

Solid rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study - May 16, 2024

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Pneumatology - The Doctrine of The Holy Spirit - Part VI

Title: The Blasphemy Against The Holy Spirit

I. Introduction

A. The blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is a doctrine that is only vaguely understood by most Christians. It is probably more misunderstood than any other teaching.

B. My prayer is that through our study together of this lesson, you will be enlightened and gain a clear biblical understanding of this topic.

II. The Scriptural Account of the Blaspheming Against the Holy Spirit

A. The account of the blaspheming against the Holy Spirit is found in Matthew 12:22-32; mark 3:22-30, and Luke 12:10.

B. By His nature God is forgiving. The Old Testament abounds with teachings about His forgiveness.

C. David declared, "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee." (Ps. 86:5)

D. In Psalm 103:3a David said, speaking of God, "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities;" Daniel 9:9 says, "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him."

E. God described Himself to Moses as, "... the Lord God, merciful

and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, ..." (Ex. 34:6-7).

F. Micah said the following about God, "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever; because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." (**Micah 7:18-19**).

G. The Old Testament is also filled with examples of God's forgiveness. When Adam and Eve committed sin, God forgave them. When Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob sinned, God forgave them.

H. The New Testament pictures God as supremely the God of forgiveness. That is the essence of the Gospel: God's divine and gracious provision for the forgiveness of man's sin (John 3:16).

I. In Christ, Paul says, "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. 1:7; cf. Col. 1:14).

J. John assures us that, "If we confess our sins, He (Jesus) is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9; 2:12)

K. No matter how severe the sin, God can forgive it. The degree of sin does not forfeit forgiveness, nor does the volume of sin end the possibility of mercy, Nor does the particular kind of sin cancel grace. However, there is no forgiveness of even the smallest sin unless it is confessed and repented of.

L. The rejection of Jesus as Messiah and King gradually escalated

as His ministry continued. First there was doubt, then criticism, then indifference, culminating in open rejection. The religious leaders of Israel then added blasphemy against the Holy Spirit to their rejection of Christ.

M. For centuries God's people had longed for the Messiah, their divine Deliverer. The hope of every godly prophet and teacher of Israel was to live to see Him. Yet, when He arrived, he was denied and rejected.

N. In Matthew 12:22-32, Matthew details five features of the climax of that rejection: the activity of Jesus in healing a seriously afflicted man; the amazement of the crowd over the miracle; the accusation against Jesus because of the miracle; Jesus' answer to His accusers; and the anathema His accusers brought on themselves.

Comment: An in-depth exposition of the details of the five features Matthew points on in this passage will not be expounded upon in this lesson (I believe time and space limits this). However, to provide the context with clarity, to allow for an understanding of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, I will summarize each of the five features, with additional emphasis on Matthew 12:31-32.

III. The Activity (Matt. 12:22)

"Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb; and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw."

A. This man had multiple problems. He was **demon-possessed** blind and dumb, and possibly also suffered deafness, so often associated with an inability to speak.

B. The fact that Jesus healed him was not unique. Jesus had healed hundreds, perhaps thousands of people just as this man was healed.

C. Jesus undeniably possessed the power to heal every kind of disease, to cast out any kind and any number of demons. His supernatural power could no longer be questioned.

D. The scribes and Pharisees had been watching Jesus' every footsteps and were already convinced that He was an enemy of Judaism. The religious leaders were no longer merely skeptical and resentful, but they had become adamantly hostile to Jesus.

E. The healing of this man on this occasion forced Jesus' critics to make their verdict concerning Him public. The miracle they witnessed was incontestable!

IV. The Amazement (v23)

"And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?"

A. The word **amazed** is the Greek word *existemi* and it means to be totally astounded, beside oneself with amazement and wonder.

B. This particular miracle was unusually overwhelming, as if Jesus meant to intensify its demonstration of supernaturalness.

V. The Accusation (v24)

"But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils."

A. These Jewish religious leaders, of whom the Pharisees were always the most zealous and vocal, could not tolerate the thought that this man, Jesus, who denounced them as unrighteous hypocrites and trampled on their human system of traditions could be the prophesied and long-awaited Deliverer of Israel.

B. They had only one option. Because Jesus' power was indisputably supernatural, and because they refused to recognize Jesus as being from God, they were forced to conclude that He was an agent of Satan.

C. He must serve the rulers of the demons, for whom Beelzebub was a popular title. This name was derived from the name of an ancient Cananite deity.

VI. The Answer (Vv 25-30) [Let us read these verses together.]

A. Although the Pharisees were speaking to the crowd beyond Jesus' hearing, He never-the-less knew their thoughts.

B. Mark tells us that some scribes from Jerusalem joined the Pharisees in accusing Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub, "And he (Jesus) called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, **How can Satan cast out Satan?** ..." (Mark 3:22-23)

C. They would not confront Jesus directly with their accusation, but He confronted them directly with its absurdity, its prejudice, and its rebelliousness.

1. The accusation was Absurd (Vv 25b-26)
2. The accusation was Prejudiced (V 27)
3. The accusation was Rebellious (Vv 31-32)

VII. The Anathema (Curse) (Vv 31-32)

"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."

