

Unpardonable Sin

Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit Blasphemy is defined as follows:

· 1 a: the act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of respect or reverence toward God; b: the act of claiming the attributes of God; 2. Irreverence

toward something considered sacred. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary

· ... The Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost Matt. 12:32; Mark 3:28, consists in attributing to the power of Satan those unquestionable miracles which Jesus performed by "the finger of God" and the power of the Holy Spirit. It is plainly such a state of willful, determined opposition to God and the Holy

Spirit that no efforts will avail to lead to repentance. Smith's Bible Dictionary,

Riverside Book and Bible House, p. 94.

Matthew 12:31-32 "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come. NKJV

Many people consider the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of Matthew 12 and the Sin unto Death from 1 John 5 to be the same but they appear to be different. Blasphemy is not even mentioned in 1 John and the phrase 'Unpardonable Sin' is not in Matthew.

"What is the 'Unpardonable Sin'?"

There is really no such thing. Neither the phrase nor the idea which it connotes appears in the sacred writings. The implication in it is that it is possible for one to so sin as to find it impossible to obtain forgiveness. There is no such situation. Taught repeatedly and with the greatest emphasis throughout the New Testament is the glorious fact that when (a) one genuinely repents of all wrongdoing, (b) ceases *the practice thereof* and (c) complies with the conditions applicable, pardon full and complete is by our Lord gladly and graciously bestowed. This indeed has been the divine assurance through the ages. In the long ago Isaiah penned these comforting words, "Seek ye Jehovah while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isaiah 55:6, 7.) And, God promised through the new covenant, "And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Hebrews 9:17.) With such comforting assurances the scriptures abound.

The passage usually, but erroneously, designated as teaching the doctrine of "unpardonable sin," is 1 John 5:16, where reference is made to the "sin unto death." But, this is simply a sin which a brother will *not* confess—a fact which

the larger context clearly shows. The Lord will forgive *every* sin a brother confesses (1 John 1:9); but, there is a sin which the Lord will not forgive (1 John 5:16); therefore, the sin which the Lord will not forgive is simply a sin which a brother will not confess. The context corroborates this view and the premises lead logically to this conclusion. If I witness sin on the part of an erring brother or sister and such may be brought to penitence and confession, I not only may, it is my duty, to pray for such with the assurance that the Lord will hear and answer the petition made. (James 5:16.) But, if the brother or sister persists in such rebellion it is a vain and useless exercise to pray for the forgiveness of impenitent persons, and the Lord will not hear and answer such a prayer for the brother or sister involved.

The "sin against the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 12:31, 32), is, in principle, the rejection of the revelation which the Spirit, the third person of the godhead, made, first through our Lord, and then through his representatives. It is the denial of the Spirit's message initially by direct inspiration, and then through the Book, the practical effects of which is the rejection of the deity of our Lord, the repudiation of his sacrificial death, the annulment of the atonement and the implication that a sacrifice will yet be made. Those who thus do would crucify Christ "afresh" from the allegation that he who died on the cross was an imposter and that the Suffering Saviour must yet appear and suffer. Salvation is denied those of this category, not because it is not offered to them, but because they have permanently rejected it. (Hebrews 6: 1ff; 10:25-28.) The ever-flowing waters of the Well of Life are always available to those who desire to come and to quench their thirst. How we should rejoice that "There is a fountain filled with blood, Drawn from Immanuel's veins; And sinners plunged beneath that flood,

Lose all their guilty stains." Guy N. Woods, GOSPEL ADVOCATE, July 16, 1981 p 443.