

THE PUZZLING STATEMENTS OF JESUS

PART 3 - THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN

“And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.” Matt. 12:31 (NIV)

Also Mark 3:28-29 & Luke 12:8-10

To bring some clarity to this puzzling statement we have to start with some basic rules for reading the Bible.

RULE 1) UNDERSTAND WORDS ACCORDING TO WHAT THE AUTHOR MEANT WHEN THEY WERE WRITTEN.

“Blasphemy” is obviously a very important word in this verse. If we’re talking about “*blasphemy against the Holy Spirit*” we know who the Holy Spirit is and we know what “against” means, but “*blasphemy*” isn’t a word we use everyday. So what does it mean?

Blaspheme (def) = The act of insulting or showing contempt or lack of reverence for God.

RULE 2) SCRIPTURE INTERPRETS SCRIPTURE

Whenever we come across a Bible verse that’s difficult to understand, one of the best ways to start to understand it better is to look up what other Scriptures have to say about that topic. The Bible begins to talk about the concept of blasphemy way back in Isaiah.

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter (Isaiah 5:20)

Other helpful passages include ...

I was a blasphemer once I was a persecutor. I was a violent man, but I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief (1 Timothy 1:13)

When the Helper comes, He will prove to the people of the world the truth about sin, about being right with God and about judgment. He will prove to them that sin is not believing in Me (John 16:8-9)

RULE 3) UNDERSTAND UNCLEAR PASSAGES IN THE LIGHT OF CLEAR PASSAGES.

We have to understand Matthew 12:31, in light of other passages such as ...

For God so loved the world that He gave His only one and only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life (John 3:16)

RULE 4) CONTEXT IS VITAL.

The context of Jesus’ statement here is a conversation with the Pharisees ...

... when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons." (Matthew 12:24)

- a) We learn from the context that this blasphemy against the Holy Spirit begins in the heart.
- b) Blasphemy also involves the spoken word.
- c) Blasphemy is not some sudden impulse.

RULE 5) READ THE BIBLE UNDERSTANDING THAT ITS PRIMARY PURPOSE IS TO CHANGE OUR LIVES.

For example, it changes my life when I understand the seriousness of sin. It's also life changing to know that my salvation is absolutely 100% secure.

WHAT NOW?

The opposite of blaspheming the Holy Spirit is to be filled with the Spirit, i.e. to be completely under the control of the Holy Spirit and surrendered to him.

Perhaps you're a Believer and you know you have been keeping the Holy Spirit at arms length. Then you need to know that you can be forgiven. You haven't blasphemed the Spirit. However, you may be wasting your life. God is willing to forgive you and give you a fresh start and to fill you again with his Spirit.

Maybe you haven't fully committed your life to Christ yet. If that's you, then the message God has for you here in Matthew 12:31 is this; to go to your grave rejecting Jesus Christ, THAT is the unforgivable sin. Because once you leave this life there is no longer any opportunity to receive God's forgiveness.

Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people (Hebrews 9:27-28)

You can change your eternal future by doing business with God right now. All you need to do is pray something like this

- Ask God to forgive you for rejecting him. Tell him about specific sins that you know of and ask him to forgive you for those too.
- Invite him to fill you with his Holy Spirit and lead your life from this moment forward.
- Thank him for his gift of forgiveness and for your new life following Jesus.