

Lesson 23 - The Unpardonable Sin

Our final lesson deals with a most solemn subject. What constitutes the only sin God can't forgive? I've met those who have committed a certain sin. Their conscience has so guilted them, they feel certain they have committed the unpardonable sin. Some have felt it's murder. But the Bible says Moses murdered and he was forgiven. Some say it must be adultery. Yet Mary committed adultery and she was freely forgiven by Christ. Some say it's cursing God. But that's not it either, for Peter cursed Jesus to His face He forgave him. What, then, is the unpardonable sin? **Matthew 12:30, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."** God says, "If you're not with me, you're against me." What God does here is take away all neutral ground. "You're either with me, or against me!" Then in **verses 31- 32** He tells us what the unpardonable sin is. **"Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."** It's the sin against the Holy Spirit that is not forgiven. Why is it you can curse God and be forgiven? Yet on the other hand, the sin against the Holy Spirit is so serious it can't be forgiven?

The unpardonable sin is not a kind of sin, it is rather a *degree* in sin--not a single act, but a continual persistent rebellion against the Holy Spirit. Let's study the work of the Holy Spirit in order to understand how we can commit the unpardonable sin against Him.

What is the work of the Holy Spirit, and why is His work so serious? **John 16:13, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."** First He will guide us into *ALL* truth. It is here that people begin to commit the unpardonable sin. As the Spirit tries to lead them to truth they are too busy, too indifferent, or too opinionated to be led. The Spirit tries to lead them to study the Bible. Through churches, preachers, TV, Radio, and evangelistic

meetings the Holy Spirit tries and tries. But as man resists being led to truth, the Holy Spirit's voice gets quieter and quieter, until man cannot be reached. He has committed the unpardonable sin. This is why it is so important to "walk while you have the light." **John 12:35**, **"Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth."** It's equally important then to also *love* the truth enough to follow it! **Second Thessalonians 2:10- 12** says many are lost because they received not the *love of the truth!* **"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."**

The second work of the Holy Spirit is found in **John 16:7- 8**, **"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."** "He will reprove the world of sin, righteousness and judgment." It's here again that many people begin to commit the unpardonable sin. When the Spirit reproves them of sin, (which is breaking the law **1 John 3:4**), they resist and do not want to give up their sins. The adulterer doesn't want to quit adultery, the child doesn't want to honor the parents, the Sabbath breaker doesn't want to quit breaking the Sabbath, et cetera. At any point we resist the Holy Spirit, we begin to harden our hearts, and if we continue, we will commit the unpardonable sin. It's the same for "righteousness." Righteousness is doing what's right. Things like being baptized,

giving a faithful tithe, keeping separate from worldliness, et cetera. As the Spirit convicts of what we need to do to follow righteousness, we are often careless and shrug it off. That's resisting the Spirit. This is how we begin to commit the unpardonable sin.

Let's broaden this. The Holy Spirit inspired the Bible, and God is the same yesterday, today and forever. So, when God reveals truth in His Word, that *is* His will.

Many people think they can just not deal with it and still be okay. Most people who plead "ignorance" will not be able to use that in the judgment. **Hosea 4:6** says a rejection of knowledge leads to "destruction." That's to read and know but turn our back on truth. If we have an *opportunity* to know, God holds us responsible! God will forgive us for what we didn't know, God never condemns sincere people in darkness. The Bible says, "**And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**" **John 3:19**. We're condemned for staying in darkness once the light has come! **John 9:41**, "Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth." When you were in darkness ignorantly, God didn't even write it down as sin! Sin is when men know God's will and refuse to follow it! **James 4:17**, "**Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.**"

Now there are two types of sin in the Bible. The sins of commission, and the sins of omission. Notice the difference.

COMMISSION

OMISSION

(Against God & Man)	(Against the Holy Spirit)
Commit - Murder	Omit following truth
Commit - Swearing	Omit forsaking sin
Commit - Lying	Omit doing righteousness
Commit - Adultery	Omit full surrender

A lot of people guilty of omission, in their judgment, don't "*commit*" sin. When you talk to them about their lives they say, "I don't murder, swear, or steal," and they don't. But they refuse to do God's will when truth and the light comes. So while not *committing* any sin, they *omit* doing what's right. The sins of "commission" are against God and man, they can all be forgiven. But the sins of *omission* are against the Holy Spirit. **To sin against the Holy Spirit you don't have to do anything wrong. You just have to not do what's right!** That's the most dangerous sin of all--to sin against light and knowledge and revealed truth. That's the sin that drives the Holy Spirit away!

