

# The Unpardonable Sin: Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit

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Well, the question that I want to deal with tonight is one concerning the unpardonable sin, or the unforgivable sin. What else is it called? Blaspheming the Holy Spirit. Right.

First, what is that? I mean, we hear about the unpardonable sin. I think that title speaks volumes, right? We're talking about a sin that can be committed, where basically there's a point of no return. What we're talking about is this: I think we all recognize that if we die without Christ, we die in our sin, and there's no hope. But what the unpardonable sin teaches us is that there's actually a point of no return that people can get to during their life, before they die. In other words, they can do something that puts them in the category, even while they're alive, of hopelessness where there is no longer forgiveness. There is no longer any pardon for sin.

Bunyan, he talked about - in the Interpreter's house - he talked about a man in the iron cage, a man who becomes so caged because of something he has done in his life that there's no way out. There's no hope. Hopelessness. It's actually possible for a man or a woman to come to a place in their life where even though they have physical life and breath, even though they are capable of continuing to enjoy blue skies and sunny days and beautiful mountain scenery, they are unsavable. That's what we mean by an unpardonable or an unforgivable sin. It is possible to reach the point of no return.

So, I mean, that's what it is. But I guess the next question would be is that even a biblical concept? Is there such a thing as an unpardonable sin? And of course we can go to either Matthew, Mark, or Luke to find accounts of what our Lord said concerning this. I want to deal with Mark's account: Mark Chapter 3, verse 22. This is what Jesus said. "The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying..." This is what the scribes are saying right here, and they're saying this about Jesus, "'He is possessed by Beelzebul,' and 'by the prince of demons he casts out the demons.'" So you see this: His enemies are accusing Him of casting demons out by demons -- that He has the prince of demons, and by the prince of demons he's casting out demons. So they're basically saying that the Spirit that Jesus has is an evil spirit, and an evil spirit casts out these demons. "And He called them to Him and said to them in parables" So Jesus calls these people that are saying this about Him. He calls them over to Him. "And He said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan?" First, He's just going after the logic of what they're saying. He's saying, "This doesn't make sense, guys! Satan is not going to cast out Satan." "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his good, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house." So He talks about the logic of it - just that it's foolish to think that any kingdom can stand on the premise that they're saying He's casting out demons by the prince of demons. He's saying, "It doesn't work!" "Guys, if you just were using logic, you would see that it doesn't work."

But now He goes beyond the logic of the matter, and He hits at the sin behind what they are doing. Listen to what He says, Mark 3:28. "Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never," - did you get that word? "Never has forgiveness." Never, in other words, if you blaspheme the Spirit, you never... Over in Mark, in Matthew rather, Matthew Chapter 12 He says, "Not in this age or in the one to come." When you commit such a sin, there is never forgiveness but this person is guilty of an eternal sin. Wow! It's not only called an unpardonable sin or an unforgivable sin. It's an eternal sin. Which means for eternity no forgiveness - ever!

And then in verse 30, He says this. He wants to show what their blasphemy is. "For they were saying, 'He has an unclean spirit.'" So, what's blaspheming the Spirit? I mean, what is this? Clearly, we see it. We've got people who are saying that the Spirit by which Jesus casts out demons is an evil spirit and in so doing, they were blaspheming the Spirit. Now, Jesus doesn't tell us precisely whether these guys had crossed over the line or whether he was warning them that they could still fall back. And of course a crowd is made up of more than one individual. Some, no doubt, had gone further in this sin than others. Maybe some had crossed the line and some hadn't. It doesn't really say but the warning is: There is a sin that there never is forgiveness for. So is the concept biblical? Absolutely. Absolutely. And can you imagine anything more terrifying than just coming to a place where it's all over. Your doom is sealed. Now, I realize probably that most of the people that commit this they may not recognize that they have committed it. But we can look at it, and we can recognize the fearfulness of it, the terror of coming to a place where you have so grievously sinned, that's it. It's all over.

I mean, you think about it. You guys ever heard somebody say or you've heard it somewhere... some person will say to another person or they'll say about somebody "I can't forgive them." We've had people visit the church like that. That they're just... I remember one woman that visited the church and she just said... "My, my stepfather did such things that I could never forgive him!" If a person says that to you, "I could never forgive you!" Well, sometimes time changes that, right? I mean, sometimes when somebody says, "I can never forgive you," they say it in the heat of passion. And you know what? If somebody can't forgive me, I can probably find somebody in life that can forgive me. I mean, you see what I'm saying? It's the kind of thing where if you can't forgive me, well, that doesn't totally destroy my life because I can go find people that are okay with me. That still can be fulfilling in my life.

But let me tell you this. When God says, "NEVER forgiveness," where are you going to go? I mean, when you're talking in a spiritual realm, when you're talking heaven or hell, when you're talking life and death, when God says never, God doesn't change His mind because time goes by. And it's not like if He says, "I don't forgive you," that you're going to go find somebody that can forgive you or somebody that's going to be fulfilling in your life and somebody that's got an eternity to offer you outside of what God offers. You see the total hopelessness of it? It is utter hopelessness. Jesus is saying something that is just... It's fearful. It's terrifying. It's something to be taken... as real. It's something to be trembled at. It really is. This is fearful, and it's true. It's biblical.

