

The Unpardonable Sin

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In John 13, Jesus begins to prepare his disciples for his departure.

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

There was going to be a big change. He had been with them from the beginning of his ministry. Now he is leaving, but he has a plan for his church. In John 14 we read:

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

He will be sending the Comforter who is also called the Holy Ghost or Holy spirit to be with them in his place. What will the Comforter do? Read in John 16:

4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

5 But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

7 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.

- 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:
9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;
10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;
11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

This says the Comforter will reprove the world of sin. The word reprove as used here means convince or convict. In John 6 it says:

- 44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Without the spirit of the father to draw or convict us we can not be saved. He convinces us of righteousness by teaching us all things, by bringing things to our remembrance, by giving us power, by comforting us.

The deaths of Ananias and Sapphira are examples judgment caused by lying to the Holy Ghost.

Yes, Jesus is the head of the Church and the government is on his shoulder, but since he left us here on earth while he went to be with the father, he uses the Holy Ghost to carry out the government of the church. I want to stress that the Holy Ghost is all-important in the Church today. Jesus is not with us in person but he sent the Comforter to meet our every need.

Now I want to consider the sin against the Holy Ghost. Let's read what Jesus said about it.

Mat 12: 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.

Mark 3: 28 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:²⁹ But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

Luke 12: 10 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven.

According to Jesus, the unpardonable sin is to blaspheme or speak against the Holy Ghost. This blasphemy or speaking is to revile or speak reproachfully of, to show impious irreverence for the Holy Ghost. I am also going to use the word despise because it helps explain what Jesus means.

Now let's read Heb 10:

26 For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins,
27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

Also read Heb 6:

4 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,
5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,
6 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.

These scriptures describe situations that result in a soul being cut off without hope of forgiveness. If you remember what Jesus said, blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is what causes that unpardonable condition. Where is that blasphemy in the texts copied from Heb 10 and Heb 6? I believe the key to answering that question is found in Heb 10:

28 He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:
29 Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

To “despise” Moses’ law is different than simply breaking the law. It is to utterly reject it, to denounce it, to blaspheme it. I believe Paul used this illustration to explain what he meant by the term “sin willfully” in Heb 10:26. It also explains what Paul means by “fall away” in Heb 6:6.

After having been saved and sanctified, to commit the unpardonable sin we must utterly reject the plan of salvation made possible by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and administered by the Holy Ghost. We must denounce it as false, say there is nothing to it, despise it. That is to blaspheme against the Holy Ghost whom Jesus left to comfort and guide us in this gospel day.

To backslide, as in the usual case, is much different than despising the plan of salvation which is to blaspheme against the Holy Ghost. A person can be overcome in temptation and fall while still knowing in his heart that the plan of salvation is real. He will feel sorry that he sinned and hope that he can find forgiveness some day even if he is unwilling to repent right now. This sin can be forgiven as Jesus said, “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men.”