

Blasphemy

A question as we begin our consideration of these scriptures that the Lord has given to us here in Luke chapter 12 . . . "Can God", "will God" forgive us for any sin and every sin that we will ever commit?

That is a question that many, perhaps most people within the Christian church wonder about. And we might want to immediately say "Yes", that the "Grace of God" is so big and so strong and so loving, He can and He will forgive us for any and every sin that we could ever possibly commit.

But if that be so, what do we do with these words given to us here in Luke chapter 12 verse 10. And what does God mean by them? Listen!

¹⁰ . . . anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him, but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven. (Luke 12:10)

This is a strange and incomprehensible possibility to consider, that there really could be a word, a conduct, a behavior, a circumstance of life that you or I might involve ourselves within, in which the offense we commit is so wrong and so evil that it is absolutely and eternally unforgivable.

Our knowledge of God, though limited as it may be, gives us full confidence that God truly is loving and He is forgiving. And we have confidence that He can forgive most everything that we do if we willingly repent of it.

And even our commonsense cries out that there can be no path we would take that is so evil that we cannot, at some point, turn back around, as did the prodigal son, and return to our Father's house and beg for forgiveness, and He would forgive us.

And yes, that really is almost always true. But these words in today's passage tell us that there is also the possibility of something very different, a word we can say, a decision we can make, a behavior or conduct we can involve ourselves within, a path we can take and get so lost that there can be no turning back. And when that takes place, our souls are eternally and irreconcilably lost, condemned forever to an everlasting damnation in the suffering fires of hell.

These scriptures call this word, this decision, this behavior, this condition of soul “blasphemy”. And it is a path on which no man, woman, or child dares tread. Listen again to these simple, but profound words!

¹⁰ . . . anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him, but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven. (Luke 12:10)

As we consider these words, may we first say that thankfully, once we are truly saved, we have assurance within these scriptures that, as believers, we cannot for any reason ever lose the eternal salvation that Christ has given to us. And because of that, as believers, we cannot knowingly or unknowingly, or even by accident venture into this condition that God calls “blasphemy”.

And if we are ever tempted to “blaspheme” we are assured in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that as believers,

¹³No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Comforting Words! Our God truly is faithful. He does not desire that anyone should perish. And He lovingly and freely has accomplished everything that it will take to provide us the mercy and grace of eternal salvation.

But, with that being said, I want to remind us that within these scriptures God has defined some specific requirements that He has included within those steps that we must take as we receive His blessed eternal salvation. We are told in Romans chapter 10 that,

⁹ . . . if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. (Romans 10:9-10)

Why do we need to remind ourselves of this necessity? It's because regrettably many of our people within the evangelical church of today, and especially many of our church leaders, have adopted “easy believism” ideas about how God saves us, that if a person will simply walk down an isle and say certain specific words that they call the “sinner's prayer” their salvation is then guaranteed.

But too often, those people's hearts may not have been fully surrendered to Christ and to His plan of salvation. And if that be so, then salvation may not be able to come to full and complete fruition in them. And our Lord knows that that can be so and He lovingly warns us in 2 Peter 1, saying,

¹⁰Therefore . . . be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, ¹¹and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:10-11)

Thankfully, once we have "made our calling and election sure", we can know with a certainty that our salvation is an everlasting provision from God, continuing on out into timeless eternity. We cannot lose it and neither can anyone take it away from us. That truth is made clear to us in scriptures like those given in John chapter 10 that tell us,

²⁷My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. ³⁰I and My Father are one." (John 10:27-30)

No one is able to "snatch" us out of the hand of God, no one. And these words especially include our own selves and our behavior. We cannot remove ourselves out of the hand of God.

The measure of evil that it would take to condemn a soul to eternal hell has been removed from those of us who are saved and it has been replaced by the Holy Spirit of God. And God's Spirit remains in us forever as A "deposit" guaranteeing our salvation for all eternity. Listen to that promise given in 2 Corinthians chapter 1,

²⁰For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. ²¹Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, ²²set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. (2 Corinthians 1:20-22)

And also in Ephesians chapter 1,

¹³And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him

with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14)

These promises are trustworthy, and they are given to you and to me who have truly given our hearts to Christ as our Savior and Lord to reassure us that we will not, neither can we, ever turn our backs upon Christ and become one of those who are eternally lost through “blasphemy”.

But a question that I have often pondered, and I would ask you to do the same, is, “When does true and everlasting salvation actually take place within a person's soul?” As we mentioned a moment ago, here in our southern bible belt churches, we love our altar calls, each week asking people to walk down an aisle to bow their knee and pray to receive Christ. And many do. And praise the Lord, for some of them, their lives really do change and they show evidence that salvation really did take place at that moment.

But sadly, for others, it doesn't seem to take long for them to return to the lifestyles and behaviors they once enjoyed, temptations “snatching” away the seeds of God's word that had been sown in them.

As with the “Parable of The Soils” given by the Lord Jesus, they believe for a while, but the temptations and the pressures and the attractions of this world become too much for them and they slowly drift away, back into the old habits and behaviors they once enjoyed.

Folks, it is a simple, but profound truth, that until we are truly saved, we remain unsaved. And unsaved, our souls are lost and are vulnerable to the possibility of the eternal damnation that comes from the “blasphemy” that Jesus is speaking about here. Listen again to His warning!

¹⁰. . . anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him, but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven. (Luke 12:10)

Note these peculiar boundaries defined for us here. Here it is said that we are able to “speak a word against the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus, and it will be forgiven us.”