Well, you know what happened last night? I think a number of you who were there... I asked the church, "How many of you have, have at some point in life, feared the fact that you've committed the unpardonable sin? How many of you have ever struggled with that? How many of

you, either before you were saved or after you were saved thought maybe you had committed the unpardonable sin?" I would say, I estimated probably a third of the people in our church have struggled with that. I know I've struggled with that. And so I realize that this is a big... This is a big problem: People thinking that they've committed it.

Well, here's the thing. It is a sin that can be committed. But probably, out of those third of those people last night that said they've struggled with it, I think the vast majority of them are Christians! There was a point in my life when I struggled with it, but God brought me on to a place where I had great assurance and great confidence that I had NOT committed it when I thought I had. I know that... John Bunyan struggled with that. I know that Martin Luther struggled with that. So, it seems like this is a common problem and we can understand why it might be. Satan does not want people saved for starters. And then people that are saved, he doesn't want them to have confidence. He wants them to live in unbelief. Because in unbelief there is weakness. And so he wants lost people to stay in unbelief. Because he doesn't want them saved. He wants them damned. And then when people do come to Christ, he wants them weak. So he's always trying to accomplish those two things.

And you can imagine that if there is indeed an unpardonable sin, Satan is the father of lies. He is a liar. He is a slanderer. You know how discouraging it is. You can imagine how much of a struggle it can be for somebody who falls into that temptation of believing they've committed the unpardonable sin when they HAVEN'T! Because it's such a hopeless condition! And so you can imagine how effective it is for the Devil to come along and say to somebody however he whispers, however our conscience picks up on his voice, But he comes along and he whispers to us "You've committed the unpardonable sin." And he's a liar, when we haven't committed it. And we KNOW he does it because we know how many people there are out there that struggled with it and then God delivered them, brought them through that. I have no doubts in my mind that it was demonic and that it is very probably very often demonically inspired. These thoughts that we've committed the unpardonable sin, when indeed we haven't!

And so I say I think it's a big problem. And you can see how the devil would use this. He comes along and he whispers to people "You've committed the unpardonable sin." He's trying to move that person into depression and despair. And to keep them in that state of hopelessness. And just whispering to them, "You've committed it. You've committed it." And then also to lie to us about even the nature of it. Telling us, "See, you had a wicked thought about the Holy Spirit." "You had a blasphemous thought about the Holy Spirit." And we're like "Oh yeah, we did. Man, we've committed it. Now there's no hope." I mean, you know, when you're in that state. It's despair, hopelessness! You're not strong. You're not walking in faith. You're not walking in joy. So, it's a real issue.

And I actually fell into struggling with this after I was saved. I'm now saved and I'm hungry for the Word of God and I'm reading through Scripture and it's at that point I came to it and thought, "Whoa! There's an unpardonable sin!" And suddenly it was like the devil was right there. "Yeah, and you're going to commit it." And then it's like, "Oh no! Oh no! I'm not going to let any blasphemous thoughts about the Holy Spirit..." I actually was on my knees on the floor, with my head against the wall saying, "NO NO NO NO!" Trying not to think! And here's the devil... You know how it is - the Devil can come along and speak and he can put blasphemous thoughts in our head. And so here he is telling me, "Oh, there's this unpardonable sin and you're going to

commit it. You're going to commit it the second you have a blasphemous thought about the Spirit." And then he's trying to stick the thought in my head! And I'm saying, "No, no, no!" I mean, what are you going to do? Live your whole life like that? "No, no, no!" You think you can't even let this thought even cross... And BOOM, there it was! And I came off my knees and said, "That's it! I've committed it." Was that even what it is? You see, the thing is, I know because he is such a liar, and because he is so crafty, and because this is in his arsenal, to use against those that might be coming to Christ or those that have already come, and he just throws it out there as a snare to cause them to stumble. I think it's very valid. It's something that we really genuinely need to deal with. And if a third of the people in our church have dealt with it, it's very likely that a third of the listeners of I'll Be Honest have probably struggled with it.

Here's the thing that I want us to consider. Now you think about this. These scribes and these pharisees committed an unpardonable sin. What was it? Well, Mark tells us in Mark 3:30 "They were saying, He has an unclean spirit." But, it's not like they looked at Jesus and they said, "Well, we don't really know Him... And He's doing supernatural things and it could be demonic." There's a place for that. There's a place when you don't know about somebody And apparently they're doing supernatural things. This doesn't mean that we just need to throw all discernment out the window. And lest we say that something could be demonic I mean... you've got guys out there that are healing all the time. That doesn't mean that we can't be discerning and come along and look at something and say, "That may be of the Devil." You've got false prophets running around and doing all sorts of things! These guys were not looking at Jesus As somebody who they really didn't know anything about. That's what you have to understand. Their sin was very aggravated.

Let me just shoot few a few things. Let this kind of impact you. Jesus told the parable... Now you can do with this what you want. Matthew 21, Jesus told a parable about this master of the house Who planted a vineyard. He put a fence around it. He dug a wine press in it, built a tower, leased it to tenants, and went into another country. When the season for fruit grew near, He sent his servants to the tenants to get his fruit, And the tenants took his servants and beat one, killed another, stoned another. Again he sent other servants more than the first. They did the same to them. Finally, he sent his son to them, Saying, "They will respect my son." But when the tenants saw the son, They said to themselves, "This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance and they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him."

