**Hardening Your Heart to Christ**

***THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN* Mark 3:20-30**

Whether you believe it or not the bible tells us we are all sinners

Romans 3:23, “For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.”

1 John 1:8 “If we claim we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves and not living in the truth.”

There are two types of sin. First there are times when you do something that God has said not to do. That’s called a sin of commission. Then there are times when you fail to do something that God has told you to do. That’s called a sin of omission. We’re all guilty of both.

To better understand sin, it’s helpful to study the Greek words for sin in the New Testament. The most popular Greek word in the New Testament for sin is *hamartano* (verb), which means falling short or missing the mark. Sin is falling short of God’s moral standards.

The more you study the Bible, the more you realize how sinful you really are. If you think you’re a good person it’s because you are measuring yourself against your own standard of goodness rather than the goodness of God which is impossible to meet. We tend to look at the outside, but God looks at the heart.

**without God’s forgiveness, the punishment for sin is eternal hell**.

Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.”

We’ve all sinned, and, and the punishment for sin is eternal hell. But the good news is that God, through the person and work of Christ, forgives our sins. Jesus was punished on the cross for our sins and then rose again, and when we put our faith in Him as our Savior and Lord, God forgives our sins.

**But There is one sin that is unforgiveable**.

The unforgivable sin comes up in Mark 3:20-30. Let’s read it.

Mark 3:20-30 20 Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat. When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.” And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, “He is possessed by Beelzebul! the prince of demons he is driving out demons.” So Jesus called them over to him and began to speak to them in parables: “How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. In fact, no one can enter a strong man’s house without first tying him up. Then he can plunder the strong man’s house. Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin.” **He said this because they were saying, “He has an impure spirit.”**

Jesus is in a house and probably healing people and casting out demons like he normally did. His own family thought He was crazy. But even worse than that, the scribes, or the teachers of religious law accused Jesus of being empowered by Satan.

So Jesus says to them “If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand” In other words, Jesus was saying, “All this time I’ve been healing people, and helping people, and teaching people to obey God, and I’ve been casting out demons. This is the very opposite of what the devil wants to do. Why would I be working against the devil if we were on the same team?”

Jesus then goes on to say “I tell you the truth, all sin and blasphemy can be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven. This is a sin with eternal consequences.”  **He told them this because they were saying, “He’s possessed by an evil spirit.”**

It is this last statement that gives us a clue to what the unforgivable sin is. The Jewish scribes were accusing him of being from the Devil so Jesus was telling them that they were on the verge of committing a sin for which they could not be forgiven. The term blasphemy may be generally defined as “defiant irreverence.” So, Jesus was saying the Teachers of the law were showing a defiant irreverence to the Holy spirits revelation that He was the Son of God by calling him a Devil.

This was not a thoughtless mistake or something randomly done. The scribes knew what they were doing. The scribes had seen Jesus perform miracles. They had seen Him cast out demons. They had heard His amazing sermons with their own ears. Yet they rejected Christ.

There was a progression to their Unbelief. Originally, they were interested in who Jesus was but they hardened their hearts against Him and were now calling him a devil. They will continue to harden their hearts till they became malicious and even to the point of hanging Jesus on a cross.

Jesus was speaking directly to the scribes, the teachers of religious law who had just accused Him of being in league with Satan, and He warned them that rejecting the Holy Spirit’s revelation was unforgivable. In other words, **the one unforgivable sin is that of rejecting the Holy Spirit’s revelation of Christ to you**.

The Teachers of the Law were supposed to be the experts interpreting and teaching the law but they had become so complacent that when Jesus came on the seen they didn’t even recognize who was despite all their knowledge of the prophesies of the coming messiah. We can become the same way when we become so wrap up in religion and tradition that we forget who the source and focus of our actions should be. We set God aside and go about our lives doing our own thing and creating God in our image instead of him creating us in his.

It is impossible to follow God unless we are led by the Spirit. And the only way to be led by the Spirit is to be filled by the Spirit.

