

THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN

“But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin.” —MARK 3:29

There are Christians who fear they have committed ‘the unforgivable sin’, which will not go well for them on Judgment Day. Some even think themselves to be ‘spiritually maimed’ and restricted in their usefulness to God.

The statement Jesus makes, “Whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven” must be interpreted in light of what is meant by ‘blasphemes against the Holy Spirit’. It must also be understood within the context Jesus said this, particularly when the statement appears to be out of the spirit of the whole of the Bible. The context was when confronted by the scribes in their persistent refusal to recognize the working of the Holy Spirit in His life, and instead accusing Him of having demonic power.

In Scripture, forgiveness is spoken of as encompassing all our sin. John says, “The blood of Jesus...purifies us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). He then adds, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1:9). There is no exception clause written into these verses, and no allowances made anywhere for being partially forgiven.

It is the Holy Spirit who makes us aware of our sin and points us to the way out of our sin through Jesus Christ. To resist the working of

the Holy Spirit is to close off any way of obtaining forgiveness, which is exactly what the scribes were doing when Jesus warned them of the possibility of not being forgiven. They were so hardened against Him that when acknowledging the supernatural element in His ministry, rather than attributing it to the Spirit of God, they attributed it to Beelzebub, the prince of demons.

The unforgivable sin is not an act one can commit in a moment without possibility of forgiveness, but it is a refusal to accept the only means of obtaining forgiveness. In resisting the Holy Spirit, we choose to remain in our sin with no possibility of cleansing. It is for this reason that a Christian cannot be guilty of an ‘unforgivable sin’, because our very response to the Holy Spirit, which enables us to become Christians, is our refusal to be guilty. If, as Christians, we fear being guilty of an unforgivable sin, we have not fully understood the work of Christ on the cross, in which He took upon Himself every sin ever committed. The nature of God’s forgiveness is all encompassing, and we need to believe and live as though we are clean - for clean we are through the blood of Christ!

PRAYER: Thank you, Lord, for taking all my sin to the cross with You, and forgiving me.

TO REFLECT UPON: Is there a past sin in my life that I feel is restricting me from being useful to God?