And in 1 Timothy 1, the Apostle Paul recounts those circumstances in his earlier life, before salvation, and says,

¹³although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did *it* ignorantly in unbelief. (1 Timothy 1:13)

It seems from these words that even as an unbeliever a person cannot, in ignorant unbelief, accidentally blaspheme and thereby condemn their souls to eternal hell. Eternal souls are too important to God for Him to allow that.

No, the “blasphemy” being spoken about in these scriptures seems always to be a deliberate act, a deliberate behavior, a deliberate conduct, a condition of soul that is beyond the normal boundaries of ordinary sinful behavior. It is as Jesus tells us here in Mark 3,

²⁸“Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; ²⁹but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation”. (Mark 3:28-29)

The blasphemy that will bring us eternal condemnation seems always to be willful and deliberate and is a direct offense against the person and work of the Holy Spirit.

But why would this be so? Why is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit different from blasphemy against the Lord Jesus, or blasphemy against God the Father? Are they not all “co-equal” with each other? Are they not actually and literally “One”? Does not blasphemy against one of them mean that we have blasphemed against them all, and consequently against the Holy Spirit?

Those are logical and very legitimate questions, but they are questions that have mysterious answers, answers that do not correspond to our ordinary human logic and reasoning.

And I confess that I do not at this time have a sufficient enough understanding from the Lord to know the answers. These scriptures don't give us a simple and direct explanation concerning these matters. And many of our most trusted of Bible Scholars have debated these questions for centuries.

So, for the time being, we'll need to just do as these scriptures exhort us to do, and we'll work with the understanding that we have received regarding these matters. And that understanding tells us very simply that,

¹⁰ . . . anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him, but to him who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven. (Luke 12:10)

The understanding given here tells us simply that while a person remains unsaved, they are always vulnerable, moment by moment, to taking steps on into a sinful state from which they can never return.

And as believers, this "narrow path" that God has called us to walk, winds right along beside and through that other path, that "broad path that leads to destruction". And with the "spiritual eyes" that God has given to us, we are able to easily observe that many of the people of this world are nigh unto the symptoms of "blasphemy".

They love the world and the things that this world has to offer. And many of them are doing as these scriptures describe, daily carrying out the bidding of their master, the devil. They steal, they kill and they destroy. Though they think themselves to be rich, they are poor, wretched, naked and blind. And they draw others into their dissipation.

Have they perhaps reached that point of no return? They may have, but it's my hope that they haven't. Yes, as they reject the Lord Jesus, that can be at a beginning point. But as long as a person has breath, there may still be a possibility that they can turn and receive Him as their Savior and Lord.

Many of our most trusted of Bible Scholars believe that the rejection of the salvation that Christ gives is the ultimate meaning of this word "blasphemy". And I also, understand that to be so. That it is in the salvation that the Lord Jesus gives to us that the Holy Spirit is also given to us. And therefore to reject the salvation that the Lord Jesus gives is to reject the Holy Spirit and to "blaspheme" Him.

May I say that again . . . it seems that it is only after a person has truly been confronted with their need for the salvation that the Lord Jesus gives, and they have then made a conscious choice and decision to reject His salvation, that they have also rejected the Holy Spirit and true "blasphemy" has taken place.

With that being said, are there other possibilities and circumstances and situations in which a person can reject and “blaspheme” the Holy Spirit. One of my favorite Bible Scholars, R. C. Sproul, taught that yes, a person can utter words that are blasphemous.

I can only recall one instance that I would believe that real “blasphemy” took place in my presence. It involved the man that I learned my clock repair hobby from.

This man was a devout Jehovah’s Witness and an Elder in his congregation. He was very well learned in their false doctrine and he constantly tried to get me to believe it.

Basic to their false doctrine is the belief that Jesus is not God. He is only a man, a very important man, yes, but still only a man. And so yes, they “reject” and “blaspheme” the Lord Jesus with their false beliefs.

But far worse, their false doctrines teach that the Holy Spirit does not exist separately from God the Father, that the Holy Spirit mentioned in these scriptures is only a manifestation of the thoughts and mind of Jehovah God.

And so, with those beliefs, it seemed of no consequence at all to this man to curse the person of the Holy Spirit. And he did! And it was shocking to me.

And I believe that by his words, he probably did commit the “blasphemy” that is spoken about here, and that if it had not already taken place at an earlier time, it surely took place at that moment.

So, after four years of friendship and numerous debates about these scriptures, we parted ways, never to spend time together again, a very sad end to a precious friendship.

Should I have gone back and tried to encourage him back to redemption? No! God’s Holy Spirit somehow made my spirit to know that this was “blasphemy” and that there was no further possibility of redemption for this man. He had reached his point of no return.

May I conclude our thoughts today by saying again that one of the surest ways of committing blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is to ultimately and finally refuse the salvation that Christ has provided to us.

The Holy Spirit is the unction that brings us to the ultimate decision of receiving Jesus as our Savior and to the receiving of His Spirit. And I have no doubt that God will make it clear within each person's mind and soul as they ultimately accept or reject the Person and work of the Holy Spirit.

So, the encouragement remains for you and for me to make very sure that we ourselves are saved, that we have truly given our hearts to the Lord Jesus. To do as we're told in Romans chapter 10,

⁹ . . . if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. (Romans 10:9-10)

And we can confess Him with our mouth best by giving the gospel to anyone and to everyone else who will listen.

I'll close with these words from 2 Peter 1.

¹⁰Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, ¹¹and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:10-11)

Let's Pray.