

What Is the Unpardonable Sin?

Matthew 12:22-32

According to the teaching of Jesus, there is only one sin that can not be forgiven. This sin is so heinous that it defies pardon on earth and garners damnation for all eternity. It is important to note that there is only ONE unpardonable sin. While “all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men,” there is one sin—and only one sin—beyond hope of pardon.

- I. Some Wrong Guesses Concerning the Unpardonable Sin
 - A. The unpardonable sin is not the committing of some heinous sin.
 - 1. Murder is not unpardonable—King David committed murder and later knew God’s forgiveness.
 - 2. Adultery is not unpardonable—Again, King David is our example. Consider also the woman taken in adultery in John 8.
 - 3. Violating any or all of the 10 Commandments is not unpardonable.
 - B. The unpardonable sin is not simply rejecting Christ.
 - 1. Many people reject the Gospel on the first hearing.
 - 2. God does not limit one’s opportunity for salvation to the first hearing of the Gospel.
- II. What is Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost?
 - A. Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost consists of ascribing the works of the Holy Spirit to Satan (Mk. 3:30 c/f Mt. 12:31).
 - 1. Jesus’ works, done in the power of the Holy Spirit, were undeniable evidence of both His being Messiah and Deity.
 - 2. In the face of Jesus’ undeniably miraculous works, the Pharisees were forced to attribute Jesus’ ability to some supernatural power—either God or Satan.
 - 3. If they had acknowledged that Jesus had performed miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Pharisees would be bound to accept His message.
 - 4. Since the Pharisees felt compelled to reject Christ’s message, they attributed His undeniable miracles to Satan. Is Satan were the source of His power, they could and should reject His message.
 - B. In the strictest sense, the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost can not be committed today.
 - 1. The specific blasphemy of attributing the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan could only be committed by the generation who saw Christ. They were faced with undeniable evidence as to Christ’s person, and they were forced to make a choice and draw conclusions.

2. While a misunderstanding concerning Christ's person was pardonable, rejecting the undeniable evidence of God's Spirit working through Christ was not forgivable.

3. Dr. Richard W. DeHaan comments:

The sin against the Holy Spirit could only be committed while Christ was here upon earth. It could only occur while men could personally witness His miraculous works and mighty power and then deliberately, knowing better, label the Holy Spirit's work through Christ as being satanic, rather than giving the credit to God....Remember, then, that the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit cannot be committed today. It could only occur during the public ministry of Christ.

III. How does the unpardonable sin apply today?

- A. While the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost was a sin that was specifically committed by the religious leaders who witnessed Jesus' ministry, the end result of that sin—ongoing rejection of the message of Christ—is the unpardonable sin committed by people today.
- B. Ultimately, the Pharisees' blasphemy against the Holy Ghost by attributing His works to Satan was a lame attempt to discredit the ministry and message of Jesus.
- C. Unbelievers who continually resist the ministry of the Holy Spirit to draw them to Christ may sin away their day of grace and ultimately face damnation.
1. Hebrews 6:4-6 describes lost men who came under the sound of the Gospel, experienced the conviction of the Holy Spirit, but continued to resist—culminating in damnation.
 2. In Acts 7:51, Stephen described the spiritual condition of Israel as one of resisting the Holy Ghost. He stated that this had been the pattern in Israel for generations. In attributing Christ's miraculous works to Satan, the Pharisees were perpetrating the pattern of resisting the Holy Spirit.
 3. Genesis 6:3 teaches that God's Spirit strives with a man only so long. There is a point at which the Holy Spirit ceases in His convicting work.
 4. Romans 1:28 indicates that those who refuse a knowledge of God may be turned over to a reprobate mind.
 5. II Thess. 2:7-12 indicates that those who resisted the Gospel and missed the rapture have passed their day of grace and will be sent a "strong delusion."
 6. II Cor. 6:2 indicates that there is an "accepted time" to be saved. Hebrews 3:7, 8 warns us to respond to God's voice when we hear it—suggesting there may come a time when He no longer speaks.
- D. When one sins away his day of grace, the ministry of the Holy Spirit ceases in his life. He does not experience conviction of sin or drawing to Christ. The man who has gone too far in his resisting the Holy Spirit will experience no concern for eternity, sin, or the grace of God