

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY (ORGANIZED BIBLE KNOWLEDGE)

Part XI: Pneumatology (Doctrine Of The Holy Spirit)

E. The Sin Against The Holy Spirit

I. Introduction

- A. Some believe Matthew 12:31-32 teaches the "unforgiveable sin," a sin slandering the Holy Spirit and forever unconditionally locking the guilty one out from ever gaining eternal life!
- B. However, Jesus said in John 6:37b: ". . . and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Applying this verse to the Matthew 12:31-32 passage would mean if one were to change his mind and repent, he could still obtain God's gift of eternal life by God's grace!
- C. We examine the context of Matthew 12 to clarify the truth about the so-called "unforgiveable sin" issue:

II. The Sin Against The Holy Spirit (I am indebted to Ryrie's The Holy Spirit, p. 52-54.)

- A. Note: the adjective "unforgiveable" does not occur in Matthew 12:31-32; rather, Jesus' expression is "will not be forgiven," a (third person future passive indicative) **verb** that does *not* close the door to possible future forgiveness, cf. UBS Greek N. T., p. 44; Zondervan's The Analytical Greek Lexicon, p. 61.
- B. Accordingly, we view the context of Matthew 12:31-32 to determine just what Jesus **meant** there:
 1. In Matthew 12:22-23, Jesus had accomplished what no other Hebrew exorcists had done: He had supernaturally healed a deaf, blind and dumb demoniac without needing to communicate with demons through the man. Consequently, the witnesses concluded Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of David.
 2. With no recourse left but to conclude Jesus had performed a miracle, the rebellious onlooking Pharisees **errantly concluded** Jesus had used **Satan's** power to heal this demoniac, Matthew 12:24.
 3. Jesus replied that this errant conclusion was first of all **illogical**:
 - a. Jesus claimed that were he working for Satan, He would have just attacked Satan's kingdom in exorcising the demon, something that is contradictory and hence **illogical**, Matthew 12:25-26.
 - b. Stating that were He have been working for Satan, Jesus revealed that the regular, "certified" Hebrew exorcists had no godly credibility either as they also exorcised demons, and even the Pharisees would have no grounds for discerning God's power from Satan's in **illogic**, Matthew 12:27.
 - c. Hence, Jesus revealed one had to conclude the Pharisees were in error, that Jesus had indeed started to bind Satan to destroy his kingdom through the exorcism. That left Jesus functioning as the promised Messiah by the Spirit's predicted power, Matt. 12:28-29; Isa. 11:1-2; 35:5; 61:1b.
 4. As the Pharisees made **illogical conclusions** about Jesus' **deeds**, they had thus **rejected** God's last sign verifying Jesus as Messiah. In doing so, they left themselves no more room to be saved as God did not plan to offer any more attesting proofs to Israel of the Messiah. That meant their sin of claiming Jesus worked by Satan's **power**, a sin against the **power** of the **Holy Spirit** by which Jesus **performed** His miracles, was a sin against the Holy Spirit that would "not be forgiven," Matthew 12:31-32.
 5. However, **if** these **same Pharisees** had **later REPENTED** regarding their view of Jesus, receiving Him as their Savior from sin, God would have still justified them! Here is historical evidence for that fact:
 - a. Paul the Apostle once was an unsaved Pharisee who persecuted Christ's followers, thinking he was serving God by stamping out an evil cult, Philippians 3:4-6 with 1 Timothy 1:12-17. However, Paul was converted to Christ and wrote most of the New Testament writings, Acts 9:1-19.
 - b. The priests took Jesus captive in Gethsemanee, John 18:8, 3, and were among those who mocked Him on the cross, Mark 15:29-31. Yet, a many of the priests later trusted in Christ, Acts 6:7.
 - c. **Both** thieves on the cross **initially reviled** Jesus along with the chief priests and scribes who mocked and derided Jesus, Mark 15:29-32b. Yet, when **one** of them **later repented** concerning his **view** of Jesus, **Christ promised** he would enter **Paradise with Jesus that day**, Luke 23:39-43.

Lesson: (1) *The sin against the Holy Spirit which will not be forgiven is NOT and "unforgiveable" sin: (2) it is rather the sin (a) of concluding the power by which Jesus performed His attesting miracles were Satanic. (b) This conclusion keeps one from trusting Christ, (c) and since there are no further signs attesting to Christ's credibility, (d) it thus also dooms him "not to be forgiven."* (3) *Yet, IF the party involved REPENTS of his errant conclusion about Jesus, he can be justified in accord with John 6:37.*