

116. The Sin against the Holy Ghost.

The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. *Matt. 12, 31.*

The sin against the Holy Ghost is the gravest of all sins. But even this sin, though it consists in the malicious denial of the heavenly truth by one who has been taught it and blasphemous and pernicious opposition to it, is unpardonable not on account of its greatness, but on account of its nature.

It is not a sin against the person of the Holy Ghost, but against His office. For the Holy Ghost has a special office to perform. His office is to lead us through the means of grace to Christ, our Savior, and thus to make us children of God. For we cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost must call us by the Gospel, enlighten us with His gifts, sanctify and keep us in the true faith. Now, if He comes to a person in the Gospel and shines in his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and that person is divinely convinced of the truth of the Gospel, his soul is greatly moved, and he opens his mouth to pray and to praise the Lord; if such a man later denies that conviction and the known heavenly truth, opposing the work of the Holy Ghost in his heart, and *wilfully* and *persistently* hardens himself against his better knowledge and with satanic malice blasphemes the truth and speaks against the Gospel: then he commits the sin against the Holy Ghost.

One of the characteristic features of this sin is that men do it knowingly, willingly, deliberately, blasphemously, and persistently. Scripture says Heb. 6: "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." But as long as you do not *wish* to commit this appalling sin, you surely have *not* committed it.

Prayer.

O heavenly Father, do Thou preserve me from sin and all evil, from the wiles of the devil, from the offenses of the world, and from the evil lusts of my own sinful flesh. Let me not follow those who crucify to themselves Thy dear Son afresh and put Him to an open shame. Grant unto me patience, hope, and perseverance. And when the time of my sojourning is at an end, O grant unto me an easy and a blessed death through Jesus Christ, my Savior and Redeemer, to whom be glory forever and ever! Amen.

To-day you live, to-day repent;
Perhaps your life will soon be spent.
To-day you're well, your cheeks are red,
To-morrow sick, yea, even dead.

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