

How You Could Commit the Unpardonable Sin!

By Herbert W Armstrong
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Here again is a shocking realization that some have committed this sin.
It impels repetition of this solemn warning!

WE NEED to send you this WARNING again -- that some former brethren either may have blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, or may stand this moment in danger of it!

Test of Experience

Each year one or two church members begin to find fault and accuse the work of God, and in this disgruntled spirit the seeds of discord are sown in other members. Without an exception, where any brother or sister begins to criticize, finds fault with the work of God and then has gone on finally to accuse this work -- to deny that it is the very work of God, and to become embittered against it -- that person has lost all real spirituality -- all contact with God, and has either gone back into the world, or over into false doctrines and beliefs.

It's as if they had committed the unpardonable sin.

What Is The Unpardonable Sin?

The precise words, "unpardonable sin" are not used in the Bible. Yet there is an unpardonable sin, for Jesus said plainly: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit SHALL NOT BE FORGIVEN UNTO MEN" (Mat. 12:31).

What IS this sin that shall never be forgiven?

Jesus had just cast out a demon. In so doing He was an INSTRUMENT being used in THE WORK OF GOD. God Almighty is working out His PURPOSE here below! The time had come for God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to carry on His work thru the HUMAN BODY of Jesus Christ, His own begotten Son. Jesus was then the human instrument -- but the work was GOD'S WORK -- and the real power that did the work was THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Let me make this plain. Understand this. Get it straight.

Jesus said He spoke nothing of Himself. The Father that sent Him gave Him commandments what He should say. He spoke only as the Father directed. He said that of Himself -- in His human BODY -- He could do nothing. "The Father that dwelleth in me, HE doeth the works" (John 14:10). The Father dwelt in Jesus by the Holy Spirit.

The work of God, at that time, was carried on BY THE HOLY SPIRIT dwelling in, and acting thru, the BODY Of Jesus -- then a HUMAN BODY. But that BODY was a mere agent or instrument. Of itself it was powerless. The WORK OF GOD was actually being done BY THE HOLY SPIRIT working in that HUMAN BODY.

It was NOT the power of Jesus' human body, but the Holy Spirit, which, working IN Jesus' human body, performed this WORK OF GOD by casting out the demon.

But the scoffing Pharisees accused Jesus of being a false prophet -- THEY DENIED THAT THIS WAS ACTUALLY GOD'S WORK -- they said Jesus did not cast out demons by any power except that of Beelzebub, or Satan.

Jesus then said He cast out demons by the SPIRIT OF GOD. Then it was that He showed that DENYING THE WORK OF GOD -- ACCUSING THE WORK OF GOD OF BEING NOT THE WORK OF GOD, but that of the only other possible power, the DEVIL -- constituted blasphemy against the HOLY SPIRIT!

"And whosoever speaketh," continued Jesus (Mat. 12:32) -- NOTICE, just SPEAKING "a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, NEITHER IN THE WORLD TO COME."

Notice that! Take HEED! Take WARNING! It's time we wake up to the POWER OF GOD! It's time we TREMBLE before the Word of God! It's time we take these things more seriously! This can mean YOUR ETERNITY!

Any person could be forgiven for speaking against the Son of MAN -- that is, the human Jesus. Speaking against a human man can be forgiven. But when they spoke against THE WORK OF GOD being done thru that man, THEY WERE SPEAKING AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT! The man, Jesus, was merely the instrument. The WORK was the WORK OF GOD, DONE BY THE HOLY SPIRIT!

Christ's Body Today

During Jesus' earthly and human lifetime, GOD'S WORK was carried on thru His human body, but BY THE HOLY SPIRIT which dwelt in Him. After Jesus ascended to heaven, the Father sent the Holy Spirit to enter into the COLLECTIVE BODY of begotten children who formed God's Church. Now they were MANY MEMBERS -- many individual PERSONS -- but the ONE BODY OF CHRIST! Not the body of Jesus, the son of MAN -- but the BODY OF CHRIST -- of the MESSIAH -- the SON OF GOD!

Beginning that memorable day of Pentecost, 31 A.D., GOD'S WORK has been carried on BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, but thru this ONE BODY OF CHRIST, now consisting of the many human members who had become begotten children of God.

To those He had called and trained for positions of leadership in HIS WORK, Jesus had commissioned, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel." The WORK OF GOD was carried on by Peter and the apostles and evangelists and pastors and other elders and teachers and helpers under him -- by the Apostle Paul, and the evangelists, pastors, other elders, teachers and helpers under him. But they were mere INSTRUMENTS in the process. The POWER that did the WORK of God was the same HOLY SPIRIT!

Apostasy was prophesied. A great falling away. The whole world was to be deceived. The human members of the Body of Christ were to become scattered! They were to be persecuted, and the world dominated by the Great Whore, BABYLON THE GREAT, and her daughter harlots.