Let me ask you a question. Do you get the feeling from that parable that the enemies of Christ knew that He was the heir? It's interesting. About three weeks ago, I was at a conference with Don Johnson. Don told me straight up. He said that, "I believe the Jews knew." "Those Jews that killed Him, those leaders." He told me. He said he believes they knew. That Jesus was the Christ. That's very interesting. That's very interesting. And I was thinking about this. I thought you know what? That parable right there seems to indicate that they knew.

You say, "Would that be the only indicator from the Scriptures that they knew?" Well, there are others. How about this: John 11:47, "So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, "What are we to do? For this man performs many signs." They saw it! You notice they didn't get together and say, "This guy... This guy is a false prophet and he's a quack and he claims to save but it's all staged" Like some people we might know are guilty of who claim to heal on television, those on Trinity Broadcasting Network. They didn't say that! You

notice what they said? "This guy is doing signs." They didn't deny it. And then they said, "If we let Him go on like this, EVERYONE will believe in Him!" You notice what they are saying? They're acknowledging He is doing such legitimate miracles that it's very likely if we allow this to keep going, everybody is going to believe in Him. That's pretty amazing!

How about this? John 18:4. "Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to Him came forward and said to them, "Whom do you seek?" They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am He." Judas, who betrayed Him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, "I am He," "They fell to the ground." Okay. They're going to take Him! And Jesus says, "I am He." Put yourself in that place! Even if you're His enemy, and you put yourself in that place -- you're coming to take Him. Because they've been planning to destroy Him, right? You want to get Him. You want to destroy Him. And you go to get Him, and when He says "I am," you all fall on your backs. Aren't you going to get up and say, "Maybe we ought to rethink this"?

How about this? Matthew 28:11 "Behold, some of the guard went into the city and told the chief priests all that had taken place." These aren't Jesus' followers. These are Roman guards, and they go in there, and they say "Angels came. They rolled this thing back. Jesus came out of the grave." These are pagans! These guys have nothing to gain by lying. And you notice what happens: "When they had assembled with the elders and taken counsel, they gave a sufficient sum of money to the soldiers." There the leaders bought them off! They didn't say "That is such a crazy story, nobody is going to believe it."

I guarantee you this: They were greedy. Jesus said they were greedy. They would not have parted with their money had this thing just sounded so foolish nobody would have believed it. They came with a legitimate account And these guys didn't say "It didn't happen!" They bought them off and said, "Say, 'His disciples came and stole the body.'" They weren't saying, "The disciples must have done it - That's the only logical explanation." They said, "Say that." You see where I'm going with all this? These guys knew! They knew it!

How about this? John 12:9 "When a large crowd of Jews learned that Jesus was there they came. Not only on account of Him, but also to see Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead. So the chief priests made plans TO PUT LAZARUS TO DEATH as well, because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus." Now, isn't that amazing? Look, if you say, "He didn't rise from the dead." You don't go kill him. Right? If you knew that there was enough of a credible account to discredit Jesus, you don't go put Lazarus to death. You know why they wanted to put Lazarus to death? They knew he was dead. You know how they knew he was dead? In John 11, when it took place, some of their henchmen, their spies, were there. He had been dead for four days. And it says they went to the Jewish leaders right away and told the report. These guys knew it! They knew it!

What am I getting at with all these? There was a man of the Pharisees... You remember what his name was, there in John Chapter 3? His name was Nicodemus. And when Nicodemus, one of the Pharisees, came to Him, he said, "We know you are a man sent from God." Did he not say that? And who is the "we" collectively speaking about? It's the Jewish leaders. It's the Pharisees. I mean, what's he talking about there? They obviously had gotten together. And in their conversations, they realized, "We know. We know!" "Something is happening! This guy is raising the dead. This guy is doing such miracles!" And Jesus Himself said, "If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have

seen and hated both Me and My Father." You see what He is saying? They have seen. They have seen the QUALITY of miracles I'm doing. They have seen the GLORY of these things. They have seen the EXTENSIVENESS. They have seen the VAST MULTITUDES that have been healed. And what have they done? Their response isn't that they have been able to disprove my works. Their response is just one of such bitter hatred that no matter how much light is shown to them, their hatred trumps the day.

And you know what? Even in the place where you see very clearly, Some of these guys, they were coming right out and it was public they were believing. But you know what? They would not follow Christ, and they would not commit themselves. You know why? They loved the glory of man more than the glory of God. That's what it says! It says they knew. They knew He was the Christ! But because they feared being thrown out of the synagogue, they would not own Him. And yes there were some of those leaders, They said they didn't believe. But I'll tell you this, it says they COULD NOT believe. Because having had so much information, so much glories set before them, they would not believe. And they got to the place where they could not believe. And it was a fulfillment of what Isaiah said, and God had hardened them. And God was not going to allow them to believe. They had come to that place where it was no longer... going to be able... "Though He had done..." This is in John 12. "Though He had done so many signs before them, they still did not believe in Him. So that the word spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled, Lord, who has believed what he have heard... Or what he heard from us? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they COULD NOT believe. For again Isaiah said, He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts lest they see with their eyes and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them."

