

Sunday, August 4, 2024

Matthew 12: Unforgivable Sin

Selected Scriptures

Matthew 12:30 "Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. 31 And so I tell you, every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. 32 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

1. What do we do with these scriptures?

What do these scriptures mean? Doesn't God forgive everything when we come to salvation, His grace covers all sin past and future?

Philippians 2:12...continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling...

What do we do with this?

Colossians 2:6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. 8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.

We have received Christ and now we move forward— we grow in him, and there is also danger to be aware of.

Hebrews 6:4 It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, 5 who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age 6 and who have fallen away, to be brought back to repentance. To their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.

Hebrews 10:26If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, 27but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God. 28Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?

So then, the UNFORGIVEABLE SIN: Blaspheming the Holy Spirit which is a REJECTION of Jesus Christ as THE Sacrifice for sin. There is no other sacrifice. There is only one way. No one can enter the Kingdom unless they are Born Again.

So where is the line? When do we blaspheme the Holy Spirit? It is most likely different for everyone, but this is not something that God wants us to live in fear of. We need to be aware of it, but we do not need to fear it. When we studied Matthew 10: Fear God and you do not have to FEAR GOD. If you don't FEAR GOD, then you should FEAR GOD.

If you have a healthy concern, if this is something that you want to make sure you don't cross the line on, then you have not crossed it or you would not care.

Mark 4:14The farmer sows the word. 15Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. 16Others, like seed sown on rocky places, hear the word and at once receive it with joy. 17But since they have no root, they last only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. 18Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; 19but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful. 20Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—some thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times what was sown."

2. First Essential Truth

In Colossians 2 there is an essential 'truth' that we must understand and will help us stay clear of the danger:

Colossians 2:6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. 11 In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not performed by human hands. Your whole self—ruled by the flesh—was put off when you were circumcised by Christ, 12 having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through your faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

When we are Born Again, all of this HAS HAPPENED. That is why Paul can say 'let there be no more condemnation...'

Romans 8 :1 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, 2 because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.

So, if this HAS happened, and as Jesus explains they have no root, so they last only a short time then how is that when trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away? How do the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful? How can that happen?

Remember, RULES DON'T SAVE! Colossians 2 makes it clear that at our Salvation God HAS DONE some things to us SPIRITUALLY. But he also says to 'see to it that no one takes you captive...'

3. Second Essential Truth

The second essential truth to be aware of: There is a danger zone. LIFE goes on for most of us and in this life, you will have TROUBLE (John 14). Jesus also tells us they will know us by our FRUIT.

Ephesians 2:1As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. 4But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. 6And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9not by works, so that no one can boast. 10For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

This is a very clear statement that our salvation is not based on what we do, or do not do. It is a gift. But we are SAVED FOR SOMETHING, or rather we are saved TO SOMETHING. LIFE will go on. There is an enemy out there fighting against us, fighting against God's Will and His people.

4. How to live then? With Obedience

As we circle back to our passage for today:

Matthew 12:30“Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. 31And so I tell you, every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. 32Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come. 33“Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. 34You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. 35A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. 36But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. 37For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Jesus is talking to people who have rejected him.

Matthew 12:38Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, “Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.” 39He answered, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now something greater than Jonah is here. 42The Queen of the South will rise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, and now something greater than Solomon is here.

Jesus is explaining what is in store for those who have rejected the only sacrifice available for redemption. And once someone gets there, Hebrews 6 tell us it is impossible for them to be brought back to repentance. How can this be? How can you go back, turn your back on your salvation?

Matthew 12:43“When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. 44Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean

and put in order. 45Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation." 46While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him. 47Someone told him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." 48He replied to him, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" 49Pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. 50**For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.**"

THIS concept (doing the will of the Father), is one of the most important areas of our FAITH JOURNEY. Look again at Philippians 2:12:

12Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, 13for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

Obedience is part of your New Life in Christ. Salvation is a FREE gift, but Obedience will be critical to 'Growing up in our Salvation.' God's Word is true. All of it, including these passages on the dangers around us. This is not something to be afraid of, but it is something to be aware of.

Obedience will help us in times of trouble. Obedience will help keep us confident. Obedience will give us power. God did the work. But we play a part in this New Life.

QUESTIONS:

1. Have you made changes in your life over the years? Have they all stuck? What was the difference between those that stuck and those that went by the wayside? Was it how much you cared? The view of others around you? What makes some changes permanent and others temporary?

2. What are the greatest challenges you have/are experiencing in growing up in your salvation? What are the greatest joys? How has your walk with God grown since salvation, in the past year, the past month, week? Have you been thriving in your Christian walk or striving? What does that look like when you contemplate your answer?
3. Review the armor of God. What role does the armor of God play in defending yourself against the world, the flesh and the devil? (Ephesians 6:11-18) Do you regularly put on the full armor of God- practically what does that look like? Can you share times when you did not put that armor on, and outcomes related to that? Time you have put it on, and outcomes related to that?
4. Overall do the external you and the internal you match? Are you leading with your knowledge of who you are in Christ or living out of fear? When you hear a message on these verses does it invigorate you or put you into a corner? How can we help you in this area?