in the mass at all but abhor it”** and then secondly, going into more detail, he said **“The mass is a mass of abominations, a mass of hell’s own concocting, a crying insult against the Lord of glory. It is not to be spoken of in any terms but those of horror or detestation. Whenever I think of another sacrifice for sin being offered, by whomever it may be presented, I can only regard it as an infamous insult to the perfection of the Saviour’s work”**. (Cecil - Rome of course claims it is not ‘another’ sacrifice but the 5 points I made earlier in this article about how The Mass differs from Calvary clearly identify it as being ‘another’ sacrifice).

In closing let me now once more quote some portions from the writings of Rob Zins and Henry Law that I cited earlier plus some words from Bishop J C Ryle in his commentary upon Matthew 26:26-35.

Rob Zins stated – **‘Rome thinks she can have an offering without an actual suffering and dying. Rome holds her people in bondage to a false atonement of make believe!! It is utterly anti-Christ!’**

Henry Law wrote – **‘Wisdom is needed for theological error is shrewd and bold... The conquering champion’s panoply is full intelligence of Christ. Christ is the sword, before which Roman frauds and neologic sophistries fall low’**.

Bishop Ryle wrote – **‘The Lord’s Supper is not a sacrifice. There is no oblation in it – no offering up of anything but our prayers, praises and thanksgivings. From the day that Jesus died there needed no more offering for sin: by one offering He perfected for ever them that are sanctified (Hebrews 10:14). Priests, altars and sacrifices all ceased to be necessary when the Lamb of God offered up Himself. Their office came to an end: their work was done’**.

May God in mercy be pleased to continue to deliver many Roman Catholics from the seducing and deceiving ritualistic claims made for the Mass by Rome and bring them to a saving knowledge of the One who alone, at the place called Calvary, offered the one and only, never to be perpetuated, effectual and finished **Propitiatory Sacrifice** that saved His people from their sins.