You see, they rejected so much light it became a fulfillment of Isaiah. They cannot believe. And I believe that right there is the very sin. They had gone over. They had gone past. They rejected too much light. So you see, why do I go through all that? For one, it's not when somebody SAYS a blasphemous thing about the Holy Spirit, necessarily. That's not the picture that we're getting. It's not, "Well, in my lost days, I had heard about the unpardonable sin because my parents took me to church, and just in defiance, I went home and I said you know, 'blankety blank Spirit of God.'" That doesn't seem to be the picture here. This seems to be such an aggravated rejection of light... Now look! It's not like this is just simply rejecting the Spirit of God your whole life like this, And that that's what the unpardonable sin is, it's just rejecting, rejecting, rejecting, And then you die like that and now you've sealed your fate. That's not the idea. The idea is, clearly from Jesus. That you get to a point where you have rejected light and that's it! Even though you still have physical life left. That's it! There's never forgiveness.

You know what? You take these over against another Pharisee. Isn't it... Have you guys ever noticed this? Isn't it interesting that Paul, when he was talking about the fact that he was granted mercy, He actually says this, First Timothy 1:13: "Though formerly I was a blasphemer..." He was a blasphemer. You say, "Well, did he blaspheme the Holy Spirit?" Well, you blaspheme Jesus and you know, are you going to say that blaspheming one person in the Trinity is not felt by all of them? I'm not saying he committed this unpardonable sin. I'm just saying he was a blasphemer and he blasphemed God. Obviously in a way that was felt by the Spirit of God. He was a persecutor. He was insolent. But he says this, "I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly, in unbelief." You see the ignorance? Paul was a Pharisee, but

he acted in a way where there was ignorance. Over against what? Over against somebody that doesn't act in ignorance. You see, when lost, pagan, Roman soldiers come to you and say "Angels came down and they rolled back the stone! And we fell like dead men. And Jesus came alive out of the tomb!" Or, there's Lazarus alive. You see, that's not ignorant.

So, there you have that. And then, of course, we have some similar verses in the Scriptures, too. You have 1 John 5 and you have John talking about a sin that leads to death. In other words, a person in life commits a sin the end of which is death. In other words, there is no forgiveness. He doesn't give us a lot of detail about what it is, But he just acknowledges that there is a sin that is unto death, That you shouldn't pray about those kind of situations. There are people in life not to pray for. Jeremiah was told to stop praying for people. There is a time when you have situations where you don't want to cast your pearls before swine. Or cast your prayers before God when it's for people who have come to a place where they've committed a sin that leads unto death. Of course we have: Hebrews 6, Hebrews 10, we need to read those. Hebrews 6:4 "It is impossible in the case of those who have once been enlightened..."

But you see this? Now, check this out! I want to pinpoint some things here, because sometimes people see these as being radically different, possibly, than the unpardonable sin that's mentioned in the three gospels. But there is so much in common, and I want you to see it. Watch this: "It is impossible..." There's our 'Never.' "It is impossible in the case of those who have once been enlightened." You see, it's not ignorance. Bright light has been shined, just like with these scribes that rejected Christ in all the light! These people have been enlightened.

Now, it doesn't necessarily mean that you walked with Christ, and that you talked with Christ. But you've been enlightened to the truth of Christ. Whether it was by Him directly or by those who heard from Him, or by those that heard from those that heard from Him! In other words, either the light you got from Him or the light you got from his apostles or the light you got from those who know about the apostles' writings, namely the Word of God, They were enlightened. They've tasted the Heavenly Gift. You see, they've seen something of the power of God. They've shared in the Holy Spirit!

It's very interesting. The Holy Spirit comes in again. They blasphemed the Spirit. Now you've got the Holy Spirit, and He's involved here. He has been active in their life. Just like over there... the Holy Spirit was working through Jesus, And they looked at it, and they said, "It's an evil Spirit." Here, you've got the Spirit involved as well. These people have shared in the workings of the Spirit. They've tasted the goodness of the Word of God, The powers of the age to come, and then have fallen away... You see, it's a rejection of Holy Spirit light, Just like it was with those scribes. "And then have fallen away, It's impossible to restore them again to repentance." It's done. There's your "never!" It's impossible. They've reached a threshold - a point of no return. "Since they are crucifying once again the Son of God to their own harm, holding Him up to contempt." Then you have Hebrews 10:26. "For if we go on sinning..." There's the rejection. You go on sinning. You choose sin over Christ. If you go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth...

There it is. That's our enlightenment, like we saw over in Hebrews 6. A knowledge of the truth. You come face-to-face with light. If you go on sinning deliberately after you come face-to-face with that light, after you received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer - there's our never - there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of

judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries. And you know what it says in verse 29? "And has outraged the Spirit of grace" You notice how the Spirit is there again. That is really, really important. And then another one that is worth mentioning here Would be 2 Peter 2:20 "For if after they have escaped the defilements of the world..." You see, they've pulled back from the world to where they are looking at the light, at the truth. For a season they own Christ. For a season, they walk in that light. "If after they have escaped the defilements of the world, through the knowledge" - there's the knowledge - there's the light, again. There's the knowledge of the truth. "The knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, And they are again entangled in them" - the defilements. They are going and sinning deliberately like we saw in Hebrews 10. And they are overcome by these things. "The last state has become worse for them than the first. It would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them."

