

The Unpardonable Sin

By Dave Roberson

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture notations are taken from the *King James Version* of the Bible.

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Chapter 1
The Question:
What Is
The Unpardonable Sin?

Have you ever thought that you had committed the unpardonable sin? Most people who have been born again for any amount of time at all can testify that at one time or another, the devil has tried to convince them that their sin was unforgivable.

Doctrinal Error
Aggravates the Problem

In my early Christian years, the denomination I belonged to believed that if you had divorced and remarried before you were born again, you were required to leave the husband (or wife) you were with at the time of your conversion and go back to your first mate. And if that wasn't possible, you were to remain unmarried.

According to this legalistic holiness doctrine, you were doomed to live in a perpetual state of adultery if you stayed married to anyone other than your first mate, even though you weren't saved when your first marriage failed.

I can remember overhearing a discussion between the elders of the church regarding this subject. They were debating about who was going to talk with a newly born-again couple in the church. Both the husband and the wife had been previously married. Finally, an elder was chosen to tell the couple that, if they did not separate,

they would be living in a state of adultery and would be spiritually lost!

Thank God, I have since learned that this is not true! However, situations and questions like this have caused us all to wonder at one time or another about what the "unpardonable sin" actually is.

Applying Real-Life Situations
To the Scriptures

For instance, we may wonder what Paul meant in Hebrews 6 regarding some who fall away from the Lord and cannot be renewed again unto repentance.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Hebrews 6:4-6

Most preachers don't like to preach on these verses in Hebrews. Why? Because according to these scriptures, many of them seem to fall into this category of not being able to be renewed again to repentance. You see, there are those in the ministry who once walked in the deep things of God and then fell into sin when the devil attacked. However, many of these ministers truly

repented and are now preaching the Gospel with signs following.

Most of us who teach the Word of God wonder where ministers who once walked in God's power and then fell morally fit into these verses in Hebrews 6. They certainly qualify for having tasted of the Heavenly Gift (which is Jesus). They have been made partakers with the Holy Ghost. And they have definitely tasted of the good Word of God and operated in the gifts of the Spirit, which are the powers of the world to come.

Several years ago, two ministers fell badly in plain view of the world. Does this mean that, according to the scripture in Hebrews 6, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance?

Obviously, this is not the case. Even though a person may come under spiritual attack and fall into sin, his heart can still yearn after God. If that is the case, let me assure you that God has sufficient grace to cover any kind of sin he might commit.

Now, I am not referring to "promiscuous grace." (Promiscuous grace is a cheap concept of grace that people often use as a safeguard for forgiveness after they have committed premeditated sin without remorse.) I am talking about the person who, when attacked by the devil, experiences a strong, inner pull to do right. That pull is so strong that he weeps inside and fights to be free, even while he commits the sinful act. Yet despite the person's inner struggle, he allows himself to be

overcome by the power of the enemy and the weakness of his own flesh.

Before God opened this truth to me, I counseled many people who were tormented with fear that they could no longer repent after falling so far into sin. I comforted them the best I could at the time. I said things like, "Don't worry. To commit the unpardonable sin, you would first have to taste of the powers of the world to come and be supernaturally used by God. If you went back into the world after knowing that kind of walk with God, it would be a different story." The people I counseled would be comforted for the moment, but I knew they still had questions. So did I!

Chapter 2
The Answer: Insights
From the Book of Hebrews

I began to wrestle with the truth God shares with us in Hebrews 6. I was troubled because I knew many preachers who seemed to have violated these verses by falling into adulterous affairs, stealing, and perversion.

I wondered if these ministers would repent and return to the Lord. I even wondered if they could return. And if it were true that they could come back to God, what does this passage in Hebrews 6 really mean when it says that it is impossible to renew some again to repentance since they crucify the Son of God afresh and put Him to open shame?

**The Plight of
The Hebrew Christians**

Let's take a look at what these verses are really saying. To do that, we have to back up to the fifth chapter and carry it all the way through to Hebrews 6:6—because it is all **ONE THOUGHT** and **ONE TEACHING**. Hebrews 5:11-14 says this:

Of whom [Jesus the High Priest] we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.

For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

Then Hebrews 6:1-6 goes on to say this:

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

And this will we do, if God permit.

