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"Preaching The Same Truth We Preached Before Kentucky Was A State"

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

By: C. D. Cole

"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.

"Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit," Mark 3:28-30.

"And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blas-

phemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven," Luke 12:10.

I believe these are all the scriptures that we can certainly apply to the question of the unpardonable sin. I do not believe Hebrews 6:1-8 and Hebrews 10:26-31 have anything to say about the unpardonable sin.

The subject is much abused and misunderstood. It has been used to frighten the unregenerate into joining the church, thereby making them a twofold more a child of wrath. Wrong views have led people into insanity.

We must distinguish between an unpardoned sin and the unpardonable sin. Our texts distinguish between sins that can be pardoned and the one sin that cannot be pardoned. Our Lord is not saying that all other sins will be actually pardoned, for then the only sin for which anybody would be punished would be the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The

lost will be punished for every sin if they are not forgiven on the ground of the blood atonement. All the sins of the impenitent and unbelieving will be unpardoned, but the only kind of sin that cannot be pardoned is the one mentioned in our texts. Every sin is a damning sin unless there is forgiveness for it.

WHAT THE UNPARDONABLE SIN IS NOT.

I. It is not any sin against men. Many are the sins men commit against one another, such as murder, theft, false witness, malice and envy. But none of these is the sin that will not be pardoned. Many have committed these sins and on repentance and faith have found forgiveness.

II. It is not any sin against Jesus Christ. Many are the sins against the Son of man, such as denial of His deity and virgin birth, denial of His atoning blood, ignoring His claims of Lord-

ship, in a word, rejecting Him as the Lord Jesus Christ. These are terrible sins, but many who have committed them repented and found forgiveness. Many an atheist has been converted and forgiven. Of course, those who live and die in unbelief are unforgiven, but this does not mean that they had committed the unpardonable sin.

III. It is not any sin against the decalogue or ten commandments. There is not a sin mentioned in the ten commandments for which there is no pardon. Christ died to redeem us from the curse of the law, therefore there must be forgiveness from every part of the curse.

IV. It is not any sin against God the Father. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven unto men."

V. It is not every sin against the Holy Spirit. There are many sins committed directly against the Holy Spirit, such as grieving, resisting, quenching, and ignoring the Spirit. Believers may grieve the Spirit; they may also quench the Spirit and ignore the Spirit in many ways. Unbelievers resist the Spirit in rejecting His word and by persecuting and opposing His prophets. Acts 7:51, 52, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." But none of these sins against the Holy Spirit is the unpardonable sin.

VI. It is not being past feeling. Ephesians

4:19, "Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

WHAT THE UNPARDONABLE SIN IS.

I. It is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. We have direct statements of Scripture for this. What is blasphemy? To blaspheme is to speak injuriously against a person. Blasphemy is an insulting or slanderous remark about some one. It is a sin of the tongue; the tongue is the medium through which the heart acts in blasphemy. The Jews charged Christ with blasphemy because he forgave sin, and because He claimed to be the Son of God. Matthew 9:3, "And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth." John 10:36, "Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" The Jews at Antioch spake against Paul and his doctrine, "contradicting and blaspheming," Acts 13:45. Saul, before his conversion, compelled Christians to blaspheme. Acts 26:11, "And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme." And Paul himself was formerly a blasphemer. I Timothy 1:13, "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief." And Paul charges the Jews with causing the Gentiles to blaspheme the name of God. Romans 2:24, "For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written."

II. We have before us in our text a clear case of the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The Pharisees blasphemed the Holy Spirit, "because they said, He hath an unclean spirit." They

attributed the works of the Holy Spirit in Christ to the power of Beelzebub, the prince of demons. Of course they blasphemed Christ when they charged Him with having an evil spirit, but this was not what made their sin unpardonable. They recognized the Holy Spirit in Him, but slandered Him by calling Him an unclean spirit.

CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE SPIRIT IS BLASPHEMED.