Well, here's the thing. The Spirit of God is outraged. The Spirit of God is rejected. The Spirit of God is blasphemed. You see it in these texts. Well, why is that so critical? Well, look. Let me tell you this. You and everybody else in this world can be forgiven of sin if we repent. Didn't Peter say it? That if you repent, your sins are going to be washed. They'll be blotted out. You see, if you don't repent, you will likewise perish. That's what Jesus said. But where there is repentance, there is forgiveness. But let me ask you this. When Jesus was getting ready to leave this world, He said, "I'm going to send the Comforter. I'm going to send One, and He's going to come into this world, and He's going to do something. He's going to be in the business of doing something." You find it there in the sixteenth chapter of John. What is He going to do? What is going to be one of His operations in the world? Can you think of anything? He's going to convict men of sin. He's going to convict men of righteousness.

And I have to think, it's the righteous standard that God demands of men. And that man can't fulfill on their own. That Jesus did fulfill. And He's going to convict men of judgment. And I would have to believe the righteousness of it, the certainty of it. The fear of it. That's what happens to men right before they get saved. They come to see themselves as sinners. They come to see themselves as naked, needing a righteousness they can't provide. They come to see themselves as due objects of God's wrath. And the Spirit convicts. But when you outrage the Spirit. When you blaspheme the Spirit. When you... when you grieve that Spirit, to the place where He... He comes to a place where He will not do that in your life. You're dead. You're a dead man. You are in a place of hopelessness, if once you come to a place where the Spirit of God draws the line and says, "That's it. No more." You see, if there's no conviction, you will die in your sin. Nobody gets saved unless the Spirit of God does a convicting work that leads a man to repentance. And without repentance, you will die in your sins. It's all over! It's absolutely all over! It's the end. Listen. The unpardonable sin. The sin that leads unto death is where we so resist and reject the light of the Spirit of God that it grieves Him so thoroughly that He withdraws from ever bringing into that individual convicting power. So that they are never able to repent and be forgiven.

And you know what? Bunyan dealt with this same thing because he had gone through it. And I can tell you, when he wrote his Pilgrim's Progress and he described in the Interpreter's House the man in the iron cage, Listen to how he describes... Listen to what the man in the iron cage said and you tell me whether Bunyan hasn't come to the same conclusion, that this



unpardonable sin is exactly what I'm telling you. Listen. The man in the iron cage says this: "I left off to watch and be sober." He drifted Like we've been talking about in Hebrews, Chapter 2. He went to deliberately sinning. Or - as with those scribes - deliberately rejecting Christ even when the Light said Lazarus DID rise from the dead and more than that, Jesus DID rise from the dead. And these Roman soldiers know that it happened. And we've seen such miracles as no man has ever done! You see, they despised the light. The man in the iron cage says, "I left off to watch and be sober. I laid the reins upon the neck of my lusts." You know one thing that was said about the Jewish leaders? Pilate knew they had turned Jesus over to him, for what reason? Envy. They were pursuing their passions. This guy says, "I laid the reins upon the neck of my lusts. I sinned against the light of the Word and the goodness of God. I have grieved the Spirit and He is gone. I tempted the Devil and he has come to me. I have provoked God to anger and He has left me. I have so hardened my heart that I cannot repent."

Isn't that exactly what Isaiah had prophesied? That John says there in John 12 came to pass with these guys? "God hath denied me repentance" You see he's saying all that we've been saying. He grieved the Spirit. God is now denying repentance. And he says this, "His Word gives me no encouragement to believe." What do we think? Do we think we can just sin at will and come any time we want to God's Word and find that it's going to convict us so that we run to Him in repentance? What happens when you get to the place where the Spirit has so thoroughly withdrawn and your heart is so hard, You look at God's Word and it means nothing to you? You see, that's what Bunyan is describing. "His word gives me no encouragement to believe. He has shut me up in this iron cage. Nor can all the men in the world let me out. Oh, eternity, eternity! How shall I grapple with the misery that I must meet with in eternity?" Okay. We just... We need to come to this place because I think we've verified the fact that there is such a thing and we've looked at what it is.

But then, we have to recognize this: Okay, it's true that some people have committed it. It's a real sin! And there are people who have committed it! And Hebrews, if Hebrew is anything, It's a book that warns us against coming to the place where we cross that line. It's a real danger. But then we also have to wrestle with this: Men -- whether it's their own heart or whether it's the Devil's temptations -- often come to believe they've committed it, when they have not committed it. And so, how can we help people that may have gotten to that place? What can we say? Well, I think one thing that we want to say is to anybody that thinks they've committed it, they really need to look at these things that I've been talking about, about what it really is. So that the guy like me who just thinks it's a thought that comes through your mind that's blasphemous, That may be nothing more than the whisperings of the Devil. Not even anything that you're wilfully bringing up and dredging up out of your own heart.

