

## Daily Bible Study

### *“Alliance or Conquest & The Unpardonable Sin”*

*(Part 2)*

*Mark 3:22-30*

*January 10-16, 2010*

**THE LORD’S DAY** – After several weeks away, we now return to our study of The Gospel According to Mark as we take for our text, **Mark 3:22-30**. We are looking at Part-2 of a lesson entitled “*Alliance or Conquest & The Unpardonable Sin*”. We have seen in Mark’s opening chapters that Jesus was beginning to face mounting opposition. He was not merely up against physical or human opposition from the scribes and other opponents but also against a spiritual foe; namely, Satan (*Beelzebub*) himself. In the demonstration of His power namely by casting out demons, we saw in **verse 22** Jesus had been accused by the Scribes and Pharisees of *having Beelzebub*. They were saying that He was possessed by Satan himself and this was the source of His power, an alliance with Satan. In **verses 23-27** Jesus declared His power over Satan by giving refutation and illustration of His conquest of Satan and the demons. Jesus then goes on to give a warning that there is an eternal sin, one that can never be forgiven, and that sin is blasphemy against The Holy Spirit. This will be our theme for this week. Read **Mark 3:22-30**.

*The Word Applied & A Suggestion for Prayer: Prayerfully read the text then ask God to both teach you from His Word this week and then give you opportunity to practice what you learn.*

**MONDAY** – We now pick up our text starting in **verse 28** where Jesus uses a word or phrase that is familiar to us from our reading the words of Jesus from Sacred Scripture. The word in the NKJV is “*Assuredly*”. Many of us are more familiar with the KJV rendering of the word as “*verily*”. The word in the Greek language is Ἀμήν - amen {am-ane’}. Here is what the Greek lexicon says of this word: The word “amen” is a most remarkable word. It was transliterated directly from the Hebrew into the Greek of the New Testament, then into Latin and into English and many other languages, so that it is practically a universal word. It has been called the best known word in human speech. The word is directly related -- in fact, almost identical -- to the Hebrew word for “believe” (amam), or faithful. Thus, it came to mean “sure” or “truly”, an expression of absolute trust and confidence. -- HMM. If you remember in **Revelation 3:14**, Scripture says Jesus Himself is “*the Amen, the faithful and true witness*”. This word in its literal definition means “firm” and metaphorically as we have just seen it means “faithful, sure, true”. Jesus is saying, what I am about to say is a firm, faithful, and authoritative truth which you would be wise to hear and heed. All of God’s Word carries this faithful authority and Jesus used this expression often to bring attention to the absolute trustworthiness of what He had to say. God’s Word is the final authority and here Jesus is making no doubt that He is giving a solemn declaration. Read **Psalms 119:89, Matthew 5:18, 24:35**.

*The Word Applied: What is your attitude concerning The Word of God? How does your life show and demonstrate that you really take it as the absolute, firm, faithful and final authority?*

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, open my eyes and heart to tremble before Your Word (Isaiah 66:2). Help me bow humbly before Sacred Scripture and give me power Holy Spirit to obey it.*

**TUESDAY** – After Jesus uses the word *Assuredly*, graciously getting the attention of those who would be wise to hear Him and learn, He continues by giving a small but incredibly powerful and loaded discourse on a subject or topic that people through the centuries have come to know and describe as “The Unpardonable Sin”. This thought is taken right from the text itself where Jesus speaks of an *eternal condemnation* and uses the very powerful and frightening word “*never*”. According to Jesus, there is a sin which can *never* be forgiven. I said several weeks ago in Part – 1 of this lesson that many people who fear they have committed this sin have not while there are others who never have feared committing it and they may very well have reason to fear. Please understand that the fact of whether or not one has committed the sin which *never has forgiveness* is not based on how they feel about it but

rather on the firm truth of God's faithful, authoritative word. Before we move past this first expression of *Assuredly I say to you...* I would briefly draw your attention to who is doing the speaking. This phrase could be said by a lot of people but when Jesus speaks it, I feel at a loss to describe the importance, weightiness, and seriousness of it. I hear sovereignty when I read it. I hear authority and power. In the solemnity (earnestness and gravity) I also hear grace, warning, and compassion. The word *I* is not in the Greek text as it literally reads Ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν or Amen (firm, faithful, surely) lego (to say, to speak) humin (you) but it is obvious and important that we understand it is Jesus (God) speaking. Even in this horrible case of a person blaspheming the Holy Spirit, choosing to commit this *eternal sin*, it is God (Jesus) who stands as and remains the final authority, judge and determiner. Jesus' famous and familiar expression or better said "solemn declaration" of *Assuredly I say to you...* is one that in its truest sense can only be uttered by Sovereign God. God help us to hear and heed His warnings. Read **Matthew 5:29-30, 7:24-27**.

