



Truth For These Times



21. WHAT IS THE UNPARDONABLE SIN?

Through the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ many have been made conscious of the gift of eternal life. This reward has appealed to many, and millions have hoped to gain entrance into the promised kingdom. However, many who have desired the promise will not receive it, because they have not fulfilled the necessary conditions.

Matthew 7:22,23 Many will say to Me in that day, “Lord, Lord, HAVE WE NOT PROPHESED IN YOUR NAME, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?” And then I will declare to them, “I NEVER KNEW YOU; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!”

There will be those who profess Christianity but are at last found unworthy to dwell with Christ. WHY?

Matthew 7:21 Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord,” shall enter the kingdom of heaven, BUT HE WHO DOES THE WILL OF MY FATHER IN HEAVEN.

To express love for God by word only is, according to this text, insufficient. Jesus said, “If you love me, keep my commandments.” John 14:15. Those who find commendation in the judgment will be those who have expressed their love by obedience to the will of God. God has given us the Holy Spirit to guide us in the way of correct living. He urges us to obey Bible truth. Our eternal destiny depends upon our relationship to His guidance, for to resist Him leads to danger in Christian living and the possibility of eternal loss.

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.

Here is the unpardonable sin – speaking against the Holy Spirit. There has been a great deal of speculation as to what the unpardonable sin actually is. Some have said it is murder; others say adultery or rape; but this cannot be. Notice Jesus said, “all manner of sin shall be forgiven” and this means any sin you would care to name. King David was forgiven for murder and adultery. Rahab was forgiven when she turned from her life of harlotry. Peter was forgiven for his denial of Christ. Mary Magdelene was forgiven for her licentious ways and Moses was forgiven for killing the Egyptian.



Jesus taught that it is unpardonable to speak against the Holy Spirit.

Isaiah 55:7 LET THE WICKED FORSAKE HIS WAY, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to OUR GOD, FOR HE WILL ABUNDANTLY PARDON.

God is only too willing to forgive, but notice the first condition: the wicked is to forsake his wicked ways.

1 John 1:9 IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, He is faithful and just to FORGIVE US *OUR* SINS and to CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

Here is an indispensable condition for the forgiveness of sins: we must confess them, and if we do, we have God's promise that He will forgive all our sins.

Ephesians 4:30 And DO NOT GRIEVE THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

If all sin can be forgiven, what sin then becomes unpardonable? Grieving the Holy Spirit will lead to the unpardonable sin, for it is His work to guide us on the pathway to eternal life. Without His help we would be deprived of our Guide which we so desperately need.



If we confess our sins – all is forgiven.

How can we grieve the Holy Spirit? Jesus said that to speak blasphemously against the Holy Spirit would not be forgiven. This is what the Jews did when they claimed that Christ's work was of the devil. We can also grieve the Holy Spirit when we resist His convicting and converting influence on the heart and life, for His work is to draw people to Christ.

John 16:8 And when He has come, He will convict the WORLD OF SIN, AND OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND OF JUDGMENT.

Here we see the constant drawing of the Holy Spirit, seeking to impress upon humanity eternal values.

1 John 3:4 Whosoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, for SIN IS LAWLESSNESS.

The Holy Spirit reproves the world of sin – and sin is the breaking of God's law; therefore in order for the Spirit to lead people away from sin, it is necessary for Him to make them conscious of the law of God; for this is what they are breaking when they sin. To resist His convicting power is also to oppose God's commands.

John 16:13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, HE WILL GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.



We can grieve the Holy Spirit by continual rejection of conscience.

The Holy Spirit will guide us to a knowledge of saving truth. He will give us understanding so that we may walk on the pathway of righteousness.

Romans 2:4 Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that THE GOODNESS OF GOD LEADS YOU TO REPENTANCE?

It may be that a person has been convicted of a certain truth which he or she is unaware. Previously the Holy Spirit may have pleaded with them to accept this new light. For example, a person many have come under conviction that the

seventh day, (Saturday) is the true Sabbath and is impressed that God wants this person to keep it holy. But it may be inconvenient – it interferes with business – it cuts across social plans – it disrupts sporting activities. It may mean the loss of income or disapproval of friends and loved ones. The person counts the cost and says, “No Lord, I cannot take that step.” So the Spirit of God is grieved, but this does not mean the person is lost, for the Spirit will repeat the process. The person may be kept awake at night, the conscience urging acceptance of God’s truth. Ultimately the person will respond and take the step of commitment, or will tragically say, NO, for the last time. God will forgive any sin, but if a person continues to grieve the Holy Spirit by resisting His conviction there will eventually come a point of no return.

Acts 24:25 Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, “Go away for now; WHEN I HAVE A CONVENIENT TIME I WILL CALL FOR YOU.”

A person may not obey God’s commandments because he or she has not yet come under conviction – only God has the right to judge each case, but on the other hand, there are many who will be lost who believed truth, but neglected to obey it. Then there are others like Felix who waited for a more convenient time, but Felix never called on Paul again – the more convenient time never came. How successful the devil has been in tempting souls to put off to a future time their acceptance of Christ.



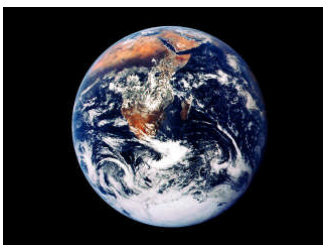
When the Spirit speaks to us we dare not resist.

Hebrews 2:3 HOW SHALL WE ESCAPE IF WE NEGLECT SO GREAT A SALVATION, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*.

There is no time more convenient than when we first learn the truth of the scripture. This is the time when the conscience is most tender and responsive to the pleas of the Holy Spirit. If we neglect the early convictions, the conscience may become hardened.