Again, it's like in Pilgrim's Progress, you remember Christian walking through the Valley of the Shadow of Death and these little demonic imps are coming up and speaking things in his ear. That he actually thought was his own heart. Then he came to realize it was actually demonic. Well, how are we going to help people that are having that very thing? The Devil is coming up and he's whispering, "You've committed the unpardonable sin. You've committed it because you had this crazy thought. And if you haven't had the crazy thought, I'm going to put one in your head right now to make you think you've had the crazy thought!" How do we help

people like that? How do we help them differentiate over against... Well, I think the first thing is to look at...

You know, one of the things that happens is this: People will go to Hebrews, Chapter 10, and they'll say, "Look, it says that if I'm exposed to the light, and I've been enlightened, and I sin deliberately after that, there's nothing but a fearful expectation of judgment. This fiery indignation and fury of fire. That God is going to meet out or dish out to His adversaries. And they say... I mean, brethren! That's fearful! And we get people all the time that get exposed to truth and then sin deliberately! I mean, what happens when somebody comes to us and they say, "I don't know if I've committed the unpardonable sin or not."

Hey, let me tell you this. I suspect, probably more times than we know, people do commit the unpardonable sin. And they may come to a point of no return. So the last thing you want to tell somebody. When they come to you like that is that you know for certain that they HAVEN'T committed it. The fact is, there is such a sin. And people do commit it. And you don't want to simply try to sooth people by telling them they haven't. And I'll tell you this -- If their conscience is bound to the Word of God, your words aren't going to help them. Because as much as you tell them, "Well, I don't think you've committed it." If they've got a conscience that's sensitive to the Word of God and they go to Hebrews 10 and they look at it, and they say, "You can say that all day long, but look! It says that if I sin deliberately after I've come to this knowledge of this truth and been enlightened and I've tasted of these things. It says there's no hope. I can't be saved!" And so, you don't want to just come and tell them.

So what should we tell them? Look, what I would tell them is this. You need to remember this, "Truth sets free." And so, if the devil is at work, He's the father of lies. It's truth that sets free. Now there's a place to say to people, "Look, now if you were exposed to great amounts of light and you went and sinned deliberately, I'm not going to tell you that's not a fearful place. Because I'd be lying to you. I'd be right there next to the father of lies if I told you that. Because that's not what God says in His Word. God says in His Word: It would have been better for you to never have known than if you're like this dog that goes back to its vomit. It's a very dangerous place. and I'm not going to tell you it's not!"

But what do we tell people? We tell people the truth. And here's the truth. One thing that you would want to say is this. "My friend, there is only one way to be saved." You see, that's the truth. There is only one way to Heaven. You can say to the person, "Whether you have committed this unpardonable sin or not, I can't tell you for certain. And the truth is, I don't think you know for certain. And I don't think you can know." And you know what most people are going to come and are going to say is, "I'm afraid I've committed it." Very rarely do you get somebody who comes along like the man in the iron cage who is going to say to you, "I know I've committed it, And I know there's no help, And I'm in such despair." And they just walk away to their ruin. You may find somebody like that, But typically, it's somebody that comes to you and says, "I'm afraid I've committed it!" Okay, if you're afraid you've committed it, what you're telling me is that you don't know that you have. And I don't know that you have. And I can tell you this. That from where you are right now, There is only, for all of us, only one path to Heaven. There's only one. And now, I might come along and say, "My friend, I want you to think about something. Are there children of God that have sinned deliberately?" Yeah, like every one. And the Bible

makes provision for it. "Little children, I write to you that you sin not, But if you sin, you do have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

So, here's the thing: The first thing that you would say to somebody is, "There is provision for those who have been exposed to great amounts of light when they sin." Right? I mean, "little children" isn't that an assumption that those are people that have been exposed to massive amounts of light? And he doesn't say it's hopeless. He says there is provision. So you need to understand this: When Hebrews 10 says, "If we go on sinning..." You notice how the ESV says, "If we GO ON sinning"? And they translate it that way because the verb implies ongoing rejection of light. It's not the kind of thing where you fall. The righteous man does fall seven times. He'll rise. But the assumption there is that a righteous man can fall seven times.

Let me ask you this: Do you think there was something premeditated and willful when David looked at a naked lady? You know what? He could have looked and had this sin up here and said, "Wow, she was really nice looking," and entertained wicked thoughts, and put it to a stop right there. You think there was anything premeditated and purposeful when he said to his servants, "I want you to go over to the house of Uriah, and there is a woman there, and I want you to bring her back here."? You think he had premeditated thoughts? Do you think he sinned purposely? Certainly, he did! Listen! Peter was told he would sin and said, "I will not." And he went and did it. And he not only did it once, and then twice, he did it three times. He was told he was going to do it, and after he had done it twice, he still went and did it a third time. Well, why would I bring that up? Not to encourage sin. But to show...

Listen my friend, not only is there provision made for sin in the lives of those exposed to much light, there are specific examples in Scripture. Now, because there are, and you don't know for certain you've committed the unpardonable sin, rather than you endlessly trying to convince yourself that you have... Peter found in Christ, One who said three times to him, (one for every time he denied Him) "Peter, do you love Me?" God came to David and said, "Thou art the man." But He didn't say, "Be damned." David would write a Psalm saying, "Blessed is the man against whom the Lord does not count his iniquities." You don't know for certain that you've committed this thing. And you have examples in the Scriptures of people who have very willfully sinned and been forgiven and pardoned.

