

The Unpardonable Sin

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit

Mark 3:22-30

*"The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "**He** is possessed by Beelzebul, and "**He** cast out the demons by the ruler of the demons. And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself that house will not be able to stand. If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished! But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house. Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin" because they were saying, "**He** has an unclean spirit. "*

The unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit was a specific charge made against Him while working through the person of Jesus Christ. The scribes were saying the spirit that possessed Jesus was Beelzebul, the ruler of demons. A person may question whether or not the Holy Spirit is at work in you or I, since our lives are tainted with sin, but to question His work through a perfect man (Jesus, God in the flesh; **Jn. 1:14**), one who had no sin, showed the arrogance and hardness of heart that these scribes had. These men had rejected Jesus' claim to be the Son of God (**Jn. 5:18**), and now were rejecting the open and obvious miracles being performed through Him by the Holy Spirit. They had rejected the light of scriptures that spoke of Him through the prophets, the testimony of His perfect life, and now the miracles done through Him. These miracles were not done behind closed doors, but in the open, before many, and to many who were known by all to have been blind, paralyzed, lame, sick, and even dead. This blasphemy was the epitome of hardness and rejection of God's light which was present on earth in the person of Jesus Christ.

These scribes were not believers who had committed a sin that would cause them to forfeit their salvation; but unbelievers whose rejection had sealed their fate in hell and the lake of fire. They had rejected too much light and now God was rejecting them. Salvation is not always open to individuals; if they continue to reject the light given to them, God withdraws Himself and hardens their hearts. First man hardens his heart and, as a result of continual hardening, God hardens him

more, and his hope for salvation perishes. A good example of this was with Pharaoh, in Egypt, at the time of Moses. Pharaoh first hardened his heart (**Ex. 7:13-14,22; 8:15,32; 9:7**); then God hardened his heart more (**Ex.9:12; 10:1,20,27; 11: 10**). In the book of Romans, the apostle Paul speaks about those who suppress the truth (**1:18**), those who know God, but do not honor Him as God or give thanks (**1:21**), and those who exchange the truth of God for a lie (**1:25**). Because of their rejection and suppression of truth, God gave them over to a depraved mind (**1:28-31**). Luke, in his gospel, mentions those who did not recognize their day of visitation (God speaking to them), and the consequence was severe (**Lk. 19:41-44**). When one rejects the light revealed, he stands on dangerous ground.

Sometimes people ask, "Can a person commit this sin today?" The answer to that question is very simple. No! Is Jesus present here on earth today? No! Again, this sin was to say that He (Jesus) had an unclean spirit; that it was Beelzebul working in the person of Jesus. Since Jesus' physical presence is not with us, but at the right hand of God the Father, we can not duplicate this sin today. This is precisely why there is no mention of this sin in any of the epistles, or in the book of Acts. If this sin was duplicatable after Jesus left earth, why is there no warning or mention of this after His departure? If believers could commit this sin, why didn't the apostles warn them in the epistles? Again, remember who committed this sin — unbelieving scribes.

One may ask, "Is there any sin a Christian can commit that will not be forgiven?" In regard to hell forgiveness, there is no sin that the blood of Jesus did not pay for. **Colossians 2:13** states: "...having forgiven us **all** our transgressions," and again in **1Pet. 3:18**: "For Christ died for sins once for **all**." The Lord promises the believer eternal life (**Jn. 3:16,18; 5:24; 11:25,26**). Since it is **eternal**, it is never-ending! It is forever! The Believer has salvation, not probation! Yet the Bible teaches that believers need to confess their sins to have fellowship with their Heavenly Father (**1 Jn. 1:3,6,9**). Unconfessed sin is not forgiven as far as fellowship is concerned, and can result in sickness or death (**I Cor. 11:28-30; Acts 5:1-10**), and the loss of rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ (**I Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Cor. 5:10**). At the cross and in hell Jesus paid our eternal sin debt forever. Through our confession of sin, as believers, we receive forgiveness in order to keep us in fellowship with God and spare us from His discipline and the loss of rewards (**Heb. 12:1-11**). Being saved from hell and being saved from disciplinary judgment at the Judgment Seat of Christ are two different things. All true Christians will be saved from hell, but not all Christians will be saved from the loss of rewards and suffering shame when Christ calls them home (**1Jn. 2:28**).

Those people who believe they can lose their salvation for blaspheming against the Holy Spirit, or for any sin (i.e., suicide, murder, divorce), *are not really saved*. They are still trusting in keeping commandments to be sure of heaven, rather than trusting that Jesus paid the hell penalty for **all** their sins. Hell is what we all deserve, but Jesus took our place on the cross and in hell for us, and then rose again on the third day (**Rom. 5:8-10; Acts 2:24-32**). Our total faith or trust must be in His sacrifice to save us. If we add a commandment or law that we must obey to receive or keep our salvation, then our faith is not in *Christ alone*. We have added works and are cut off from Christ (**Gal. 2:21; 5:4**). All true Christians know they can never lose, sin away, or give back their salvation, since **all** their sins are paid for.