

QUESTION: What does it mean in Matthew 12:31-32 to "blaspheme against the Holy Spirit"? Is there an "unforgivable sin"?

ANSWER: There is no such thing as an "unforgivable sin" for a born again Christian who has put their faith and trust in Jesus. **That word is not even in the Bible.** The dictionary defines "blasphemy" as **insulting or showing contempt, or lack of reverence for God.** However, the "blasphemy against the Spirit" in Matthew 12:31-32 is very specific: the Pharisees had attributed Jesus' miracles to the power of Satan instead of God (see verses 22-28). Jesus said that He cast out demons by **the Spirit of God** (vs. 28)(see also Acts 10:38), but the Pharisees said it was the power of Satan (Beelzebub). Jesus then says in verse 37, "For by your words you will be justified, and **by your words you will be CONDEMNED.**" The Pharisees will stand before the Judgment seat of God one day ("in the age to come") and will have to listen to **their own words** as they are condemned to hell for not believing in Jesus. In fact, Jesus says He is the one to whom all judgment is given, so they will stand before the very One they rejected on earth. But why is it that blasphemy against **the Holy Spirit in particular** is unforgivable? Because it is the **Holy Spirit who convicts men in their hearts** of the truth about Jesus (John 15:26; John 16:7-14), and to ignore or reject that convicting means there is **no other chance, no other WAY** for a person to believe and be saved (Hebrews 6:4-6; Heb. 10:29). Since **all other sins** can be forgiven when a person accepts Jesus as Savior, then **the sin of hardening their hearts against the convicting of the Holy Spirit** (and thus rejecting that forgiveness through Jesus) has no way of being forgiven.

- **Matthew 12:31-32** "Therefore I say to you, **EVERY SIN and blasphemy WILL BE forgiven** men, but the **blasphemy against the Spirit** will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, **it will not be forgiven him**, either in this age or in the age to come."

Definition: "Speaks a word against the Son of Man" -- "Son of Man" was Jesus' own way of referring to Himself. A person may speak against or blaspheme Jesus out of ignorance, but if they later repent and are saved, that sin is forgiven. Saul of Tarsus, who later became the Apostle Paul, is a prime example.

- **I 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; although I [*Paul*] was formerly a **blasphemer**, and a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy, because I did it **IGNORANTLY** in unbelief."

Two other scripture passages that are **misinterpreted** by some, and cause some people to think they can lose their salvation are: Hebrews 6:4-6 and Hebrews 10:26-29. It is **SO IMPORTANT** to **read scripture in its CONTEXT**, so that you understand **TO WHOM** the writer of Hebrews is speaking here. These warnings were being given to Jews who had started to follow Christ, but then went back into Judaism, even **to the point of offering animal sacrifices in the temple!** The warning to these people was that **if they "fell away" from Christ (stopped believing in Jesus)**, the animal sacrifices would no longer cover their sins, as they had in the Old Testament. Jesus was the **FINAL SACRIFICE** for **SINS!** **If a person rejects JESUS, then there is NO OTHER SACRIFICE that can take away their sins.** There has been so much misunderstanding and wrong teaching of Hebrews 6:6. The ones to whom "it is impossible to renew them again to repentance" are the ones who have heard the gospel, even seen and felt the working and convicting power of the Holy Spirit (verse 4), but they only "tasted" of the gift of salvation - **they never actually received**

Christ! They "tasted" of God's precious gift of salvation, but then "spit it out" by turning their backs on Christ and going back to a religion of "dead works" (Heb. 6:1).

The message is the same in Hebrews chapter 10, and again it is dangerous to take one or two verses out of context. Verse 12 says, "but He (Jesus), **having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time**, sat down at the right hand of God." Verse 18 says, "Now where there is forgiveness of these things, there is **no longer any offering for sin**" (meaning the animal sacrifices of the Old Covenant). These people were saying that the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross was not sufficient, or didn't count at all, and they were going back to the Old Covenant sacrifices. Verse 27 warns them that only "a terrifying expectation of judgment" awaits them if they reject Christ's sacrifice, because "there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins" (verse 26). Hebrews 10:29 says, "Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy WHO has TRAMPLED the SON of GOD UNDERFOOT, counted the blood of the covenant (the BLOOD of JESUS) by which he was sanctified a common (unholy) thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace?"

There is that "insulting the Spirit of grace" or blaspheming the Holy Spirit again. It is only those who reject Christ's sacrifice altogether, and count His blood as unholy, who are guilty of that sin. Jesus Himself said, "I say to you, **EVERY SIN and blasphemy WILL BE forgiven** men" (Matt. 12:31), and I John 1:9, "If we CONFESS our sins, **He is faithful and just to FORGIVE us our sins**, and to cleanse us from ALL unrighteousness." If you believe that Jesus' blood is holy, and that He died for your sins, there is NO SUCH THING as a sin that CANNOT be forgiven you. The only unforgivable sin is to REJECT JESUS!!!!