Mark 8:36,37 FOR WHAT WILL IT PROFIT A MAN IF HE GAINS THE WHOLE WORLD, AND LOSES HIS OWN SOUL? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

James 4:14,17 Whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow. For WHAT IS YOUR LIFE? IT IS EVEN A VAPOR that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do *it*, to him it is sin.



What use is it if we gain the whole world but lose our soul because we resist God’s leading?

So many have their values all mixed up. Eternal things are often secondary or even last. This world and our lives will pass away – we are as vapor – but what God offers is eternal. So many plan to do God’s will – someday – but firstly the things of this life occupy the attention. The delay excuse may be a business proposition that needs to be finalised, or bills need to be settled or it could be one of a thousand different reasons. Many procrastinate – they put off the day of decision, until it is TOO LATE.

2 Corinthians 6:2 For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." BEHOLD, NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME; BEHOLD, NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION.

There is no better time than now. If we delay – if we put it off – we are weakening the voice of God's Spirit in our lives.

Isaiah 30:21 YOUR EARS SHALL HEAR A WORD BEHIND YOU, SAYING, "THIS IS THE WAY, WALK IN IT," Whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left.



The more we resist, the weaker the Spirit's voice is to our minds.

The Spirit works through the Word of God and our conscience. If we remain responsive we will readily respond to the convictions. It will be as though we could hear the voice of the Spirit saying "This is the way – walk in it."

But if we continually refuse to respond, the conscience will become weaker until finally, we will no longer hear the voice of God's Spirit. It will be like a person who has failed to respond to an alarm clock. The bell will ring but the sleeper will not hear it. Likewise, if we train our minds not to respond to the wakening call of the Holy Spirit, in time we will not hear Him at all. We would be left in silence – without God's voice in the conscience. Some have mistaken this silence for peace, but it is not the peace of mind the Bible speaks of – rather it is like the peace of a scorched forest after a devastating bush fire. It is peaceful and still – but dead.

1 Timothy 4:1,2 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, HAVING THEIR OWN CONSCIENCE SEARED WITH A HOT IRON.

The person who has such a conscience is past feeling – past response to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. A seared conscience has no feeling, it is like a dead radio. Radio waves may be all around but the dead radio cannot detect them. Some minds have developed this way so that they can no longer hear the pleading voice of God. There is no desire to repent, no desire to follow truth. Such a person has indeed committed the unpardonable sin. The fact that a person is concerned shows that they are not guilty, for those who are guilty are in no way concerned. The one who is somewhat fearful gives evidence that he or she can feel the Holy Spirit convicting them: therefore they have not committed the unpardonable sin.



Walk in the light while you have it.

John 12:35 Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. WALK WHILE YOU HAVE THE LIGHT, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going."

If we walk in the light of truth we know and understand, then we are safe. The solution for successful Christian living is to never say NO to God. It is so easy to rationalize away Bible truth – so easy to make excuses for not obeying God, but on the day of judgment such excuses will only be empty words. It can only lead to disaster if we draw back from the convicting influence of the Holy Spirit. True happiness, and peace of mind can only be found in obeying the voice of God's Spirit.

Dear friend, don't ever slight another opportunity. Listen to the voice of mercy as He pleads with your heart. Don't let pride or unbelief lead you to reject the truth God has made known to you. Those who do will lament at last saying "The harvest is past, the summer is ended and we are not saved." Jeremiah 8:20. On the other hand the committed Christian will discover that "all things work together for good to those who love God." Romans 8:28. They will find that the blessings of God will more than compensate for any sacrifice the truth of God calls for. Our faithful Shepherd will guide, protect and see us safely through.

The unpardonable sin is the sin we refuse to confess. If we do not respond to the Holy Spirit's conviction then we will refuse to confess our sin, which means it is not forgiven. The sin against the Holy Spirit is not forgiven. Not because God will not forgive sin, but because the person does not want forgiveness and refuses to ask for it. The person therefore severs connection with God because of the rejection of the Holy Spirit's pleadings. Friend, God speaks to you with love in His voice; the love that was demonstrated at Calvary, and He says, "Come, follow me." Are you one of His sheep? If you follow him all the way then He will guide you safely to your eternal home.

Review Sheet – The Unpardonable Sin

ASSIGNMENT: Read the Bible study carefully before answering the following questions.

1. In the judgment what does Christ say to many professed Christians? Matthew 7:22,23
And then I will declare to them _____: _____, _____
_____.
2. On what point did they fail in their Christianity? Matthew 7:21
Enter the kingdom of heaven, but _____
_____.
3. What is the unpardonable sin? Matthew 12:31,32
But whoever _____
_____.
4. Why do we repent of our sins? Romans 2:4
Answer: _____
5. How did Felix put off the conviction of the Holy Spirit? Acts 24:25
Answer: _____
6. Is this life more important than eternal life? When should we respond? 2 Corinthians 6:2;
Mark 8:36,37
Answer: _____
7. If we are genuine, how will we know the pathway of truth? Isaiah 30:21
Answer _____
8. What constitutes the counterfeit peace of Jesus? When does it happen?
Answer: _____

9. What eventually happens to the conscience which continually rejects the Spirit's pleadings?
1 Timothy 4:1,2
Speaking lies in hypocrisy, _____
_____;
10. As the light of truth is revealed to us what should we do? John 12:35
Walk _____, _____
_____:
11. What are some of the saddest words that will ever be spoken? Jeremiah 8:20
Answer: _____
12. What will the unpardonable sin ultimately be? (See last paragraph of lesson.)
Answer: _____

Do you plan to walk in the light the Holy Spirit has revealed to you? YES _____ NO _____