A. Many passages of Scripture have been misunderstood, but few have been more misinterpreted and misunderstood than these two verses. Because of their extreme seriousness and finality, it is critical to understand them correctly.

B. Jesus first stated that "**All (Any) manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven him (i.e., men).**" Although blasphemy is a form of sin, in this passage and context the two are treated separately - with blasphemy representing the most extreme form of sin.

C. **Sin** here represents the full spectrum of immoral and ungodly thoughts and actions, whereas **blasphemy** represents conscious denouncing and rejection of God.

Point: Blasphemy is defiant irreverence, the uniquely terrible sin of intentionally and openly speaking evil against Holy God or defaming or mocking Him (cf. Mark 2:7).

D. The Old Testament penalty for sin such as blasphemy was death by stoning (Lev. 24:16). In the last days blasphemy will be an outstanding characteristic of those who rebelliously and insolently oppose God (Rev. 13:5-6; 16:19; 17:3).

E. Even so, blasphemy, Jesus says, is forgiven, just as any other sin is forgiven when it is confessed and repented of.

F. An unbeliever who blasphemes God can be forgiven. Paul confessed the following about himself: "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. 1:13-14)

G. Paul goes on to say - "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Tim. 1:15)

Comment: Peter blasphemed Christ with curses (Mark 14:71) and was forgiven and restored.

H. To question God's goodness, wisdom, fairness, truthfulness, love, or faithfulness is a form of blasphemy. However, all of that is forgivable by grace.

I. There is one exception: blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven (Matt. 12:32c).

J. Even the person who blasphemes Jesus, who dares to speak a word against the Son of man ... shall be forgiven.

K. To misjudge, belittle, and discredit Jesus because of incomplete knowledge or inadequate perception of who He is was forgivable, wrong as it was, as pointed out earlier, The Apostle Paul had himself been an ignorant blasphemer of the Lord Jesus Christ.

L. But the blasphemy against the Spirit was something more serious. It not only reflected unbelief, but determined unbelief - the refusal, after having seen all the evidence necessary to complete one's understanding, even to consider believing in Christ.

M. A determined rejection of Jesus and an absolute and permanent refusal to believe, results in the loss of opportunity to even be forgiven ... neither in this world (i.e., age), neither in the world to come.

N. During Jesus' earthly ministry, the unbelieving Pharisees and all the others who blasphemed the Spirit cut themselves off from God's mercy, not because it was not offered, but because it was

abundantly offered yet rebelliously and permanently rejected, and ridiculed as satanic.

VIII. Summary

A. The generation immediately after Christ was on earth was ministered to by the apostles, enlightened by their teaching, and given proof of the truth of the gospel by their miracles.

B. That generation had evidence equivalent to that of those who heard and saw Jesus in person. They had the highest possible revelation from God, and if they refused to believe in the face of such overwhelming evidence, there was nothing more God could do for them.

C. There will come a time when God, will cease, to give further opportunity and salvation will be forever lost. That is why Paul told the Corinthians, "behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6:2)

This lesson will conclude our study on Pneumatology, and I pray that you have been informed, enlightened, and encouraged as you continue to walk with the Lord.

For those without a saving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, I encourage you to repent of your sins and receive Him as your Lord and Savior - now!

It is now interactive time. Please respond to the following as appropriate.

1. By His very nature, God is _____

- A. Forgiving
- B. Unmerciful
- C. Vengeful
- D. Unloving

2. "For thou, Lord, art _____, and ready to _____; and plenteous in _____ unto all them that _____ upon thee."

[Psalm 86:5]

3. "To the Lord our God belong _____ and _____, though we have _____ against him."

[Daniel 9:9]

4. "The Lord God, _____ and _____, longsuffering, and abundant in _____ and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, _____ iniquity and transgression and sin, ..."

[Exodus 34:6-7]

5. From this handout, cite three people that were referenced in the Old Testament as an example of whom God offered forgiveness.

- A.
- B.
- C.

6. From the handout, it was stated that the New Testament pictures God as supremely the God of what?

- A. Vengeance
- B. Forgiveness
- C. Pity
- D. None of the above

7. The degree of sin forfeits forgiveness.
- A. True
 - B. False
8. In Matthew Chapter 12, when Jesus healed the man who had multiple issues, Jesus was accused of casting out devils by whom?

Your response:

9. _____ is defiant irreverence, the uniquely terrible sin of intentionally and openly speaking evil against Holy God or defaming or mocking Him.
10. According to Leviticus 25:16, what was the Old Testament penalty of blasphemy?

Your response:

11. An unbeliever who blasphemes God out of ignorance, can be forgiven when they come into the true knowledge of God, repents and confesses. (Circle the correct response.)
- A. True
 - B. False
12. To question God's goodness, wisdom, fairness, truthfulness, love, or faithfulness is form of what?

Your response:

13. Based on information in the handout, it was stated that - "A determined rejection of Jesus and an absolute and permanent refusal to believe, results in what?"

Your response:

14. Write out 2 Corinthians 6:2 in its entirety.

I pray that this lesson has been a blessing to you.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know, that your labor is not in vain in the Lord. [1 Cor. 15:58]

In The Master's Service,

Pastor Austin