

Number Fourteen: Why for “the Many” and Not “for All”?

Another change in the Eucharistic Prayers occur when during the consecration of the wine into the Blood of Christ, the priest prays: “...the Blood of the New Covenant, which will be poured out for you and *for many* for the forgiveness of sins”. This is a change for an important theological reason from “for all” that we are accustomed to hearing. Jesus Christ suffered and died on the Cross so that all humanity might be redeemed from the power of sin and death we brought on ourselves through Adam because of original sin. We all are redeemed because of Christ’s suffering and death and not because of our personal worthiness but we do not get a ‘free pass’ into heaven. The choices we make in this life have eternal consequences and when we reject God’s grace and refuse to repent of our sins, we separate ourselves from God. So, Jesus’ suffering and death is not a guarantee that all will automatically be saved regardless of our choices but rather it provides the freedom for us to choose for or against God. This change in the Eucharistic Prayers makes it clear that our freedom to choose for or against God matters and that Christ’s death is not a guaranteed ‘free pass into heaven for all’ because God respects our free will and our choices.