Nevertheless, just before the END of this WORLD, Jesus said plainly that HIS very Gospel of the Kingdom of God "shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the END (of the world) come" (Mat. 24:14). Jesus said also, in His Message to the Churches (Revelation 2 and 3), that to the "Church in Philadelphia" -- OUR VERY CHURCH OF TODAY, of very little power of our own -- He would OPEN A DOOR which would empower us to carry out His commission!

That door was opened! Once again, almost 1900 years later, JESUS' VERY GOSPEL is going out to the whole world! And just as in the days of the human Jesus -- just as in the days of the early apostles -- we are merely the powerless HUMAN INSTRUMENTS! The real WORK OF GOD is being carried on today thru us, BY THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD!

The real work, then, is not our work -- it is GOD'S WORK. Not of our human power, but BY THE POWER OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD!

In the very next verse, back in Matthew 12 (verse 33), Jesus had continued to say: "Either make the tree good, and his fruit good or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: FOR THE TREE IS KNOWN BY HIS FRUIT."

The FRUITS of this work are these: For the first time in more than 1850 years the same Gospel Jesus preached, THE KINGDOM OF GOD, is being preached and published into all the world as a witness. It is offending many in this world. The religious leaders of today -- the modern Pharisees -- attack it as the work of the Devil -- they call us false prophets, as they did Jesus. We are persecuted by the world. The world hates us. But many precious lives are being CHANGED, converted, begotten of God! God is producing a precious harvest for His Kingdom. New churches are being raised up around the world. New offices are being established. The flock is being fed. Evangelists, pastors, elders, are being trained as God calls them. The sick are being healed, the demons cast out.

The FRUITS of this tree are not corrupt -- they are the SAME FRUITS THAT the SAME HOLY SPIRIT produced in the human body of Jesus -- in the collective Body of Christ in apostolic days! THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES THE WORK, and the work is exactly the same -- the fruits the same -- as in the days of Christ and the apostles!

BEWARE!

Brethren, we whom God has called and is using are mere human persons. We are men of like passions as you -- as Elijah, as David, as Peter and Paul. We make mistakes. We do not do everything exactly as YOU may think you would do if God had called you to our office. But God did not call you to my office, or that of some of our evangelists and elders. God called US, knowing better than you know, our every human weakness. Yet he chose us in spite of that, and when you criticize and find fault are you not assuming to yourself the prerogatives of GOD? It is GOD who directs us -- uses us as His instruments.

Yet you may speak a word against us, personally, as human men, AND BE FORGIVEN. But mark carefully this! The very fact that you may be forgiven means that such speaking IS A SIN! -- a sin for which, IF YOU REPENT, God will forgive.

But -- and here's where you need to TREMBLE IN FEAR! -- if and when you criticize or accuse or condemn THE WORK, THEN YOU ARE SPEAKING AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT -- and if and when you do that, YOU SHALL NOT BE FORGIVEN! You shall not be forgiven now, or in the world to come -- the WORLD TOMORROW -- during the millennium or during the Great White Throne JUDGMENT!

This sort of thing always starts out with personal criticism and fault-finding against the one God has chosen and is using in the office of apostle in HIS WORK. But oh, brethren, how we have been grieved to see a few here and there along the way, thru the years, start out by finding fault against the human person of God's servant, and then in that disgruntled and embittered spirit proceed progressively into condemning THE WORK OF GOD, and denying that it IS the work of God.

This work has grown too great and powerful to be the work of a human man, apart from either God or the devil. If this is not the very WORK OF GOD, then it must be that of SATAN. And to accuse it -- to condemn it -- I ask you, brethren, IS IT NOT MORE THAN POSSIBLE THAT THIS IS SPEAKING AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT, and therefore is the UNPARDONABLE SIN?

Brethren, in fear and trembling, I warn you, with all the love in my heart, "BEWARE!"

I have always noticed that those whose hearts -- and their pocketbooks as well -- are really in the work of God are the ones who remain spiritual, close to God, and who are growing spiritually. And, without exception, every single member of God's Church who has ever lost interest in this WORK OF GOD -- this work of carrying the Gospel to the world going out now from Pasadena headquarters -- begins to fall

backward spiritually. Soon such people go off into false doctrines. Their understanding is closed. They begin to believe errors and lies. They become more and more bitter, unhappy, and they either go back into the world or they go into some false offshoot movement which bears no fruit, and fails totally to carry out the Commission of Christ -- THE WORK OF GOD!

Your own spirituality -- your closeness to GOD -- your spiritual growth and development -- your hope of eternal salvation in the Kingdom of God, DEPENDS, THEN, ON KEEPING YOUR HEART IN THE VERY WORK OF GOD!

The very PURPOSE of our lives should be, NOT the social enjoyment of local church congregations, but GETTING CHRIST'S GOSPEL TO THE WORLD! That's the MAIN purpose of the local churches. That's the MAIN PURPOSE OF YOUR LIFE, AND MINE!