

Chapter Seven

The Unpardonable Sin

Introduction

In our last chapter we listed the seven functions of the Holy Spirit as described in John 16: 7- 16 and we examined the first three of those seven, called the three primary functions of the Holy Spirit.

In 1 Corinthians 2: 9- 16, the Apostle Paul informs us that we cannot even see or understand or comprehend the truth of the gospel and the deep things of God apart from the work of the Holy Spirit. And of course this is an amplification of John 16: 13- 15.

Let us read 1 Corinthians 2: 9- 16.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed [them] unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know [them], because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. {1 Corinthians 2: 9- 16} KJV

How Mankind Lost the Holy Spirit

When Adam, our first representative man, disobeyed God, he sold out the human race and the whole world to Satan. Humanity, right there and then, forfeited the right to have the Holy Spirit and in reality lost the Holy Spirit. It would have been illegal for the Holy Spirit to work on the human mind and heart while the race was sold out to another government and another spirit. God never transgresses the law of freedom or any other principle of righteousness.

How the Holy Spirit was Given Back to Mankind

As we have seen before, the moment Adam sinned, the Son

of God "stepped" into the gap of separation from God which sin has produced. This prevented Adam and mankind from being annihilated (dying the second death), and allowed the Holy Spirit to do its office work. When the fullness of time arrived, the incarnate Son of God actually died the second death for all mankind. So we see then that the sacrifice of the Son of God was the price that had to be paid for mankind to again have access to the Holy Spirit. The price was infinite. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? {Hebrews 9: 14} KJV

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: {Romans 5: 12} KJV

The Sin against the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit convinces and convicts us of the truth and glory of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit reveals the fullness and clarity of gospel light to the soul. Therefore to willfully and persistently reject the gospel while the Holy Spirit is working upon the spirit and soul of the individual is to insult, despise, nullify and trample underfoot the Holy Spirit by rejecting Christ.

If a person does not accept a gospel truth because he or she does not see or understand it, or is not convinced or convicted of it by the Holy Spirit, that is not the unpardonable sin because we are told in 1 Corinthians 2: 14:

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know [them], because they are spiritually discerned. {1 Corinthians 2: 14} KJV

And of course, since minds differ, the time period required by the Holy Spirit to convince, convict and enlighten souls will also differ.

During the loud cry of Revelation 18: 1- 4, the Holy Spirit in latter rain power will so lighten the world with the glory of the gospel and the love of God that every living person will be brought to the point of final decision. At that time rejection of the truth, as it is in Jesus, will constitute the unpardonable sin.

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit

To blaspheme means: to treat with utter disrespect; to show violent contempt of; to treat with scornful disdain; to jokingly trivialize a matter of the highest import.

To reject the Spirit's work of guiding into all truth, (by progressively revealing Christ and His redemptive work), is to nullify the infinite price paid for our salvation. That is blasphemous.

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy [against] the [Holy] Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the [world] to come. {Matthew 12: 31-32} KJV

A Second Condemnation

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. {Mark 16: 16} KJV

To reject, with fixed finality, the work of the Holy Spirit is to throw away or nullify the infinite gift of salvation which is already given to us in Christ and to bring upon oneself a second condemnation. We already discussed in chapters 3 and 4 that all mankind was condemned in Adam; that was the first condemnation. All mankind was corporately justified in Christ. When Jesus says "he that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark 16: 16), He is not referring to the first or Adamic condemnation but to a second condemnation which results from rejection of the gospel which is rejection of Christ and is the unpardonable sin or blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

The Other Dimensions to the Definition of Blasphemy

1. The account in Matthew 12: 22- 31, of a miracle performed by Jesus in casting out demons and the reaction of the Pharisees to the miracle, is an interesting one. The Pharisees attributed this miracle of God, performed by the Holy Spirit through Christ, to Satan. To call a truth of God Satanic is utter disrespect and contempt for the Holy Spirit. The purpose of the miracle was to vindicate the validity of Christ's claims to be the Messiah. The Pharisees rejected Christ in their rejection of the miracle and therefore blasphemed against the Holy Spirit.
2. *Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that*

thou, being a man, makest thyself God. {John 10: 31-33} KJV

In this text we learn of another meaning of blasphemy. For any man to think, speak or act as if he were God is blasphemy. In this case the Jewish accusation against Christ was wrong because He is God the Son.

Why the Unpardonable Sin cannot be Forgiven

The Gospel is the Good News that Christ has died for all the sins of all mankind for all time. To put it in legal terminology, the penalty or punishment for our sins, the sins of all people, has been paid in full by the atoning sacrifice of Christ Jesus the Incarnate Son of God. Therefore God the Father has pardoned the human race; our condemnation has been fully revoked. The penalty for all the sins which have occurred as a result of Adam's fall has been paid in full by the death of Jesus the Son of God. All of this was accomplished by the faith of Jesus!