*The Word Applied:* *How do you react to the solemn warnings of Jesus? Is there a seriousness and concern aroused in your soul when you hear God speak to you from Sacred Scripture?*

*Suggestion for Prayer:* *Father, give us sensitive, willing, and eager hearts to listen and obey You. Thank You for loving us enough to declare to us the way of life through Your Word.*

**WEDNESDAY** – After His expression introducing an upcoming solemn truth, Jesus proceeds with a statement which is brimming full of hope and comfort to the penitent soul. Before speaking to the sin for which there is no forgiveness Jesus by comparison says *...all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter...* Jesus says *all sins...* in **verse 28**. All Hamartema (sin, evil deed) will be forgiven. This of course is a reference to all sins of which men sincerely repent (**Acts 2:38**). The list of heinous sins in Scripture that were forgiven by God is long and ugly. Might I add that it is also in a sense hopeful and encouraging to any penitent sinner? From David's adultery and murder (**2 Samuel 12:13**), to the Prodigals *riotous living* (**Luke 15:13, 21-24**), to Peter's triple denial of Jesus (**Matthew 26:74-75**), to Paul's (Saul's) merciless persecution of Christians (**Acts 9:1, 22:4**) Jesus declares *...all sins will be forgiven...* As true believers in Jesus who have been brought to repentance and faith by the Power of The Holy Spirit (**Acts 11:17, 2 Timothy 2:25**) we can look at our own lives and recognize heinous sin which God graciously forgave us of as He placed them on Christ and punished Him for them (**Isaiah 53:4-6**). To the truly repentant beloved there is always forgiveness. Read **Isaiah 55:6-7**.

*The Word Applied:* *Are you living a life of repentance, forsaking your way and thoughts? If you are returning to The Lord, take heart He will abundantly pardon. Amen!*

*Suggestion for Prayer:* *Father, help me live a life that is marked with forsaking my way and thoughts and turning to and seeking You. Thank You for forgiveness of my sins.*

**THURSDAY** – We ran through a little list of sins in Scripture in yesterday's lesson and pointed out there is real forgiveness to the repentant. Luke tells us of a woman in **Luke 7:36-50** who was a sinner, most likely a prostitute, and Jesus, forgave this repentant lady and tells a wonderful story to illustrate the love that results in a life which understands and has real forgiveness from Christ. There is forgiveness for us as vile sinners. *All sins and blasphemies* can be forgiven, except one. In a general sense we could say that all sin blasphemes God. The Apostle Paul was guilty of blaspheming God as He says so in **1 Timothy 1:13** and yet he was granted forgiveness. In his account of this very story Matthew even adds that Jesus said "Anyone who speaks a word against The Son of Man it will be forgiven him..." (**Matthew 12:32**) This would be where the Apostle Paul once found himself. Getting back to our text in **Mark 3** Jesus mentions in **verse 29** that *he who blasphemes against The Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation*. There is one Blasphemeo (to speak reproachfully, rail at, revile, calumniate, blaspheme), one defiant irreverence if you will for which there is no forgiveness. When Jesus says there is no forgiveness that is precisely what He means. He uses the word *never* *aion* (for ever, an unbroken age, perpetuity of time, eternity) and the connected word *eternal aionios* (without beginning and end, that which always has been and always will be) for description and clarity. Matthew in His account records Jesus saying *...it will not be forgiven him either in this age or the age to come*. Mark it down, those who commit this sin NEVER find

forgiveness. We'll see tomorrow that Mark then adds a parenthetical word in **verse 30** as he explains in the context before us how this sin is committed.

*The Word Applied: Meditate for a few minutes on the fact that you have blasphemed the Almighty God in words, thoughts, and deeds. Ask The Holy Spirit to examine & convict you.*

*Suggestion for Prayer: Father, forgive me my great debts to You. Help me forgive others also.*

**FRIDAY** – **Verse 30** helps explain to us in this context what Jesus was referring to specifically as the *eternal sin*. Mark tells us *...because they said, He has an unclean spirit. They refer to the scribes of verse 22 who accused Christ of having Beelzebub. They said He was doing His miracles by the power and help of the devil and demons and furthermore that He was possessed by Satan himself. This was the point to which they blasphemed the Holy Spirit; that when they knew in their own consciences Jesus worked these miracles as He said, by the finger, Spirit, kingdom and power of God, they attributed them to Satan's power, rejecting Divine illumination, and so were guilty of the sin against the Holy Spirit; the unpardonable sin, the sin for which there is no forgiveness. Tomorrow we will summarize these thoughts but let me add for today this blasphemy seen in our text was a sin committed by speaking which really only revealed the actual problem, the thoughts of the heart which Jesus made clear in the continuing discourse of this event recorded for us by Matthew in Matthew 12:33-37.*

*The Word Applied: Romans 10:9-10 speaks to our confession with the mouth of Jesus as Lord in genuine salvation. Scripture is clear this is followed by a life lived bearing out that confession. What does your life say through your actions about your mouths confession?*

*Suggestion for Prayer: God, keep me by Your grace. Help me live in accord with my profession.*

**SATURDAY** – In summary, *The Unpardonable Sin* differs from other sins in its direct relation to the work and person of The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit convicts sinners, illuminates, enlightens (**Ephesians 1:17-18**) and opens their minds to the truth of Jesus (**2 Corinthians 3:16-17**) and the gospel. When a person willfully rejects and with deliberate opposition and refusal (**Acts 7:51**), hardens themselves, suppressing the truth, God places a permanent hardening if you will on the person and gives them the desire of their heart, rejection of Him (**Psalms 81:11-12, Hosea 4:17, Romans 1:18-32** “*God gave them over...*”). Once a man has committed this sin they are forever lost. This is why we are warned “*...today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts*” (**Hebrews 3:12-19**). More to come tomorrow.

*The Word Applied: Are you hearing and obeying the voice of The Lord from Scripture?*

*Suggestion for Prayer: God The Holy Spirit, thank You for Your work of grace bringing me to new life in Jesus although I am an undeserving sinner. Help me to listen and obey Your Word.*