

What Is the “Unpardonable Sin”?

As a willful *choice*, the unpardonable sin is the deliberate *rejection* of God the Father and Jesus Christ, and a *repudiation* of the forgiveness of sins and the gift of salvation made possible through Jesus’ sacrifice.

The unpardonable sin is a deliberate and calculated renunciation of God. It is *not* an accidental sin, nor is it a sin committed under *temptation* or through *weakness*.

Rather, the unpardonable sin is a knowing, determined, premeditated, willful *decision* and *choice*—arrived at while rejecting any pangs of the conscience, while denying the leading of the Holy Spirit, and while ignoring the pleadings of the Word of God, or of ministers and brethren. It is a willful determination to *reject* the very **gift of repentance**; it is based on hostile *contempt* for the commandments of God and the Spirit of God; it is a willful *repudiation* of the very sacrifice of Jesus Christ and His blood for the forgiveness of sins and the salvation of God.

Satan the devil has *not deceived* those who have committed the unpardonable sin. Rather, they have willingly and willfully—with predetermination and without regret or sorrow—turned their backs on God the Father and Jesus Christ, and the Word of God.

It is not possible to renew such a one to repentance. In fact, it is impossible for even the Holy Spirit to move such a person to repentance. Such a person has “seared” his or her conscience as if with a hot iron—and there is no power, human or divine, that is able to renew them to repentance.

Their choice is *final*, and God’s judgment against them is final.

“In [the book of] Hebrews, the characteristic terms for sin that display contempt for God are compounds of *para*, many of which occur nowhere else in the New Testament.

paradeigmaizein, to expose to public humiliation (6:6)

parapikainein, to rebel (3:16)

parapikrasmos, rebellion (3:8, 15)

pararrein, to drift away, fall away (2:1)

parapherein, to carry away (13:9)

pareinenos, being listless (12:12)

“There is no other repentance than that provided through Jesus Christ. There is no salvation apart from the purification for sins accomplished by the divine Son in the final period of God’s redemptive activity (1:1-3). The *adunaton* [the impossibility], which is used, absolutely and without qualification in Heb. 6:4, expresses an impossibility because the apostate [has] repudiat[ed] the only basis upon which repentance can be extended. **To repudiate Christ is to embrace the ‘impossible’**” (Lane, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 47A, p. 142).

The Human Conscience: Created by God in all men and women, the human conscience is part of the heart and mind. When anyone sins there is an *automatic* sense of guilt. The worse the sin, the greater the guilt—and hence, dread. “Conscience is that faculty within us which decides as to the moral quality of our thoughts, words and acts [i.e., makes us specially aware of our thoughts and actions]. It gives consciousness of the good of one’s conduct or motives, or causes feelings of remorse at evil-doing, but its action is involuntary. A good conscience is one

which has no feeling of reproach against oneself, [and] does not accuse oneself of willful wrong” (*Cruden’s Concordance*, definition of *conscience*).

Warnings Against the Unpardonable Sin:

1) Description of the Apostate:

Heb. 6:6 “fallen away” “crucifying the Son of God” “publicly holding *Him* in contempt”

Heb. 10:26, 29 “willfully go on sinning” “trampled underfoot the Son of God” “has regarded the blood of the covenant, with which He was sanctified, *as an unholy thing*” “has scorned the Spirit of grace”

2) One’s Prior Experience

Heb. 6:4-5 “once enlightened” “personally obtained the heavenly gift” “became partakers of *the* Holy Spirit” “have tasted *the* good Word of God, and *the* powers of *the* world to come”

Heb. 10:26, 29 “after receiving the knowledge of the truth” “was sanctified with the blood of the covenant”

3) Impossibility of Renewal

Heb. 6:4, 6 “For *it is* impossible ... to renew *them* again unto repentance”

Heb. 10:26 “there is no longer any sacrifice for sins”

4) Their Expectation

Heb. 6:6, 8 “being cursed, the end of which *is* for burning”

Heb. 10:27, 29, 31 “terrifying expectation of inevitable judgment” “fierce fire” “much worse punishment” “a fearful thing to fall into *the* hands of *the* living God”

Comfort:

1) Basis

Heb. 6:9 Appeal to “better things”

Heb. 10:32 Appeal to “remember the earlier days”

2) Past Experience as Christians

Heb. 6:10 “work, and the labor of love” “have served the saints”

Heb. 10:32, 33, 34 “endured much conflict in *your* sufferings” “companions of those who were enduring the same things” “showed compassion to me in my bonds” “gladly endured the plunder of your possessions”

3) Present Responsibility

Heb. 6:11, 12 “demonstrating the same diligence” “*be* imitators of those with faith and steadfast endurance”

Heb. 10:35, 36 “do not cast away your confidence” “need to have endurance”

4) Incentive

Heb. 6:11, 12 “the full assurance of the hope until *the* end” “inherit the promises”

Heb. 10:35, 36 “great reward” “may receive the promise”