

**Unforgiveable Sin**  
**Mark 3:22-30**  
**January 20, 2013**

## Introduction

What we will study today is among the scariest verses in the Bible, yet it is the most encouraging verses in the Bible. It should frighten those who are comfortable and comfort those who are frightened. This passage is one of the most misunderstood passages in Scripture, so I want to take the time to explain it fully what it means to perform the unforgiveable sin and what blaspheming the Holy Spirit means. My prayer is that we will understand what our Lord means and how we can be reassured that we are not doing that.

I quoted C.S. Lewis last week on the three views of Jesus. He was tired of the nonsense that Jesus was only a good man, so he sought to clarify who Jesus is. Because Jesus claims to be God, we are left with 3 choices. We can call Him crazy (as we learned last week that His family thought He was not right in the head). We can call Him a liar, or we can call Him Lord and God. Those are the only three choices that we have about our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Remember this has to do with the claims of Him being God—how do we respond to His claims. The Jewish leaders failed miserably in recognizing Jesus as Lord. They committed the unforgivable sin. What did they say?

**Mark 3:22-30** *And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul! By the prince of demons He is driving out demons."* <sup>23</sup>*So Jesus called them and spoke to them in parables: "How can Satan drive out Satan? <sup>24</sup>If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. <sup>25</sup>If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. <sup>26</sup>And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. <sup>27</sup>In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house. <sup>28</sup>I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. <sup>29</sup>But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin."* <sup>30</sup>*He said this because they were saying, "He has an evil spirit."*

## I. The Accusation

**Note:** Parallel passage is in Matthew 12:24-32.

- The evidence of His power
  - Jesus was immensely popular
  - There was a crowd everywhere He went

**Mark 1:45** *However, he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction.*

**Mark 2:2** *Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive them, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them.*

**Mark 3:7-8** *But Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the sea. And a great multitude from Galilee followed Him, and from Judea <sup>8</sup>and Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the Jordan; and those from Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard how many things He was doing, came to Him.*

- Not only that, He healed tens of thousands of people (we only have a small sample in the gospels)

**John 21:25** *And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.*

- People are continuously exposed to His healing power
- Not only that but they are exposed to His teaching

**Matthew 7:28** *And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching,*

**Matthew 22:33** *And when the multitudes heard this, they were astonished at His teaching. (After Sadducees ask Jesus about woman marrying multiple husbands—Jesus' answer silenced them).*

- Despite all the evidence He has performed, no one has recognized or declared Him to be the Son of God
- Scribes from Jerusalem
  - *And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem*
  - The Pharisees and scribes have been following Jesus closely
  - They want Him dead—they are already opposed to Him

**Mark 3:6** *Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Him, how they might destroy Him.*

- Possessed by Beelzebub
  - Beelzebub is another name for Satan
  - Means—Lord of the flies (or in some cases...Lord of the dung)
  - This is the vilest slander they could come up with against Jesus
  - They are not denying that Jesus is doing the supernatural work
  - In their eyes—it is either God or Satan—and they believe Jesus to be Satanic
  - This accusation comes up often

**John 8:48** *Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?"*

**John 8:52** *Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.'*

**Matthew 9:34** *But the Pharisees said, "He casts out demons by the ruler of the demons."*

## II. Responding to Accusation

**Note:** In Matthew's account, he says that the Pharisees are outside, trying to poison His ministry. He also says that Jesus knew their thoughts. Here in Mark, Jesus calls the Pharisees in and talks with them (showing them grace and pointing out their logical fallacies).

- Silly logic

*"How can Satan drive out Satan? <sup>24</sup>If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. <sup>25</sup>If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. <sup>26</sup>And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come.*

- How can Satan cast out Satan?
- How can a kingdom that is divided against itself stand?
- Meaning
  - Satan would be blowing his cover
  - He would be weakening his kingdom (Jesus said that it would end)
  - Demons are in one accord—against God
  - Why would they be helping God here?
- The religious leaders refuse to see the absurdity of their beliefs

- The truth

- Binding the strong man
  - Strong man = Satan
  - Who is stronger than Satan? God
  - Jesus is binding the strong man and plundering his house
  - Plundering what? (people's souls—He is casting out demons from people—setting them free).
- Jesus is in complete opposition to Satan and his kingdom

**1 John 3:8** *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.*

### III. Blaspheming the Holy Spirit

<sup>28</sup>*I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. <sup>29</sup>But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin." <sup>30</sup>He said this because they were saying, "He has an evil spirit."*

- God's nature—forgiving

**Psalms 103:3** *Who forgives all your iniquities*

**Exodus 34:6-7** *And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, <sup>7</sup>keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."*

- No matter how severe our sins are—God forgives
- Jesus forgives blasphemes against Himself

**1 Timothy 1:12-13** *And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, <sup>13</sup>although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.*

- Jesus forgives those who placed Him on the cross and murdered Him

**Luke 23:34** *Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."*

- What's the eternal sin? They said that He had an evil spirit.
  - What if I did that? Does that mean I'm never to receive forgiveness
  - Not necessarily—if you did it out of ignorance (without knowing Jesus as God)
- Unforgiveable sin happens when a person has the full knowledge—the full understanding of the gospel of Christ and you say that is all a lie
- Blaspheming the Holy Spirit
  - Jesus did all His works by the power of the Holy Spirit

**Mark 1:12** *Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness.*

**Luke 4:14** *Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region.*

- By rejecting what the Holy Spirit reveals about Christ through miracles and through preaching, then you have blasphemed the Holy Spirit

**Note:** He restricted the independent use of His divine attributes, and He left Himself to the will of the Father and the power of the Spirit. Whatever He did was the Father's will and was done through the Spirit's power. So if you say Jesus is satanic, you have just blasphemed the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit doing His work through Him. The Holy Spirit came upon Him at His baptism, the Holy Spirit led Him from there into the wilderness to be tempted—was with Him through His temptation. The Holy Spirit then anointed Him to preach. If you were there and you saw it and you heard it and your final conclusion was He's demonic—you can't be saved because that's your ultimate conclusion with full revelation. So this is unique to those people who had that full revelation.

**Hebrews 2:3-4** *how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, <sup>4</sup>God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?*

**Note:** You know about Christ, His life and ministry. You know it from the eyewitnesses—from the Apostles who perform signs and wonders to affirm their testimony. If you ignore those evidence—then how can you escape judgment?

God is not saying, "I don't like the way you treat My Son; I will never forgive you, even if you come to Me." No what He is saying is, "You have had so much evidence and you have drawn your conclusions, therefore it is obvious you will never come to Me. So you will never be forgiven." God could not have done any more.