

Behold What Manner of Love

An Expository Study of the Epistle of **1 John 5:16&17**

Chapter 28- The Sin Unto Death

261 The Sin Unto Death- Part 4

WAOY Tuesday 10/14/08

Welcome again, my beloved in Jesus Christ. We are continuing to go over our verse by verse study of the Epistle of **1 John**, and today we are going to continue to look at what John taught about "the sin that is unto death"- so let's read **1John 5:16&17** again together:

16 If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

17 All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

Now on the last broadcast- we were looking at just what John was teaching here by exploring two possible answers to what the "sin unto death" might be.

And we were exploring the first possibility that the sin unto death is a sin to *eternal* death in that some lost people commit by blaspheming the Holy Ghost. And the Scripture passage that teaches this is found in **Matthew 12:31&32**, where Jesus said:

31 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.

32 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.

Now this is a frightening passage and one that we need to take great heed with because if you blaspheme the Holy Ghost- you will not ever be forgiven. So best just not do that.

But we live in a day when unscrupulous hirelings put unwarranted fear in the hearts of many of God's people by equating the Truth of what Jesus taught here with what they are doing, and the two are not the same.

I can't even begin to tell you the number of people who have sat in my office in abject terror because they were told by some man that they had committed this sin simply because they didn't agree with some activities that was going on in their Church. Some have even shared with me that their spiritual leaders told them they had blasphemed the Holy Ghost and were in danger of eternal damnation simply because they asked a question.

Listen, blaspheming the Holy Ghost is a very serious thing, but we need to take what Jesus actually said about it, and not add to it or take anything away from it.

First of all- simply because a person doesn't understand something that is going on in their Church is not a sign of blasphemy. Also, asking legitimate questions about a particular practice of the Church is not blaspheming either. We are commanded by Scripture to test the spirits to see if they are of God precisely because all spirits are not of God, and all men are not truthful, and all activities that go on in the modern Church are not Scriptural even though they may be accepted and popular.

And any real minister of the Gospel worth his salt welcomes genuine questions and honest criticism for two reasons:

1. A true man of God welcomes light and examination of what he is doing and teaching because he does not want to deceive anyone, and he realizes all too well that he is flesh and he is capable of making huge mistakes, and so he welcomes people to hold him accountable to Scripture to help guard his own soul.
2. A true man of God wants all glory and honor to go to Jesus and not to himself, and so he runs away from praise and he will not accept worship and adoration from anyone. Yet even though that is true- the praise of men is intoxicating and- like money- can and does corrupt the best among us. So a true man of God welcomes honest criticism of his ministry so that he can make sure that Jesus is being exalted by his ministry and not himself.

So anyone who teaches that asking honest questions is blasphemy is either woefully ignorant of what blasphemy really is or is so caught up in his own importance that he is trying to instill fear into people's hearts so he can manipulate them into not holding him accountable- and either one of these is real bad.

When a man begins to believe his own press reports about his own value to God and his own gifts from God and his own importance to the people- he is already off base and is on the road to certain destruction. His only hope at this point is to repent and confess his sin and come clean or to scare as many people as he can into not holding him accountable to Scripture so he can maintain credibility with them.

Now this is a classic definition of a cult and one of the most common tactics that the ungodly leaders of these cults use to hold people in line so that they will not even question what he says is to twist what Jesus taught here.

These self-appointed prophets will teach that God speaks directly to them and that they have special insight and special anointings and special gifts that the people need in order to be in right standing with God and to function in this life. This gives these leaders spiritual credibility in the eyes of the people. And because the people of these cults are never taught the Word of God properly- over time- they become hopelessly dependent upon that person for everything- including being in right standing with God.

Almost every single one of the people of these cults throughout history are taught that to doubt or to even question anything that this leader says to them is tantamount to blaspheming the Holy Ghost, and so a strange perverted fear develops in their hearts- not a holy reverential fear of God- but a warped mindless fear to ever cross these cult leaders about anything is foremost in their minds and hearts.

This causes otherwise intelligent people to suspend rational thinking, Scriptural reasoning, and spiritual discernment, and every verse of the Bible is looked at through the warped lens of their own personal situation.

At this point- it takes a miracle of God to free these people from this cult- because they will lie, steal, cheat, and do almost anything to maintain a right standing with this leader because in their mind- if they break away from that false leader- they have lost their contact with God.

Now most of the people of these cults are innocent victims of evil and wicked people who *knowingly* manipulate them for their own glory. But the leaders themselves are not innocent at all. They are what Jude calls them in **Jude 4**:

... who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

And in verse 8:

... these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

And Jude pronounces judgment against these self-appointed leaders in **Jude 11-13**, when he said:

11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

Jude continues to describe the characteristics of these false teachers in **Jude 16-19**:

16 These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

18 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

And then Jude gives us the solution on how to keep these evil and ungodly men from gaining influence in our lives and how to rescue those that we love who have been deceived by these heretics in **Jude 20-23**:

20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

22 And of some have compassion, making a difference:

23 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

So, needless to say- exposing these people as the heretics that they are and denouncing their evil deeds as being evil and holding what they teach accountable to the authority of Scripture is not blaspheming the Holy Ghost at all- it is being obedient to the Holy Ghost Who taught us in **1 John 4:1**:

Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

And it is being faithful to what the Lord Jesus said in **Matthew 24:4**, when He said:

... Take heed that no man deceive you.

We are living in very powerful days today, dear friends, and now, more than ever- we need to exercise spiritual discernment and try the spirits so that we will not be deceived and so that we may remain faithful to Jesus.

The Apostle Peter told us why we need to be on guard about things like this as he wrote **2 Peter 2:1-3**:

1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

2 And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

3 And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

So while blaspheming the Holy Ghost is unforgiveable- and may well be the "sin unto death" that John wrote about here- holding the leaders of the Church's feet to the fire and accountable to Scripture, and to expect that a true man of God will graciously and humbly feed the sheep and will refuse to feed himself is not committing this unpardonable sin. And when unbiblical practices are going on in the Church- you are not blaspheming the Holy Ghost to reject them and denounce them.

So the bottom line to this aspect of what John is teaching here is that only wicked, evil, ungodly lost, unsaved, unregenerate people can truly blaspheme the Holy Ghost, and truly this is a sin unto eternal because it shall not ever be forgiven them.

Well, I have to stop right here, but please join me on the next broadcast as we continue our journey through the Epistle of **1John**. May God help us all.

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