When Jesus introduced this idea of sinning against the Holy Spirit, something had happened in His experience. Christ had been teaching truth. All who had Bibles and were reading them could testify to it! But in spite of His pure witness, and pure truth-packed preaching, many of the people there despised the truth for the same reason people do today. They didn't want to give up their sin, or change their lifestyle! And if you don't want to do right you have to find some excuse to do wrong. So these people accused Christ of having a devil! God's heart broke when these lost men, for whom He persistently strove to save accused Him so hatefully. Christ knew they were stepping on the toes of the, Holy Ghost. Jesus said, "Wait, you can curse me, and I'll hang on a cross and still pray

'Father forgive them,' but be careful, the Holy Spirit is insulted, you're committing the unpardonable sin!"

Now let's bring this home. We who have been shown the truth straight from the Word, if we judge it unimportant and reject it, we are guilty of the same sin. **Hebrews 10:26, "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,"** What's left? **Verse 27, "But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."** Notice though, it's not only hell and judgment you have to look forward to but "fear." Once you know the truth and refuse to follow it you cannot have peace! Here's why. **Hebrews 6:4- 6, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."** For folks who know, they're driving the nails and crucifying Jesus all over! When this realization hits the conscience one of two things happens. The heart hardens, and the spirit is rejected--or the heart melts and is converted. The same sun that melts wax, hardens clay.

A third work of the Holy Spirit is unification. That means when you know the truth, it will unite all believers into one body. It doesn't matter if you are black or white, educated or uneducated, the Spirit will lead you to a body of believers who believe in all truth. And in that church, the Spirit will lead you into the baptismal waters where before the world you testify that you are going all the way with God! **First Corinthians 12:13, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into**

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

It is here too that some commit the unpardonable sin. They are led to truth, they forsake sin and follow righteousness, but they refuse to be baptized and commit themselves to the body. The Spirit patiently urges them to step out and become a strength to the body, and while many joyfully take that step, others resist and never do. As they delay and wait, the Spirit is again resisted and they commit the unpardonable sin.

A good definition of the unpardonable sin is in **Acts 7:51**, "**Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.**" Here Stephen tells them they are resisting the Spirit for two reasons. 1. "As your fathers did so do ye." It is for this reason more than any other that men and women today commit the unpardonable sin. The pull of family, its social structure, and the approval of those closest to them means more than the approval of God. The most frequent reason given for not doing the will of God is because "mom and dad raised me this way and I don't want to change." 2. **Verse 53**, "**Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.**" This is the second major reason people commit the unpardonable sin. They do not want to keep *all* the commandments! As it was in Jesus' day so it is today!

In these last days, God is developing a group of people totally committed to the Spirit's control--a group like Gideon's army. God told Gideon to raise up an army. Gideon collected 32,000 men. A *small* army compared to the large one they had to face. Yet God

said Gideon's army was too big and He proposed a test. "Whoever is *fearful*, go home." Twenty-two thousand men left! God then said, "There are still too many, they are not committed." So He proposed another test. "All who kneel down at the river instead of running through, send them home." Nine thousand seven hundred knelt, and only 300 remained. But those 300 were Spirit-filled, fully committed men, and through them God won a decisive battle.

God has again given to this world in the last days of earth's history a testing message to reveal what is in the hearts of men and women. He gives the test of the Beast power. Many fail here. Then comes the test of salvation, and more fall away. He sends the great test of love, "if you love me keep my commandments " many fail the test. He sends the Sabbath-day test, *many* fail here. Then comes the test of the Mark of the Beast; the test of keeping ourselves free from this world, its pleasures and outward adornment; the test of our bodies being His temple; many fail, but others pass. Why has God given these tests? God wants to develop a people who are totally committed to Him!

Matthew 10:36-38, "And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." There is a price to true discipleship. That price is a 100 percent commitment to God. As God's Spirit works upon your heart at the close of these lessons, God gives you a special invitation in **Ephesians 4:30, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."** "Grieve not the Holy Spirit whereby you are sealed." As you surrender to the Holy Spirit, the Seal of God is placed in your

forehead, and you will be among that group in Revelation who stand before God's throne through eternity praising God for the joy of salvation! Let's make an appointment to be there together.