

Sinning Against the Holy Spirit

Explore Your Faith Teaching Series - Explo-23 ©

With Pastor Joseph Rodrigues

OUTLINE

Introduction:

God is not some abstract force or energy field in the universe. He is a personal being.

When we sin, we sin against *his person*.

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are *individual persons* in the triune Godhead.

In this study, we examine some of the ways in which we can sin against The Holy Spirit.

The Bible warns us about sins against the Holy Spirit. These warnings are probably in the context of the Spirit's work in the believer of regeneration, indwelling, and empowerment for service.

It therefore does not make sense for anyone to sin against him.

However, there is 'an unforgivable sin Jesus warns about!

The intent of this session is to discover how not to be dis-empowered of the Holy Spirit in our Christian walk.

The Holy Spirit is **a person** who can be sinned against. Understanding this is vital to our Christian walk.

The following sins against the Holy Spirit need to be considered in the context of The Spirit's work in the believer of regeneration, indwelling, and enduement for service.

1. *Blaspheming*

It is called the unpardonable sin; the most awful sin that one can commit (**Matt. 12:31, 32**). In effect, it is calling God "the devil".

It consists of ascribing to Satan the work of the Holy Spirit. In **Mark 3:22-30** this is what we see the Scribes doing.

Think: In this context, how do we evaluate whether a work is of God?

In the OT, The root meaning of the word is an act of effrontery in which men insult the honour of God. Essentially the name of God is cursed or reviled instead of being honoured. The penalty for blasphemy was death by stoning (Lev. 24:10-23; 1 Ki. 21:9ff; Acts 6:11; 7:58)

In the NT there is an extension of the meaning-not only is God blasphemed, but also his representatives. So the word is used of Moses (Acts 6:11); Paul (Rom. 3:8, 1 Cor 4:12; 10:30); and especially the Lord Jesus in his ministry of forgiveness (e.g., Mark 2:7 and parallel passages). Because these representatives embody the truth of God himself an insulting word spoken against them and their teaching is really directed against God in whose name they speak (so Mt. 10:40; Luke 10:6).

The verses in Mt. 12:32 and Mk 3:29 which carry the awful pronouncement that the sinner is guilty of an eternal sin which cannot be forgiven *is a solemn warning against deliberate, persistent rejection of the Spirit's call to salvation in Christ Jesus*. Human unresponsiveness inevitably leads to a state of moral insensibility and to a confusion of moral issues wherein evil is embraced as though it were good.

Note: People who are distressed in their souls for fear that they have committed the unpardonable sin should in most cases be told that their distress is proof that they have not committed that sin.

2. *Insulting (through Pride)*

The Holy Spirit presents the atoning work of Christ to the sinner. If the sinner refuses to believe or accept it, he is insulting the Holy Spirit. (**Hebrews 10:29**)

In his rejection, the sinner is saying to the Holy Spirit, "The whole work of Christ is a deception or lie, and he presents God with another plan of salvation (i.e., works)". It amounts to counting the death of Christ as a common thing, the death of an ordinary man.

To deny the deity of Christ and the preciousness of the blood is to despise the witness of the Holy Spirit.

It is vital that new Christians are taught about the deity of Christ.

In James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5, Proverbs 3:34 is quoted to emphasize the contrast between the meek, whom God favours and the proud, whom God resists.

Paul saw pride ('boasting' in knowledge of the law and in works/righteousness), as the characteristic spirit of Judaism and a direct cause of Jewish unbelief. He insisted that the gospel is designed to exclude boasting. (Rom. 3:27) by teaching men that they are sinners, that self-righteousness is therefore out of the question, and that they must look to Christ for righteousness and take it as a free gift from him.

3. Resisting (by unbelief)

Acts 7:51 Stephen's accusation against the High priest and the Jews at his trial.

Often the Holy Spirit quickens the conscience to do right but when we deliberately resist His pleading and guidance, we are actually manifesting unbelief.