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,

And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

First of all, it is important to understand that the people in the Hebrew church were the exact opposite of the believers in the Corinthian church. While the Corinthians had been steeped in paganism and had no knowledge of

the Law of Moses, the Hebrews had tremendous knowledge concerning the Law. The Hebrew Christians understood the covenants and the Law that God had given to their fathers. They were well aware of how God had favored them as a nation when He delivered them out of years of bondage and led them into the Promised Land.

The kind of persecution the Hebrew Christians received was different from the persecution the Corinthians received coming out of paganism. Can you imagine the beatings the Hebrew Christians endured at the hands of the Hebrew scholars as the Jews relentlessly badgered and harassed their Christian countrymen for forsaking the God of their fathers?

To the Christians, the ground probably seemed to quake when one of those Hebrew scholars stepped forward. An intimidating figure indeed, his full beard represented the wisdom of ages and his stubbornness proved as unmoving as the Rock of Gibraltar.

Then in a forbidding voice of condemnation, the scholar would begin by quoting the first of the Ten Commandments: “There shall be no other gods before you! You are a Hebrew—one of the chosen people of God. How can you turn to this deceiver called Jesus? He is nothing but a man. How can you believe that this man could possibly be the Son of God? Return to the God of your fathers and repent so that He may have mercy on your soul.”

These new believers often took a beating at the hands of these Hebrew scholars before they had the opportunity to become grounded in their faith. And the Jews’ demand on them was not just to backslide in their Christian walk. In order to return to favor under the Jewish law, these Hebrew believers had to make a total denial of Jesus Christ. They were required to denounce Him as the Son of God. And to establish their reason for denouncing Jesus, they had to quote the commandments of Moses, such as Exodus 20:3: **Thou shalt have no other gods before me.**

Backsliding vs. Renouncing Jesus

I make this contrast between the Corinthian and the Hebrew believers to point out this fact: It is one thing to backslide while trying to hold on to Jesus, fighting discouragement and the lusts of the flesh. But it is quite another to purposefully deny and denounce the blood of Jesus, His work on the Cross, and His equality with God as a Part of the Trinity.

Even though we didn’t stop loving Jesus, we have all yielded to temptation at one time or another. We seemingly lose control in certain areas of temptation, even though Jesus has given us the authority to overcome ALL the works of the enemy in our lives. The sin or the particular weakness is different in each case, but we have all experienced that desperate inner struggle when we cry out as Paul did in Romans 7:19: **For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.**

This is the case for most ministers who have fallen publicly from God's path. They struggled with a war between their flesh and their spirit. And when the flesh won, they still knew and acknowledged the truth of God's Word the entire time they were yielding to the wrong desires. Even though they had problems with their flesh, they believed and preached that Jesus is the Savior of the world, and in their heart, they still loved Him.

Well, God looks on the inner man. And as long as He finds true repentance there, His arms of grace reach the entire distance a believer has fallen.

However, it is an entirely different case when a man or woman who has walked in intimacy with God denies the Person and the work of Jesus Christ and turns with deliberate purpose to serve another god. In the case of the Hebrews, they were choosing to go back under the Law of Moses. They were counting the blood that ratified the New Covenant, the blood of God's own Son, as an unholy thing.

Hebrews 10:28,29 explains this:

**He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:
Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?**

Paul was writing to Hebrew Christians whom the devil was trying to ensnare in the trappings of the Law. Undoubtedly, the devil saw the powerful pull of family tradition and partial truth and knew that this was a potential stranglehold he could exploit that would lead these new believers to deny Jesus and lose their salvation. Paul realized that the Hebrew Christians needed help.

Chapter 3

The Solution: Get Off the Milk!

So Paul wrote a direct warning, complete with a prescription to prevent the devil from gaining this stranglehold of fear and intimidation in the emotional realm of the Hebrew Christians.

Paul knew that the only way he could ensure that the devil wouldn't succeed in his strategy would be to get the Hebrews off the milk and on to the meat of the Word. To that end, Paul explained in detail, in the first chapters of Hebrews, the differences between the Old and the New Covenants, stressing the fact that Jesus is truly the fulfillment of God's promises to both Abraham and Moses.

The Danger of Remaining On the Milk of the Word

Then in Hebrews 5:11, Paul begins by calling the Hebrew Christians dull of hearing. He tells them, "I have many things to say to you, but I can't because you are feeding on the milk instead of the meat of the Word."

