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WHAT IS THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN?

Study 21 Unforgivable Sin

"If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life." (1John 5:16)

Yes; except for '**unpardonable sin**' which cannot even be prayed for! This is so shocking the question has to be asked, how many sins are so bad as to be forever unforgivable? (Look up the complete verse then tick the correct box)

Any sin

Extremely serious ones

One particular sin

WHAT THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN IS NOT

The prodigal son was received back with joy. (Luke 15:20-24)

So ... _____ ... **is not** the unforgivable sin!
 (name the prodigals sin? - Luke 15:11-15)

Although this brother was expelled from the church and severely punished, his 'spirit' was saved from hell. (compare 1 Cor. 3:15, 1 Cor. 5:5)

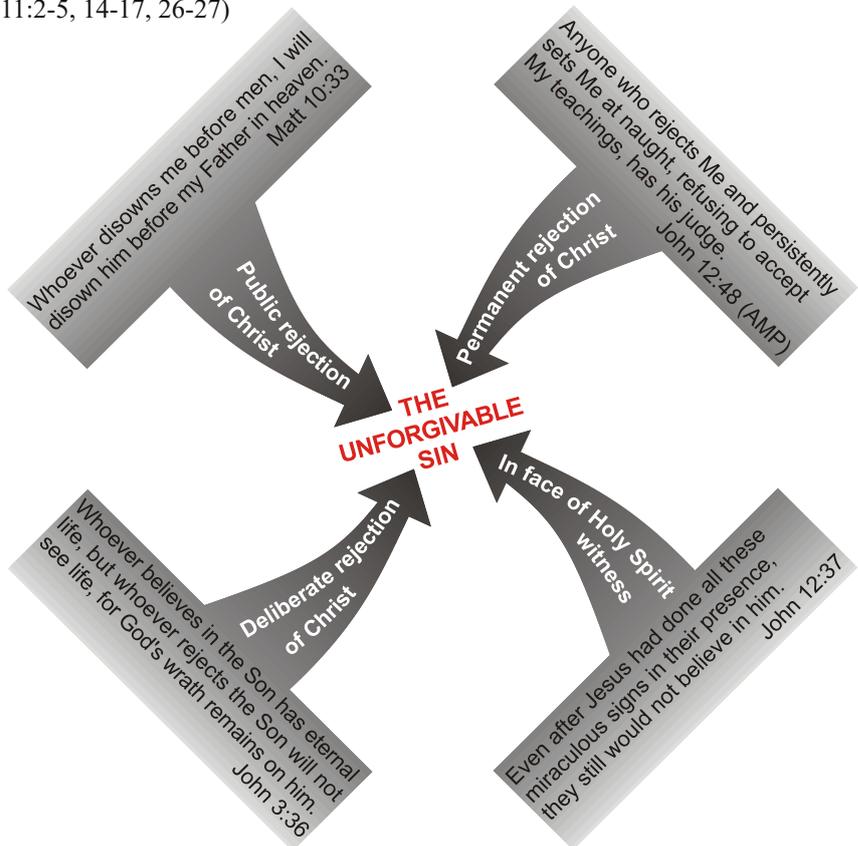
So ... _____ ... **is not** the unforgivable sin!
 (describe his sin? - 1Cor 5:1-5)

King David was guilty of an awful double sin but he repented and God accepted him.

So ... _____ ... **are not** the unforgivable sin!
 (identify the two sins? - 2 Sam. 11:2-5, 14-17, 26-27)

EXACTLY WHAT IS THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN?

The unforgivable sin is to publicly, permanently and deliberately reject Jesus Christ in contradiction to the Holy Spirit's witness concerning who he is.



Case Study 1 – THE BEELZEBUB INCIDENT

Matthew 12:22-32 recounts an astonishing miracle where Jesus healed a man who, not only was blind, but also could not speak. The Pharisees angrily explained it away by claiming he had achieved it through the power of Beelzebub.

What were the people saying that the Pharisees were so determined to deny? (Verse 23)

Jesus was the son of David, simply meaning David's natural descendant.

Jesus was **THE SON** of David, in the sense that he was the promised Messiah.

It needs to be understood that the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to testify of Christ. (John 15:26) Therefore blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is to reject the Holy Spirit's witness concerning who Jesus is. In this incident they rejected the evidence by attributing it to Satan. Not only that, the Pharisees had already premeditated their attitude toward Jesus before the miracle had happened. (Matt. 12:14) But worse, they repeated their rejection in the face of Holy Spirit proof again in Acts 4:14-18. By doing this they showed it was not a one-off temporary denial, but permanent! Yes, the unforgivable sin.

Case Study 2 – THE TRAMPLE UNDER FOOT INCIDENT

"If we deliberately keep on sinning ..." (Hebrews 10:26) What sin? Lying? Stealing? No, this is not speaking of **any** sinning. It is referring specifically to the sin of abandoning the Christian faith and returning to temple worship. The implication was frightening. These people had actually **experienced** the power of the Holy Spirit but returned to the sacrifice of animals as their means of atonement. The writer called it, 'trampling the Son of God under foot,' and 'insulting the Spirit of grace.' (Hebrews 10:29) It was, of course, the same as the Pharisees sin but in a different setting. Look up Heb. 6:4-6, 10:26-31 to see full context. Then connect the underlined scriptures with the statements below describing what these people had done.

- They **publicly** rejected the Son of God by going back to the temple.
- They **deliberately** rejected Christ's sacrifice for them.
- They did this in **contradiction** to the Spirit's witness in their lives.

*It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who **have shared in the Holy Spirit**, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age,*

*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.***

***If we deliberately keep on** sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God (Hebrews 6:4-8, 10:26-27 NIV)*

Thus the unforgivable sin was (and still is) to publicly, permanently and deliberately reject Jesus Christ in contradiction to the Holy Spirit's witness concerning who he is, and what he did for us on the cross.

HAVE I COMMITTED THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN?

This whole subject has caused many Christians to be paralysed with fear. Some have suffered breakdowns and even contemplated suicide agonizing over the possibility that they are doomed to hell without hope. This is tragic, and unnecessary. The very fact that a person is concerned shows that they have **not** done the unpardonable sin nor hardened their hearts toward Jesus. However, for those who want biblical proof that they are safe, they need only go to the example of Peter. He disowned Christ not once but three times, and yet was forgiven. Why was Peter's denial different? Read his story in Mark 14:66-72 then put either a tick or a cross in each box.

public rejection
 personal doubting

deliberate/premeditated
 careless/emotional

permanent decision
 temporary mistake

fighting Holy Spirit
 forgetting Holy Spirit

So how can I be sure that my sin is not the one that leads to death? (1John 5:16) Do the above exercise again, this time with your story. If you have not ticked all four boxes, it means **you have not** committed the unforgivable sin. Repent of whatever it is you have done, and welcome back into the fellowship of those who believe.

Answers here:
www.5loaves2fishes.net/pdfs/answers.pdf