We are called to believe. We resist the Holy Spirit when we doubt the word of God (**Heb. 3:19**).

Resisting by unbelief carries a grave warning of being turned over to a reprobate mind (**Rom. 1:24**).

'Unbelief' is expressed by two Greek words in the NT: *apistia* denoting a state of the mind) and *apeitheia* denoting an expression of this state. They word *apaetheia and its derivatives* connote invariably disobedience & rebellion. Paul says that the gentiles have obtained mercy through the rebellion of the Jews (Rom. 11:30; see also Rom 11:32; Heb 4:6, 11). This disobedience springs from *apistia*, 'a want of faith and trust'.

Unbelief towards himself was the prime sin of which Christ said that the Spirit would convict the world (John 16:19).

Unbelief in all its forms is a direct affront to the divine veracity (*cf.* 1 Jn. 5:10), which is why it is such a heinous sin. The children of Israel did not enter into God's rest for two reasons. They lacked faith (*apistia*, Heb. 3:19), and they disobeyed (*apeitheia*, Heb. 4:6).

Unbelief therefore finds its practical outworking in disobedience.

4. Vexing (through disobedience)

If we are honest with ourselves, this is really one of our chief hindrances spiritually.

In **Isaiah 63:9, 10** we read "They rebelled, and vexed His Holy Spirit". This referred to backslidden Israel, but the principle applies to us (the redeemed ones rebelled and vexed the Holy Spirit).

Sometimes the Holy Spirit reveals ugliness within, and instead of being thankful for the discovery, we rebel and our proud hearts refuse to make the necessary confession.

The root of vexation is rebellion. Its source is murmuring and complaining.

The Spirit is vexed when, after repeated warnings, multiplied blessings, abundant light and knowledge, we persist in evil.

Remedy for restoration?--Listen, yield and obey.

5. Being insincere (by deceiving)

Acts 5:1-9- Ananias and Sapphira in seeking to deceive the brethren actually tempted and lied to the Holy Spirit..

A man is guilty of this when he pretends to his brethren that he is wholly devoted to god when he is actually indulging in secret sin. We need to beware of a profession that is more holy before men than it is before the Lord. Rather than condemn others we need to examine ourselves!

Psalms 51:10 "create in me a clean heart, oh God". Do we stand in consecration and say, "I surrender all, when we know in our hearts that we are being hypocritical?"

2 Kings 5: 25-27- Gehazi lies, and becomes a leper

False impressions intended to harm others, and lies spoken to men are as lies to the Holy Ghost.

6. Quenching (through prejudice)

1 Thess. 5:19-20: this is a command, not an option

The thought of quenching is the suffocation of a fire (**Isaiah 4:4** -spirit of burning)

To quench means "to stifle, to silence" (**Eph. 6:16**)

Areas in which we can quench the spirit;

When he speaks through his word or into our consciences

When we criticize the manifestation of the Spirit in the testimony of a believer, or the sermon of some preacher or in the Spirit's manifestation in a meeting (g., tongues, prophecy etc.).

It is possible to quench the Spirit on one point but yield to him on other issues

7. Grieving (by making light of the sensitivity of The Holy Spirit)

The Spirit is pictured as a sensitive dove, one that is gentle.

Light and unprofitable conversation of the saints grieves the Spirit. *Eph 4:30, 31* makes this point clear.

The Holy Spirit cannot join in unprofitable talk, much less in evil speaking. Therefore, we need to watch the door of our lips. This is not something to be trifled with.

Charles Finney is quoted as saying, "The Spirit is grieved by saying or publishing things that are calculated to undervalue the work of God. When a blessed work of God is spoken lightly of, not rendering to God the glory due to His Name, the Spirit is grieved. If anything is said about a revival, give only the plain and naked facts just as they are and let them pass for what they are worth".

Men filled with the Holy Spirit are full of Joy *but not frivolous*. Know the difference!

Conclusion