And I know this: That there's only one way to God. And it's by coming to Jesus Christ. Look. Repent. If you repent, you'll be forgiven. Jesus said, "If you come to Me, I won't cast you out." And you say, "How does that work? What if I commit the unpardonable sin and then I go to Jesus? He has to cast me out." No, don't you realize? Didn't you hear? When you so grieved the Spirit that you commit the unpardonable sin, The Spirit isn't going to work conviction in your life to cause you to want to flee to Christ. Your very desire to want to flee and jump in His arms is indication you have an open door to go! Jesus says, "If you will, come! If you're thirsty, drink! If you're hungry, eat!" He said, "If you need rest, I will give it, if you come to Me. Him that comes, I'll never cast out." That's what He says! So, listen. If the Spirit of God is so working in your heart that you have any desire in there to go, then you go. Look, you're giving genuine indication that the Spirit of God is active.

As I said last night, I think this is so... I love this. It's like Charles Leiter asked Conrad Murrell one time, "Can somebody lose their salvation?" And Conrad said, "You can if you do." Well you understand: Scripture talks about shipwreck. That doesn't mean you can lose God's

salvation. But clearly there are people in Scripture that receive the Gospel gladly and then fall away. Matthew 13 tells us that. Clearly, there are people like Hymenaeus and Alexander who make shipwreck of the faith. Clearly, there are warnings in Hebrews 6 and 10 and other places that ought to be taken seriously. Because people can make shipwreck of the faith. They can drift away. They can fall away. That doesn't mean that God's salvation is defective. But it means something was defective about their faith. It didn't have any root.

Well, why do I say all that? To say this: If somebody asked me, "Will Jesus Christ save somebody who has committed the unpardonable sin?" I will say, "He can if He has." You say, "What do you mean?" I mean this: No matter what you think you've committed, If you run to Christ and fall square into His arms, And He whispers, "I love you. You are forgiven." Then I don't care what you've committed, and I don't care what you think you've done, and I don't care how much you were convinced you committed the unpardonable sin, if He'll forgive you for it, then you're forgiven. And there's only one way to Heaven. There's only one way. And so if somebody becomes so ensnared by the unpardonable sin that all they can do is worry and fret in the unbelief, they can't be saved. And so I'd say to anybody listening or anybody you guys deal with that think that they've done it, you have to come and convince them of that reality, that truth.

Look, my friend, whether you've committed it or not, I don't know. But I know this: that there is nobody going to be in Heaven, except they repent of their sins, and they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. There's no justification for anybody, except those who will run to Christ to go to Him, to find rest in Him. And He promises that if you will go to Him, you will find satisfaction, you will find something there to drink that will lead to eternal life. You will find rest. You will truly find it. And that is the only way to Heaven. And if you are so hung up and so stuck that you cannot flee to Him for rescue, then you are in trouble. If anything comes into your life that prevents you from going to Him for rest, you're in trouble! Whether it's the unpardonable sin or any other kind of sin. If there's anything in your life... We find this: "There's none other name given among men under Heaven whereby we must be saved." If you would be saved, you've got to surrender, and trust in the righteousness that Christ has earned for sinners. You've got to do that.

And I find this: God's promises never cancel each other. Did He promise that there is a point of no return? Yes. He warned more maybe than promised. And is there a promise that we can go to Christ? Yes! Well, the two shall never contradict. They shall never conflict. They shall never interfere with each other. The truth is, if you WILL... That's how He closes the Bible: "If you WILL, come and drink." And that's the only way. That's the only way! You can say to anybody, no matter what they think they've committed, "Look, no matter what you think you've committed, no matter how much you worry, all your worrying is not going to save you. Worrying doesn't get anybody to Heaven. And you know what? People that worry that they've committed the unpardonable sin, You know what they do? They multiply counselors. They want to go to this person and that one. They want to go to this person and say, "I'm afraid I've committed the unpardonable sin." And why do they say that? Because they're hoping the person is going to tell them some solution that's going to automatically get them saved. And then the person will say, "You need to go to Christ." And then they run to another person and say, "I think I've committed

the unpardonable sin." And the whole time they've gotten something like Hebrews 6 or 10 so echoing in their mind that they never hear.

But we've got to break through to people like that! We've got to get to a place where it's like, "You've got to hear what I'm saying!" There's only one way to Heaven. And it's not worrying about whether or not you've committed the unpardonable sin. That doesn't get you to Heaven. It's not, "Oh but I really think I've committed Hebrews 10!" But that doesn't get you to Heaven. You see, worrying about that is not going to correct it. It's not going to solve it. The thing is, what solves it is when you say, "Will Jesus forgive me if I have committed it?" Well, I would say that if you run to Him for rest, He promises that He'll give that rest.

And as I said last night, brethren, I think one of the best places we can take people is like those two blind men. And they came along and they said, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" And the crowd said, "Be quiet." And they cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" And they cried out, and they cried out, and they cried out, and eventually Jesus said, "What do you want?" And they said, "Lord, that we might see!" And He gave it to them.