I. There must be an unmistakable work of the Holy Spirit. There must be a recognition of the Spirit in His work. Dr. Broadus thought it is committed only in connection with public miracles, in which the power of the Spirit is unmistakably at work and is recognized. He did not think the sin is committed in our day. Christ had cast out demons, and the Pharisees could not dispute it, but in admitting it, said it was done by an unclean spirit.

II. There must be knowledge that it is the work of the Spirit. Paul had blasphemed Jesus of Nazareth, yet he was forgiven because he did it ignorantly in unbelief. He did not believe that Jesus spoke and worked by the Spirit of God. He thought Jesus was an imposter and possessed an evil spirit. Thomas Goodwyn, one of the Puritans, said that two things were necessary in committing the unpardonable sin: "Light in the mind and malice in the heart." The unpardonable sin is never ignorantly committed. It is not a case of mistaken identity, but the deliberately and knowingly calling the Holy Spirit an unclean spirit.

WHY IS BLASPHEMY OF THE SPIRIT UNPARDONABLE?

I. It is not because the sin is too great for the blood of Christ to atone for. This would limit the intrinsic value of the blood. We

believe the blood of Christ is sufficient for the salvation of the devil if it had been designed for him. And for the fallen angels had He died for them.

II. It is not because it is too great for the grace of God. This is obvious when we examine some of the cases which God has pardoned. Take Manasseh for instance. He was the wicked son of the good king Hezekiah, and his father's successor on the throne of Israel. His steady course of vile conduct covering a period of many years is recorded in II Chronicles 33:2-7, 9, 10. Surely if one may sink too low to be reached by the grace of God, it is this wicked man. But, read the sequel: "And when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto him: and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into His kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God," verses 12 and 13. Then consider the history of Saul of Tarsus. He styled himself the chief of sinners, and yet he was converted.

III. The unpardonable sin is to be attributed to the sovereign will of God. God has sovereignly decided that He will not forgive the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. He could if He wished to. There is one kind of sin for which no provision has been made. For this sin Christ did not die; for this sin, the Holy Spirit will not convict; for this sin, God has no forgiveness. If this seems hard, remember that no provision was made for any of the sins of the fallen angels. None of the sins of fallen angels was pardonable; only one sin of fallen men is unpardonable.

This is an excerpt from

the book, SIN, SALVATION, SERVICE, by C.D. Cole. It is published by the Bryan Station Baptist Church and may be obtained by writing to the church address.

HE HAS BLESSED US ABUNDANTLY!

"And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." I Timothy 6:8.

Did you know that even the poorest American has it better than the average person anywhere else? In his book THE GREAT ASCENT, Robert Heilbroner tells what it would be like for a typical American family to live like a typical family in an underdeveloped country.

"Strip the American home of nearly all its furnishing...leave the family a few old blankets, a kitchen table, a wooden chair...Every member of the family may keep...his oldest suit or oldest dress, one shirt, and one blouse...permit one pair of shoes to the head of the family...

The appliances (in the kitchen) have already been taken out, ... The box of matches may stay, a small bag of flour, some sugar, and some salt. A few moldy potatoes already in the garbage can must be hastily rescued, for they will provide tonight's meal...leave a handful of onions and a dish of dried beans.

Next, the house must go as the family moves out into the tool shed. Transportation goes except for one old bicycle. And the family's annual income is reduced to three hundred dollars a year."

This, my friend, is why we ought to be filled with gratitude for what we have! Let's pray now and thank God for all He has done for us. Indeed, He has blessed us abundantly.

--B. Taylor

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Regeneration—A change of nature; a new life from God

Repentance—A change of mind; a new mind about God.

Conversion—A change of life; a new life for God.

Justification—A change of state; a new standing before God.

Sanctification—A change of Service; a separation unto God;

Adoption—A change of family; A new relationship before God.

Glorification—A change of place; a new condition with God.