

“THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN”

Certain verses in the Bible tell us that there are times when a person cannot receive forgiveness from God. This is a very scary thought! What do these verses really mean? Could I be in danger of committing an unforgivable sin?

Common Misconceptions:

* “Suicide is a ticket straight to hell.”

> Why people think this:

(1) The “sin” is murder (6th Commandment – Ex. 20:13)

(2) There would be no chance to ask for forgiveness.

> This idea is completely non-Biblical! (Matt. 12:31)

> Leads us to a 2nd Misconception

* “Sudden death without forgiveness of specific sins leads to hell.”

> Teenage Scary Scenario: Explain

> Why people think this:

* “Sin cannot enter heaven.” (common idea based on Rev. 21:27)

> Q: What gets us into heaven? (*Is it justification? Or perfection?*)

* “Making fun of or imitating someone speaking in tongues is blasphemy of the Holy Spirit.”

> Commonly taught to young people in Pentecostal movements.

> Non-biblical position: Blasphemy has nothing to do with making fun.

So ... what is the “unforgivable sin?”

-- Matthew 12:25-32 (Read) (also, Mark 3: 28-30; Luke 12: 10)

* The Unforgivable Sin is BLASPHEMY / SPEAKING AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

-- “Blaspheme” – *to speak evil of*

-- i.e. Crediting Satan with the work of the Holy Spirit

(the Pharisees claimed Satan’s power was behind Jesus’ miracles)

Is Blasphemy against the HS something that can happen today?

Some say that this sin cannot happen any more – that it was only possible while Christ lived on earth.

Why? These believe that miracles were only for the time of Christ – that age has past.

Response? There is nothing in Scripture to suggest that Christ’s teaching – or his power – was to be limited to the 1st half of the 1st century AD. Jesus Himself said, “*Because I go to the Father, you will do greater works than these.*” (Jn 14:12)

So, our conclusion is that, yes, blasphemy against the HS can happen today.

Scary Scenarios:

** A local pastor who openly preaches against people who speak in tongues, claiming that such activity is “of the devil.” You are a Spirit-filled believer who prays “in the Spirit” (in other tongues). Do you see this pastor as guilty of blasphemy against the HS?*

** A faith healer who attracts media attention and huge crowds – but you suspect some of the miracles are fakes. Your conclusion: he is a swindler. Is he “of God” or “of the devil?” If you think he’s of the devil – and you turn out to be wrong ... have you committed the unpardonable sin?*

** An elderly lady at church “has a word” for me that I should “return to the music of our fathers and grandfathers” and to “turn away from the polluted music of today.” “This rock music is the devil’s music and shouldn’t be used in church”, she exclaims! Believing that God is using all kinds of music to reach younger generations, I’m faced with the decision ... is this lady guilty of the unforgivable sin?*

The above scenarios, while important, don’t seem to warrant eternal damnation! This is certainly not what Jesus had in mind when he made these famous and controversial remarks. While each example seems to fit the model of giving credit to Satan for the Holy Spirit’s work, there is something deeper to the concept of blaspheming the HS.

Pastor Chris’s Interpretation

1. Refusing to accept the WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT as from God!

Q: What is the work of the Holy Spirit?

-- conviction; illumination; guidance; revealing truth

> If I refuse to accept that conviction is from God, or if I ignore the illumination of the truth in God’s Word,

how can I be saved?

> Why did Jesus say that he who “speaks a word against the Son of Man” would be forgiven?

-- Some didn’t recognize Jesus as Messiah. (I Timothy 1:13)

2. A CONTINUING, NEVER-ENDING refusal.

> Mark 3:29b – “he is guilty of an eternal sin.”

> Matt. 12: 32 – “ ... or in the age to come.”

-- denotes an ongoing refusal to accept the Holy Spirit’s work

-- Important: at the Judgment Seat, denying the HS’s work will not be OVERLOOKED!

3. If you desire forgiveness from Christ ... you have NOT COMMITTED THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN!

- > There is no sin you can “commit” that can’t be forgiven.
- > The only sin that can’t be forgiven is not seeking forgiveness for sins.
- > You blaspheme the HS when you refuse to acknowledge His leading you to a relationship with

Him.

Next Week: Can A Christian Lose His Salvation?