

The Holy Spirit

Lesson 21 – Blasphemy Against The Holy Spirit

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Matthew 12:1-37; Mark 3:22-30; Luke 11; 12

Introduction

The Holy Spirit came to glorify Christ, to reveal all truth, and to empower Christians for holy living and fruitful service. The blasphemy against the Holy Spirit provokes curiosity, debate, and controversy. This lesson will not satisfy or answer all questions. It will not leave the matter resolved. You must read, study, think, re-read.

Can Christians commit this sin? This is the issue. There must not be more of a curiosity about this sin than a real quest for the Holy Spirit. Familiar Scripture must be read more closely. What is the context? Who are the addressed? What did they do? Did they commit this sin? If not, when was it committed and by whom? What can we learn?

I. Basic Study

We can sin against the Holy Spirit in many ways. What would this sin not be?

1. It would not be murder (Acts 2:30-41).
2. It would not be suicide. The unpardonable sin is committed while alive.
3. It would not be profanity (Matthew 26:69-75; John 21)
4. It would not be backsliding per se (Hebrews 6:4-6; Acts 8, Simon).
5. It would not be a delay in obeying the gospel. Rejection is not blasphemy.
6. It would not be blasphemy itself (1 Timothy 1:13-15).

How else can we sin against the Holy Spirit?

1. We can grieve Him (Ephesians 4:30).
2. We can quench Him (1 Thessalonians 5:19).
3. We can tempt Him (Acts 5:3, Ananias and Sapphira).
4. We can defile Him (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 6:19, 20).
5. We can despise Him (Hebrews 10:25-31).

None of these are the “unpardonable sin.” It is a definite statement, act, or deed! It is not merely refusal or rejection. Read John 12. Those who “would not” fell into the state of “could not.” But the world was condemned already (John 3:16-18). We have a definite statement by Jesus that it is not unforgiven but unforgivable! Jesus said it is an eternal sin. The language is harsh! What could have been in the past, could not be in the future! It is not merely the unpardoned sin.

II. What Is The Context?

The Jews demanded a sign and then had a fit when they got one. A triple or quadruple miracle. *Miracles!* The credentials of the King were demonstrated before the eyes of the Israelites. The rulers did not *deny the miracle!* The rulers refused to admit what the people already knew. The addressed were leaders. Theirs was a willful, presumptuous rejection of obvious fact. It was not impulsive. It was not spur-of-the-moment emotionalism. It was not thoughtless.

Blasphemy is defamation, irreverence in speech, "to sin with a high hand." Blasphemy was a sin punishable by death. It is a sin of the heart. Jesus knows hearts. He knew their hearts were calloused and hardened to anything he did or that the Holy Spirit would do through Him. Jesus says that our words reveal the true conditions of our heart (Matthew 12:35-37).

Here was no mere act of sin without any sin leading up to it. **It was a state of willful, determined opposition to the Holy Spirit that finally ended in bitter blasphemy. This was a judgment which could be said was self-imposed. Their hardness of heart was produced by their rebellion against better knowledge. They had no desire to repent, to turn to God, and could care less if they committed an unforgivable sin.**

III. The Sin Unto Death (1 John 5:16-18)

This is not synonymous with blasphemy. The language or reality is frightening! This is to brethren. It can be committed today. Some under "guilt complexes" are superstitious about having committed the "un-pardonable sin" but are careless about apostasy.

Consider Hebrews.

1. A stratagem for survival, Hebrews says, "It is always too soon to quit."
2. Hebrews 4: Harden not your heart.
3. Hebrews 6: They were partakers of the Holy Spirit then fell away!
4. Hebrews 10: They had gone, in spite of the Holy Spirit, and there was no more sacrifice.
5. This is frightening, sobering language!

Conclusion

They "had it and blew it." They were sin-hardened and conscience-seared; the cross could not touch, and the Holy Spirit could not convict. To cast aside God's convicting power (John 16:7-13) is spiritual damnation. The first gift in Christianity is the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38 1/2). Use Him; do not abuse Him!