To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. {2 Corinthians 5: 19} KJV

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. {Romans 5: 6- 8} KJV

Therefore as by the offence of one [judgment came] upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one [the free gift came] upon all men unto justification of life. {Romans 5: 18} KJV

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. {John 1: 29} KJV

This is the goodness of God that leads to repentance (Romans 2: 4) as the Holy Spirit reveals this in order to draw us to Christ to have sin removed from our hearts through faith in Christ. This is individual justification by faith which produces sanctification.

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only [so], but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. {Romans 5: 9- 11} KJV

[There is] therefore now no condemnation to them which are

in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. {Romans 8: 1-4} KJV

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. {Romans 6: 22} KJV

Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed [is] every one that hangeth on a tree: {Galatians 3: 13} KJV

But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. {Hebrews 2: 9} KJV

Justice demands that sin be not merely pardoned, but the death penalty must be executed. God, in the gift of His only-begotten Son, met both these requirements. By dying in man's stead, Christ exhausted the penalty and provided a pardon. {6 B.C page 1099}

It should be absolutely clear then that Jesus died for our sins and redeemed us from the curse of the law. He did this for all mankind. At Calvary's Cross our Saviour exhausted the penalty for all sin and sins, except one, and that one is the unpardonable sin. Since the penalty for all sin has been exhausted, none of that penalty is left to be executed on any of the transgressions of any of Adam's offspring. Therefore the unsaved will die the second death because of a second condemnation for which there is no sacrifice or remedy. This is the condemnation that results from rejecting Christ and blaspheming against the Holy Spirit.

How the Apostle Paul Describes it

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? {Hebrews 10: 26- 29} KJV

Let us list the salient points that the Apostle employs to describe the unpardonable sin.

(i) It is willful

- (ii) It is done, not ignorantly, but after receiving the knowledge of the truth
- (iii) There is no sacrifice for this sin
- (iv) It involves trampling the Son of God underfoot
- (v) It counts the blood of the covenant as worthless
- (vi) It despises the Holy Spirit

Six key descriptive points are highlighted. The number six is the number of self and in this case implies choosing self and rejecting Christ. This is a terminally fixed mind-set of rejection of the Holy Spirit's revelation of the beauty and glory of Christ. For this sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, there remains no sacrifice. It cannot be pardoned.

In the years that followed the 1888 General Conference Session, the Spirit of Prophecy gave warnings against doing despite to the Holy Spirit by rejecting the message. We close with this warning from R.H. October 21st, 1890.

It is not God that puts the blinder before the eyes of men or makes their hearts hard; it is the light which God sends to his people, to correct their errors, to lead them in safe paths, but which they refuse to accept,--it is this that blinds their minds and hardens their hearts. They choose to turn from the light, to stubbornly walk in sparks of their own kindling, and the Lord positively declares that they shall lie down in sorrow. When one ray of light which the Lord sends is not acknowledged, there is a partial benumbing of the spiritual perceptions, and the second revealing of light is less clearly discerned, and so the darkness will constantly increase until it is night to the soul. Christ said, "How great is that darkness!"

It is an astonishment to the whole universe that men do not see and do not acknowledge the bright beams of light that are shining upon them; but if they close their hearts to the light, and pervert the truth until it is interpreted to be darkness, they will imagine that their own criticism and unbelief is light, and will not confess their opposition to the ways and works of God. By pursuing a course like this, men who might have stood fast to the end, will place their influence against the message and messenger that God sends. But in the day of judgment, when the question is asked, "Why did you intercept yourself, your judgment and influence, between the people and the message of God?" they will have nothing to answer. If they open their lips then, it will only be to say that they now see truth as God sees it. They will confess that they were full of pride of opinion, trusted in their own judgment, and strengthened the hands that sought to tear down that which God had commanded to be built up. They will say, "Although the evidence was strong that God was working, I would not acknowledge it; for it was not in harmony with what I had taught. I was not in the habit of confessing any error in the past in my experience; I was too stubborn to fall upon the Rock and be broken. I determined to resist, and not be converted to the truth. I would not reveal the fact that I thought my course was wrong in any degree, and my light went out in darkness." To

such the words apply, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes."

As the prophet looked down the ages, and beheld the ingratitude of Israel, as he was shown in vision their unbelief, he also saw that which brought him joy of heart, and gave him a vivid sense of the goodness of God to Israel. He said, "I will mention the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses. For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." But through their own course of rebellion the blessing of God toward Israel was turned away from them. That which they had sown in questioning and unbelief, they had to reap. The record says, "But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them." May the Lord forbid that the history of the children of Israel in departing from God, in refusing to walk in the light, in refusing to confess their sins of unbelief and rejection of his messages, should be the experience of the people claiming to believe the truth for this time. For if they do as did the children of Israel in the face of warnings and admonitions, the same result will follow in these last days as came upon the children of Israel. The apostle admonishes, "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: when your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest." Now comes the warning of the apostle, sounding down along the lines to our time: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end."

{R.H. Oct. 21, 1890 – paragraphs 3- 5}