

blasphemy

What is the unpardonable sin/ unforgivable sin?

The unforgivable sin is described in Mark 3 and Matthew 12. These passages involve Jesus Christ's repeated and widespread public defeat of Satan and his demons. Many readers and theologians have been confused about the true nature of this sin. As you read these verses for yourself (below), bear in mind part of the purpose of Jesus Christ's ministry was to directly confront darkness with the light of truth in a public battle of pure good versus pure evil. The only being in the universe that is more powerful than the Evil One, is God. He is the only one with enough power to bind Satan himself and forcibly dispossess him.

Mark 3:22-30:

"The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "He casts out the demons by the ruler of the demons." And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? "If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. "If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. "If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished! But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house. "Truly I say to you, all sins shall be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"--because they were saying, "He has an unclean spirit."

Matthew 12:31-32:

"Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come."

The context of these statements begins with the Pharisees who had long observed the sinless Jesus Christ. They observed him doing undeniable and powerful miracles that were, at the very least, clear evidence of power supplied by God. These impressive miracles were freely given in pure kindness and love to release people from obvious suffering and the oppression of horrible evil.

However, the Pharisees had so firmly set their hearts against accepting Jesus as the Messiah that they rejected the obvious truth before them and perversely twisted it to influence the crowds. They publicly credited the most ultimately evil being in the universe with these precious, godly miracles. In other words, they called the precious and holy Spirit of God, the unclean spirit of Satan. In effect, they charged Jesus Christ with sorcery; one who is in league with Satan. These charges are not only appalling and extremely serious, but clearly absurd. As Jesus immediately responded,

Mark 3:23-27:

And He called them to Himself and began speaking to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? "If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. "If a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. "If Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but he is finished! But no one can enter the strong man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the strong man, and then he will plunder his house."

Dr. Henry Morris says: "The unforgivable sin of speaking against the Holy Spirit has been interpreted in various ways, but the true meaning cannot contradict other Scripture. It is unequivocally clear that the one unforgivable sin is permanently rejecting Christ (John 3:18; 3:36). Thus, speaking against the Holy Spirit is equivalent to rejecting Christ with such finality

that no future repentance is possible. 'My spirit shall not always strive with man,' God said long ago (Genesis 6:3).

...In the context of this particular passage (Matthew 12:22-32), Jesus had performed a great miracle of creation, involving both healing and casting out a demon, but the Pharisees rejected this clear witness of the Holy Spirit. Instead they attributed His powers to Satan, thus demonstrating an attitude permanently resistant to the Spirit, and to the deity and saving Gospel of Christ" [Henry M. Morris, *The Defender's Study Bible* (Iowa Falls, Iowa: World Bible Publishers, 1995), emphasis added.].

Scholars Morris and Clark further explain:

"Persons deeply troubled by a guilty conscience often fear that they have sinned too grievously for God to forgive and save them. Others, dominated by a carnal, calculating attitude, hope to sin to the limit and then come to Christ to escape the consequences. Thus with radically different motives, both ask 'Is it possible to sin beyond the point of being saved?'

God's ability to save is not limited by man's sinfulness. In fact, every person, before he accepts Jesus Christ as Savior, is in total rebellion against God, though sinfulness may not manifest itself with equal intensity in every person. The Apostle John taught believers,

1 John 2:1-2:

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin and if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world."

In relation to whether a believer can blaspheme the Holy Spirit, the answer is no.

"...once you accept Jesus, that part of the Holy Spirit's job is complete, thus you can't blaspheme His work. Naturally, He continues to work with you, and you can be stubborn and resist Him as a Christian, but you can't blaspheme Him. Live unproductively, carnal and unspiritual, possible. But commit the unpardonable sin? It's just not possible for a true Christian. Remember what Paul said: [Darrin Yeager (DYeager.org, 2002).]

Romans 8:1:

"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus..."

A true Christian cannot commit a sin for which there is no forgiveness. We are protected by the power of God (1 Peter 1:5). Although we can certainly grieve the Holy Spirit, He still seals us for the day of redemption (Ephesians 4:30). The Apostle Paul was confident "that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6, NKJV).

Bear in mind, however, if someone who claims to be a Christian is responding to the Holy Spirit and Christ in a way very similar to that of the Pharisees, despite the strong witness of the Holy Spirit and abundant exposure to the truth of God's Word, it is highly doubtful that the person was ever saved. Only God knows for sure. The evidence clearly points to an unregenerate heart.

Matthew 12:33-34:

"Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit...For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart."