

“The Unpardonable Sin”

(Luke 11:14-28)

Dr. Richard S. Koole
Chapel Pointe
July 31, 2011

I. Introduction

A. In the middle of the South Pacific during WWII

1. An American aircraft carrier
 - a. Six planes launched
 - b. Searching for the Japanese fleet
 - c. Dark of night
2. As they sought to return
 - a. Japanese were searching for the aircraft carrier
 - b. All lights out!
3. Radioed the planes
 - a. You're on your own to find the carrier
 - b. "Please turn on some lights!"
 - c. Just one small one!—Please!
4. Couldn't sacrifice the carrier
 - a. Sorry
 - b. Then broke radio contact
5. Six planes and their crews plunged to a watery grave!
6. The night the lights stopped shining

B. Does God ever turn off the lights?

1. Can a person reach a place where God gives up on them?
2. Is there a sin that God won't forgive?

C. My fears

1. Talks with my friends in High School and College
 - a. Were we guilty of blasphemy?
 - b. Had we committed the "unpardonable sin?"
2. Could it be committed accidentally?
3. Statements regarding Pentecostals
 - a. "It must be through Satan"
 - b. Was that the unpardonable sin?
 - c. Were we close to the edge?

D. Will answer three Questions

1. Is there an unpardonable sin?
2. If so, what is it?
3. In light of it, what should we do?

E. Let me give you the setting in Luke 11:14-28

II. Review

A. After the Lord's Prayer

1. Less than a year left
2. Jesus teaching in Jerusalem

B. Growing opposition

1. From a group that should have known better

- a. Should have been the most excited to see Jesus
- 2. Then they went too far
- 3. The words of Jesus—“That’s enough”

III. Text...Luke 11:14-28

A. The Restoration of the Demoniac (Luke 11:14)

(Outline by MacArthur)

Luke 11:14

(14) Jesus was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon left, the man who had been mute spoke, and the crowd was amazed.

- 1. Matthew 12:22 says the man was also blind
- 2. This guy was in bad shape
- 3. Think Helen Keller with a demon
- 4. The witnesses couldn’t deny a miracle had occurred
 - a. He could see...hear...speak
- 5. The big question was.....how did Jesus do it?
- 6. Who empowered Jesus?

B. The Reaction of the Crowd (Luke 11:14)

Luke 11:14

(14) ... and the crowd was amazed.

- 1. Saw it with their own eyes
 - a. Many witnesses
 - b. Undeniable
- 2. Matthew adds in Matthew 12:23

(23) All the people were astonished and said, “Could this be the Son of David?”

- a. Old Testament title for the Messiah
- b. He didn't "look" like they thought He would
 - 1. But what other explanation could there be?
 - 2. Power far beyond that of any prophet
- 3. They looked to the Pharisees for the answer
 - a. The most religious guys in town
 - b. "You guys are supposed to know it all"
 - c. If not the Messiah – then who?
- 4. This was very frightening for the religious leaders
 - a. Their whole system put at risk
- 5. They quickly came up with an explanation

C. The Rejection of the Pharisees (Luke 11:15-16)

Luke 11:15-16

(15) But some of them said, "By Beelzebub, the prince of demons, he is driving out demons."

(16) Others tested him by asking for a sign from heaven.

Matthew 12:24

(24) But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons."

- 1. *"This fellow"*
 - a. Derisive term
 - b. This "low life"
- 2. *"He works for the devil"*
 - a. Beelzebub (Philistine)
 - 1. From Baal

- b. Common term for *Satan*
- 3. Only two possible sources of such power
 - a. God
 - b. Satan
- 4. Would never admit it was of God
 - a. Yet they should have known it was
- 5. Rejected Him, fully aware of who He was

D. The Rebuke of the Lord (Luke 11:17-23)

1. Absurd (Luke 11: 17-18)

(17) Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them: “Any kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and a house divided against itself will fall. (18) If Satan is divided against himself, how can his kingdom stand? I say this because you claim that I drive out demons by Beelzebub.

- a. Satan doesn’t fight against himself
- b. One demon doesn’t cast out another

2. Contradictory (Luke 11:19)

(19) Now if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your followers drive them out? So then, they will be your judges.

- a. “What about the exorcism you guys do?”
- b. Were they using Satan to attack Satan?

3. Dangerous (Luke 11:20-23)

(20) But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.

(21) When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are safe. (22) But when someone stronger attacks and overpowers him he takes away the armor in which the man trusted and divides up the spoils.

(23) He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me, scatters.

- a. Takes a more powerful man to plunder a powerful man's house
- b. Jesus explains His power
 - 1. Satan is strong
 - 2. "Therefore, think about My power"
- c. Therefore—
 - 1. The Kingdom of God is here
 - 2. Jesus is the Messiah
 - 3. They're on the wrong side
 - 4. And God's angry with them
- d. Dangerous to observe the clear revelation and working of the Holy Spirit and give the credit to Satan

E. The Return of the Demon (Luke 11:24-28)

(24) When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it.

- 1. The "evil spirit" is a demon
 - a. Fallen angel
- 2. "comes out of a man"
 - a. Cast out or left
- 3. "arid places"
 - a. Deserts???
 - b. We don't know
- 4. Seeking rest
 - a. Searching for a new home (human!)
- 5. The restless demon seeks to return

(24) Then it says, "I will return to the house I left." (25) When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order.

- a. What does he discover?
 - 1. The house has been swept clean
 - a. Put in order
 - 2. The man has cleaned up his life
 - a. His morals
 - 3. Problem:
 - a. Empty
 - b. May be referring to morality without Christ
 - c. The *immoral* recognized themselves as sinners and repented
 - d. The *moral* thought they deserved to go to Heaven
 - 1. Didn't need the work of Christ
- 6. The demon returned

(26) Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there. And the final condition of that man is worse than the first."

- a. Because house was not filled
 - 1. Needed the Holy Spirit?
- b. Worse than before
 - 1. Brought 7 other demons with him
- c. Matthew adds (Matthew 12:45)

(45) And the final condition of that man is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation.

- 7. Talking about what was about to happen to the nation of Israel

F. The Result of their Rejection (Luke 12:10)

1. Terrifying verses

a. **Matthew 12:31-32**

(31) And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. (32) Any one who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.”

b. Pops up later in Luke 12:10

(10) And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.

c. Mark 3:28-30

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

2. An unusual form of blasphemy

a. Matthew 12:31

(31) And so I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.

b. Others had blasphemed God and been saved

c. Apostle Paul in I Timothy 1:12-13

(12) I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service. (13) Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.

d. Unlike Paul prior to his conversion....the Pharisees were not ignorant

1. They knew who Jesus was

a. The evidence was overwhelming

b. They had tasted the power of the Holy Spirit

c. And attributed it to Satan

- d. And walked away
- 2. When Paul (Saul) witnessed the power of Jesus he repented

IV. Comments re: the “unpardonable sin”

1. *What is the unpardonable sin?*

a. Definitions

- 1. In this passage:

It was to experience the power and presence of God the Son and God the Spirit, and attribute that power to Satan

- 2. Today

It is with full knowledge of the truth, to continually, intentionally and blatantly reject the witness of the Holy Spirit regarding Jesus Christ as the Savior

b. The unpardonable sin

- 1. A person who knows the whole plan of salvation
- 2. Who has felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit
 - a. Maybe many times
- 3. Who chooses once and for all to reject Christ

2. *Can it happen to me?*

a. **Some believe it could only happen while Jesus was on the earth**

- 1. The Pharisees should have been the happiest to see Jesus
- 2. The shock when Jesus went after them
- 3. The religious leaders had experienced the power and presence of God the Spirit... and gave the rationale for those mighty works to the power of Satan
- 4. All of the evidence was before them
 - a. Jesus came unto his own, and his own rejected him

5. Some believe it could only happen while Jesus was on earth

To commit the unpardonable sin of slandering the Holy Spirit, the miraculous work of God must be manifested in a clear and unambiguous way, which leaves no room for doubt or possible alternative explanation. Such a situation is impossible outside of the revealed presence of the kingdom of heaven through God's direct work in Jesus.

In other words, only those eye-witnesses of the Spirit's work through the miracles of Jesus can be considered culpable of slandering the Holy Spirit. Moreover, the slander against God's work must be intentional, not born of uncertainty or mistaken assessment, but rather from malice and an intentional attempt to deceive others.

b. Others are convinced it can still happen to people today

1. Active rejection

- a. It is a moment in the life of a person when they so offend the Holy Spirit's offer of salvation that God says "Enough"
- b. No prayer or pleading can save them
- c. Matthew 12:32

(32) Any one who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

- d. I John 5:16

(16) There is a sin that leads to death.

2. Passive rejection

- a. At the death of a person who fails to accept Christ
- b. Still hope up until the time of their death

3. How close can you get and still be lost?

- a. People in the church.....Hebrews 6:4-6

(4) It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, (5) who have tasted the goodness of the word of God

and the powers of the coming age, (6) if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace

1. *Been enlightened.....v. 4*

- a. Head knowledge
- b. Not salvation
- c. Know all they need to know about salvation

2. *Tasted the Heavenly gift.....v. 4*

- a. Have had a taste of Jesus
- b. See His power and position
- c. Tasted—yet never *consumed*

3. *Shared in the Holy Spirit.....v. 4*

- a. Felt His convicting
- b. Drawn by His power
- c. Partakers—not possessors

4. *Tasted the goodness of the Word of God.....v. 5*

- a. Knew their Bibles
- b. Knew of His death, burial, resurrection

5. *Tasted of the powers of the coming age.....v. 5*

- a. Knew about the glories of Heaven

6. *If they fall away.....v. 6*

(4) It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened.....(6) if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace

- a. Fully aware

b. And walk away!

- b. What more could God do?
- c. Shows how close you can get...and still be lost
- d. Talking about us this morning
- e. Hebrews 10:26-29

(26) If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left...

(29)who has insulted the Spirit of Grace?

f. These once enlightened people who once professed to love the Lord Jesus were now saying that Christ was a blasphemer, and he deserved to die on Golgotha. They insulted the Spirit of Grace

4. Beware of hanging around the church

- a. Raised in the church...a Hebrews 6 person
 - 1. You know all the facts regarding Christ
 - 2. You've felt a conviction for your sins
 - 3. You've never really committed your life to Christ
 - 4. You've continued to hang around the church
 - a. May even be a leader at Chapel Pointe
 - 5. But you've never accepted Christ as your Savior
- b. ***A failure to accept is a decision to reject***
 - 1. May never again feel the Spirit's drawing
 - 2. Is this your "Last Call?"

5. If you're worried...it's not too late

- a. That's God's Spirit working within you
- b. But this may be God's final call for you

6. How do you know you're saved?

a. John 3:36

(36) Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.

b. Assurance of Salvation