Notice the description Paul gives of a Christian who is feeding only on the milk of the Word:

**For every one that useth
milk is UNSKILFUL IN THE WORD OF
RIGHTEOUSNESS: for he is a babe.**
Hebrews 5:13

The Hebrews prided themselves on their knowledge and understanding of God's Word. But without an under-

standing and acceptance of the work of Jesus, their knowledge was incomplete.

As long as any Christian stays in this unstable condition of spiritual ignorance, the danger exists that their emotions will be overpowered by the continual onslaught of the devil. And for the Hebrew Christian, this onslaught was a very serious matter.

You see, the Jewish leaders were blinded by the devil into believing that the teachings of Jesus were heretical. They had a mere glimpse of the truth—just enough to realize that the age-old hold they held on the Jewish people through their legalistic enforcement of the Law was being threatened. And they were determined to retain the power and control they had always enjoyed, whatever the cost.

Acts 23:12-14 gives us an idea of how serious these Jewish leaders were in their pursuit to obliterate this new "heretical" sect:

**And when it was day,
certain of the Jews banded
together, and bound themselves
under a curse, saying that they
would neither eat nor drink till
they had killed Paul.**

**And they were more than
forty which had made this
conspiracy.**

**And they came to the chief
priests and elders, and said, We
have bound ourselves under a
great curse, that we will eat
nothing until we have slain
Paul.**

Imagine forty men binding themselves under a curse to neither

eat nor drink until they had killed Paul! With this kind of fear driving men, you can understand how great the pressure must have been on the Hebrew Christians and why Paul warned them to get off the milk of the Word and on to the meat.

The Results of Feeding on Meat

In Hebrews 5:14, Paul talks about the difference that feeding on the meat of the Word makes in the life of a Christian: **But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**

So the Hebrew Christians who fed on the meat of the Word had their senses exercised as they continually subjected those natural senses to the Word of God. Their emotions were no longer unstable. Therefore, they were able to stand in the confidence instilled in their hearts by the meat of the Word.

The pressure the Pharisees employed against these faithful Hebrew believers to force them to go back under the Law no longer overpowered their senses. As they fed on spiritual meat, they became skillful in the Word of righteousness and were able to hold on to their salvation. They were able to discern between good and evil; they didn't give in to the pressure and go back under the Law.

So follow closely as we read Hebrews 6:1 again: **THEREFORE leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection;**

not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God

When you see the word “therefore,” you had better see what it is **THERE FOR**. The word *therefore* means “based on what has already been said; in conclusion to.” So what Paul begins to say in Hebrews 6:1 is based on what he has already said in the fifth chapter.

By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul says, “Therefore—or because of—the weakness of your senses, you need to get off milk and begin to eat and digest strong meat. Then your senses can be strengthened and trained to discern between good and evil in every situation.”

Paul indicated that this is the progression God designed for our spiritual growth. Our senses are capable of being weaned off milk and on to strong meat. And unless we move on from milk to meat, we will end up spiritually stunted. We will always be wrestling with our natural senses that are unexercised in the Word of righteousness and therefore weak enough to be drawn back under the Law.

Move On Unto Perfection

This is so important for us to understand. As long as we stay on milk, the danger exists that our emotions might someday overpower us to the point where we go back under the Law, count the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing, and lose our salvation by rejecting the grace of

God. But we will stand strong if we will only determine to pursue the Word of God and go on to perfection, leaving behind the basic principles of the doctrine of Christ, such as continual repentance from dead works and from lack of faith toward God.

We must advance beyond the doctrines of baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection from the dead, and eternal judgment. We need to go on into perfection. Then the foundation we build for ourselves will become so strong that we will not fall back under the Law and find ourselves in danger of losing our salvation. This is what Paul meant when he said in Hebrews 6:4-6 that it is impossible for those who are fully enlightened to fall away.

Paul was saying to the Hebrew believers, "Please get off the milk!" He was urgent in his warning because, as long as the Hebrew Christians were fed only on the milk of the Word, they were in danger of their senses being overpowered by the Law. On the other hand, Paul was certain that the deeper they went into Christ, the more impossible it would be for them to fall away from the Lord and deny Him. So by the unction of the Holy Spirit, Paul urged them on to the place of perfection.