And you see, that's a perfect example. The Devil says, "Shut up! You've committed the unpardonable sin!" "Jesus! Son of David! Have mercy on me! I may have committed the unpardonable sin, but forgive me anyways. I don't have any other place to go. You're my only hope! I know nobody else is going to give me sight." "Just shut up! Shut up! Be quiet. You've committed the unpardonable sin." "I don't care if I have our not, but I'm going to cry out, and I'm going to cry out, and I'm going to cry out, and even if I die crying out, I'm going to cry out." Just like that woman that had her daughter that was taken by a demon. She comes and Jesus is silent. So be it! If that's the way it is with you. "Lord, I think I've committed the unpardonable sin. Please..." And Jesus answers with silence. And the Devil comes along just like the crowd with those two blind men and says, "Just shut up! Be silent." You've committed the unpardonable sin. He doesn't want anything to do with you." And then you've got even people over there saying, "Man, your case is hopeless." Just like the followers of Jesus. "Jesus, send her away. Send her away. She's just bugging us. She's crying out over there. Send her away! She's no good. She's worthless. She's not one of your choice people. She has committed such sins, there's no hope for her. Just send her away."

But she would not take no for an answer. Listen, you know what that is? That's faith! That's faith at work in the blind men. That's faith at work in that woman. And He said, "It's not even proper for me to give this to you." You know what? Even if it ends up not being the Devil anymore, But it's Jesus Himself who is almost seeming to give you the stiff shoulder! Even if it's His words themselves that you find over there in Matthew 12 or in Mark 3, or in Luke 12 concerning the unpardonable sin! It's not even the Devil anymore, it's Jesus' own words. "Yes, Lord. That's true. But even in Your Word there, You say that if I'd come to You, You will give me rest." You see, use His own words against Him. "Yes, Lord. That's true. I am a dog. And I don't deserve any of the least... But doesn't the dog even get the scraps off the table?"

Brethren, I'll tell you what, you lay hold of Jesus, though He be like a bucking bronco, though He be like the angel that Jacob wrestled with, you lay hold on Him and you don't let Him go. You go to Him as your only hope because you have no other! He is the only foundation. He is the only way. He is the way, the truth, and the life. There is no other way, there is no other truth, and there is no other life! You lay hold upon Him, and though the Devil screams at you,

and though Jesus' own words, though followers of Jesus would turn you away - as those followers of Jesus sought to turn away that woman - you lay hold there and you don't let go. And I guarantee you, if you go to Him, He will not cast you out. He will not! Nobody ever came to Jesus and insisted on having something from Him, did He ever turn them away. People full of doubts. People full of unbelief. Yes. They didn't get anything from Him. He didn't do many mighty works among them. But those that were determined (it has always been that way), those that have determined, whether you have committed the unpardonable sin or not, If you will lay hold on Him you will be saved!

I trust you hear exactly what I'm saying. Some people would say that yes, indeed, there is an unpardonable sin and we see it in the gospels. But because the unpardonable sin was distinctly, such as there in Mark Chapter 3, said to be these scribes saying that Jesus had an unclean spirit; and because Jesus doesn't physically walk the earth anymore, and because we can't physically see all the same things that those people saw, that it's not possible for us to sin against that same kind of light. It's not possible for us to directly attribute what Jesus did in that day to the Spirit of God in the same way that they did; therefore it's not even possible today to commit that sin.

And I would say that if we only had Matthew 12, Luke 12, Mark 3, we might come to that conclusion. However, because we have 1 John 5 after Jesus was gone and there being a sin unto death. Because we have Hebrews after Jesus was gone, being spoken to people who never had seen Jesus. Because we have the truths that we have in other places in our New Testaments, that are being spoken to Christians in general, being spoken to the Church, being spoken at a time when Jesus was already removed bodily from walking this earth, I would say that those arguments don't stand. Clearly, there's a point of no repentance in Hebrews. Clearly there is a sin that can be committed that is a sin unto death that when somebody commits it, John is saying not to pray for them. And so... And because of the nature of those other sins, having to do LIKEWISE with great amounts of light and GRIEVING the Spirit. I think we see so many similarities about it being never forgiveness, never repentance, passing a point of no return, it would have been better had they never known, and it being very specifically an infuriating of the Spirit, a despising of the light of that Spirit. I think we see so many parallels in Hebrews 6 and 10, with 2 Peter 2, and 1 John. I think we see so many similarities and we definitely see something of an unpardonable nature in those others to believe that it's something that they committed when Christ was right there in front of them. And yet, we have it on good authority (especially from Hebrews), that when you have exposure to light- you know how it says it there in Hebrews chapter 2. It was the Lord in the beginning that shed this light and spoke this truth, but then it was also attested to by those who heard. And what He's clearly saying is to drift from that, is to put yourself in a position where you're in serious and grave trouble. So it's not only the light that comes from Jesus in human form on the earth; it's also equally the light that has been set forth through the word of those apostles. It's seeing Christ even in His Word. It's the Spirit of God shedding that light abroad through the Word of God that is likewise that light being rejected. and then deliberate sin can bring us to a point of no return. So, that's basically how I would answer that. It just, it doesn't seem to stand up to Scripture. Do you agree?