



**SERIES: Walking with Jesus**

**SPEAKER: DAN COKE**

**Saturday, December 16, 2023**

**Scripture: Mark 3:23–30**

**TITLE: The Two Kingdoms and the Unforgiveable Sin**

“And he called them to him and said to them in parables, ‘How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.

“‘Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin’— for they were saying, ‘He has an unclean spirit.’” (Mark 3:23–30, ESV)

The first question a person usually asks right after reading this passage is: What’s the eternal sin that is never forgiven? Or, what does it mean to blaspheme the Holy Spirit?

I have met Christians who have come to me in tears, worried that they had committed the unpardonable sin of blaspheming the Holy Spirit. I want to provide you some clarity on this subject and to do so, we need to look closer at the entire context.

First of all, Jesus describes two kingdoms in conflict over which one will rule the world of mankind. Those two kingdoms are the kingdom of Satan or darkness and the kingdom of God.

Secondly, Jesus describes His ministry as being a full-blown, military assault against the kingdom of Satan. Every healing, every exorcism, and every convert was an act of spiritual warfare. So, from this context, Jesus wants everyone to know that Satan is not thrilled to be losing these battles. In fact, Satan wants more territory not less. This is why Jesus says, house divided against itself will not be able to stand. Two kingdoms, two households are at war and makes no practical sense for a household under attack to turn on itself. To do so, would be to forfeit any hope of victory.

Moving on. The third thing that Jesus mentions is entering the house of the strong man, tying him up and plundering his goods. Again, this is how Jesus viewed his earthly ministry. He saw himself as entering Satan’s house or kingdom, tying him up and plundering all his valuables, which are people. To be even more specific, the strong man’s house is a reference to the nations being won to Christ.

And what would be the definitive work of Christ that ultimately binds the strong man? Well, it's the cross! Through the cross, Jesus would deliver the ultimate blow to the strong man. All these things are tied to the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ. And the religious scribes were not only criticizing this earthly ministry, but they attributed all to the power of Satan.

It's in response to this demonic accusation that Jesus says, [“Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin.”](#)

Jesus equated the blaspheming of his earthly ministry as being the unforgivable sin. Matthew confirms this in verse 30 with these words, [“for they were saying, ‘He has an unclean spirit.’”](#) It was the Spirit of God that descended upon Jesus at His baptism and who remained on Him. Blaspheming or attributing Christ's earthly ministry to Satan is the eternal sin. Understanding this has been a huge comfort to me! Because being a Christian means loving the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It means confessing Jesus as Lord, which is a sign that the Holy Spirit is in you.

Now, it's onward Christian soldiers! Marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus going before. Amen.