Pressing on to maturity and perfection is one of Paul's constant themes throughout his epistles. He understood that without spiritual growth, spiritual death begins. That's why he kept exhorting the Hebrew believers to get off milk and eat the strong meat of the Word.

Most of us miss Paul's point in this passage of Scripture. We think that Paul is saying it is impossible for a believer to repent and come back to God if he has fallen into sin after he has tasted of the Heavenly Gift and the powers of the world to come. Therefore, we judge others when they give in to temptation, or we become paralyzed by self-condemnation when we fall into sin ourselves.

But we need to understand that God's Word is still as true for us as it was for the Hebrew church of Paul's time. What God was saying through Paul to the Hebrew believers, He is still saying to us today. The more revelation knowledge we have of Jesus Christ and the more fellowship we have with Him, the more impossible it becomes for legalism or any other tactic of the enemy to overpower our emotions and cause us to count the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing by denying Christ.

It's Not Too Late To Come Back!

This message is for each one of us who has yielded to temptation and gone astray. It is for every man and woman who has ever walked in the deep things of God, only to fall into sin and then give up in despair.

There is no greater sense of inner emptiness than that which comes when a person is convinced by the devil that he has sunk so low that God Himself will not take him back. That's why people need to understand this message. They need to know that, as long as they haven't turned away from

Jesus to another form of salvation, they can always return to the Lord. As long as they believe that Jesus is the Savior of the world, Jesus has grace for them and waits for them to come back.

Perhaps you have been confused over this passage of Scripture we have discussed. Or maybe you know a friend or a family member who is living under guilt and condemnation, believing he or she has committed the unpardonable sin and cannot come back to God.

If so, you now have a better grasp of the truth. Share with anyone who is struggling with this question that as long as he believes in Jesus and is willing to return to Him with his whole heart, God's grace is forever sufficient.

As for you—like Paul, I encourage you to press into God, leaving behind the milk of the Word. Begin feasting on the meat. Your senses will be exercised by the truth of God's Word, tearing down any strongholds the devil has erected in your emotions. And as you feast on the meat of God's Word, your stability will increase and your faith will grow to become absolutely unshakable!

Chapter 4

Present-Day Speaking

For the devil, your adversary, desires to bring condemnation in the form of sentences that condemn you to hopelessness, despair, and cares.

Know this: By the Holy Spirit, I do lead you and guide you into all truth, and My Word IS truth.

When you know and understand the principles of your foundation, even your emotions shall be brought under subjection to that which says, "You have been made free." So worship the Lord your God. Enter into His Presence and know Him.

This generation shall not be as the generation before you, for surely the signs of the end shall come to pass. And many shall come in this last day, preparing the way for the coming of Jesus as did John prepare the way.

Those who are prone to deception shall go further into deception, neutralized by their own systems of thoughts that were born from the lust of the flesh. But there will be those whose lamp shall burn brighter and brighter as the forces of hell and darkness line up with the forces of light for the great conclusion of this matter that will lead you into the last days, says the Spirit of Grace.

So rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for on those who will have the move of My Spirit, I will pour it out. Those who are strong shall do exploits. But those who resist My truth shall be

destroyed according to how much they let the strongman in.

Rejoice in truth and turn yourself over to My Spirit. Put your feet on the rock and become strong, for that which can be shaken shall be shaken. But search you out the security of My Spirit and enter into My peace.

Be not despaired, for the enemy would desire to encompass, to overshadow with darkness. He desires to introduce reasonings and systems of thoughts that would captivate you with a stronghold so you would never put one foot in front of the other or taste to see that I am good.

Come unto Me, you who are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. You shall find rest for your souls. My burden is easy. My yoke is light. Learn of Me, says the Spirit of Grace.

Is it not hard to kick against the pricks? Is it not hard to live within the confines of a stronghold of your own reasonings where you have kept your victory shut out? Why won't you enter into My rest?

Have I Committed the Unpardonable Sin?

Have you ever asked yourself that question? Do you know someone else who has? Well, Dave Roberson has insights from God's Word to help clear up the confusion!

In *The Unpardonable Sin*, Dave explores a key passage in Hebrews to find out what it really means to commit the unpardonable sin. Dave's teaching will help you put any unfounded worries to rest, and his scriptural solution will point you in the right direction so you can move on with God!

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