Romans 8:9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.

The Holy Spirit enabled Jesus to do miracles and cast out demons to reveal the identity of Christ – to prove to people that Jesus is the Son of God. So, in this story in Mark 3 the Holy Spirit was using these miracles to reveal Christ as the Son of God to all those present, including the scribes. But, even after all the miracles they witnessed, they still rejected Christ and refused to be filled by the Spirit

The unforgivable sin is Persistently denying or hardening of your heart against the Deity of God and of his son Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This is called the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit because that’s what is happening when a person rejects Christ. God sends his Holy Spirit to each person to reveal Christ; to make it very clear that Jesus is the Son of God, and the way to salvation.

If we harden our hearts to the Holy spirits revelation then God will turn away from us. We can see this happened to Pharaoh back in Egypt when God sent the 10 plagues to free the Israelites. After the first 7 plagues, the Bible tells us that Pharaoh hardened his hart against God. After that we are told that God Hardened Pharaoh’s heart to show his glory. Be careful of hardening your heart against God when he calls there may come a time where God will harden it for his glory.

Ephesians 4:17-19 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts

The Holy Spirit gives us all the information, and all the evidence we need to be rescued from sin. If we reject Christ in spite of that clear revelation, then we blasphemy the Holy Spirit.

We find that no one comes to the Father unless they are drawn or called

John 6:44 “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up at the last day.

Once you are drawn the father will open your heart to receive his message

Acts 16:14. 'A certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one who worshiped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened to listen to the things which were spoken by Paul'

But not everyone who is called comes. In Jesus parable of the wedding feast we find “many are called, but only a few are chosen.”( Matthew 22: 14). Only those who have been “chosen” and have received Christ will come.

I the case of the pharmacies, during Jesus time, they were called but they did not receive

Author Geoff Ashley wrote, “Blasphemy of the Spirit involves knowledgeable, willful and continued rebellion against the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Pharisees had seen the Spirit working through Christ and yet rejected His utterly obvious work. Their denial was a decided response to the overt testimony of the Spirit. It was not out of ignorance or indecision. To blaspheme the Spirit is to reject the very One Who illuminates our hearts to faith and repentance.”

Sam Storms wrote, “This was not a one-time, momentary slip or inadvertent mistake in judgment, but a persistent, life-long rebellion in the face of inescapable truth. Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is not a careless act but a calloused attitude… Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, therefore, is not just unbelief but unashamed unbelief that arises not from ignorance of what is true but in defiance of what one knows beyond doubt to be true. It is not mere denial, but determined denial; not mere rejection, but wanton, willful, wicked, wide-eyed rebellion.”

**How do you know if you’ve committed the unforgivable sin?** If you are a follower of Jesus, then you don’t need to worry about the unforgivable sin. If you trust in Jesus as God’s payment for your sin, you have nothing to worry about. As Sam Storms wrote, the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is not a one-time action, but an on-going attitude, a lifestyle, a consistent pattern of rejecting the Holy Spirit’s revelation to you that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Remember Romans 8:1, “So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.” If you trust in Christ as your Savior and King, then you have the promise that God has adopted you as His child, and when you die and stand before Christ to be judged, you won’t be condemned, only rewarded.

IF you have not excepted Jesus as your Lord and savior then at some point in your life the Holy Spirit will lovingly reveal Christ to you. This may happen only once or many times but He will make it plain as day that Jesus is the Son of God. He will give you all the evidence you need. And you have a choice. Will you trust in Christ and let Him rescue you? Or will you reject Christ? This may be the last attempt by the holy spirit to reach you. Will you respond? If not, I hope it is not the last time. Do not Harden your heart against God.

If you or someone you know is hardening their heart then pray for them. Pray that God will give them a new heart

Ezekiel 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Be careful of hardening your heart against God when he calls or there may a time where God will harden your heart for his glory like Pharos.

Isaiah 55:6 Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

Some material by **by Andy Manning**