

My Thoughts for Sunday, 30 October 2016

“The Unforgivable Sin”

“Anyone who rejected the law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. How much more severely do you think someone deserves to be punished who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, who has treated as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant that sanctified them, and who has insulted the Spirit of grace?” Hebrews 10:28-29

Gather a group of your peers together and pose the question: “What is the greatest sin one could commit?” If you have any Catholics in your group, be advised, by their records there are approximately 50 each, Venial and Mortal sins, just against the First Commandment. Putting this aside and just considering what non-Catholics perceive as sins, I am sure you will get a large variety of answers. These answers will probably exclude those simple things like lying, stealing, cheating and those other almost accepted practices in today’s society. At the top of the list you might encounter sins like, murder, child abuse, using the Lords’ name in vain, etc. Does this mean that just because society accepts those “minor” sins that they are O.K. with God? As a Christian, a believer in His gift to me, I/or we could answer that question. But let’s let God speak for Himself. *“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”* (Romans 5:12) O.K. So this tells us where sin actually came from and that we are all sinners. But it does not tell us what is and is not a sin. This sin is known as the inherent sin because it was inherited from our first parents. This, then, is not the sin in question for our discussion.

We are all familiar with the Ten Commandments written on two tablets of stone by the finger of God, delivered to His people by Moses. Disobeying, or rejecting these commandments is what determines sins performed by us as individuals. Let’s first take a look at how serious the offense was when the Israelites, God’s chosen people, rejected these commandments, or sinned. *“Anyone who rejected the Law of Moses died without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.”* (Hebrews 10:28) Has this punishment been revised in our world today? Most certainly in our modern society. This culture that accepts just about anything as a normal way of life. Our culture is swiftly moving away from moral absolutes to an attitude of tolerance and leniency. Almost anything is acceptable as long as you are not convicted. Individuals are paid to defend known guilty criminals at all cost to gain their freedom, only to watch them return to society and their chosen criminal occupation.

Here, I insert the Ten Commandments, taken from Exodus Chapter 20:

NOTE (Numbers in Italics are verse numbers only.)

And God spoke all these words:

2 *“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.*

3 *“You shall have no other gods before[a] me.*

4 *“You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.*

7 *“You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.*

8 *“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*

12 *“Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.*

13 *“You shall not murder.*

14 *“You shall not commit adultery.*

15 *“You shall not steal.*

16 *“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.*

17 *“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”*

Let’s go back to God’s Word regarding the breaking of His Commandments. Looking in the letter written by James the brother of Jesus, inspired by God, we read; *“Whoever keeps the whole Law but stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.”* (James 2:10). Have you ever told a “little white lie?” Ever stolen anything, no matter how small, that wasn’t rightly yours (a piece of candy, a paper clip or pen from the office)? Did you always honor your parents, (even when they “didn’t understand you”)? How do you honor the Sabbath? Do you devote at least part of it to honoring your God? We could

go on and on, but I am sure if you are honest with yourself, you will find many more “shortcomings, failures, sins.” Anyone in doubt of where their sin lies, go to Matthew chapter 5. As an example, Jesus’ own words at Matthew 5:27-28 states; *“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”*

Let your friends know that, according to the God’s Word, *“all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”* (Romans 3:23) Know also; *“The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* (Romans 6:23) There is no difference, one sin from another, according to the Word of God. The good news is, we have been given eternal life through the life, death and resurrection of our Lord, Jesus. My favorite verses again, John 3: 16-17; *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*

Sounds good! Everybody wins! Almost but not quite that simple. Look back at the words in John 3:16. There is that stipulation that *“whoever believes in Him, shall not perish but have everlasting life.”* Look around you today and see all the denial of Christianity itself! The denial that God is even in existence! The denial that one needs repentance and forgiveness! Forgiveness! For What? Again, we go back to God’s Word and realize we should have read a bit further in John 3 18... *“Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is already condemned, because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.”*

I believe we have come back to our topic, “The Unforgivable Sin.” Our God has given us a free pass, a literal, get out of jail card. All we need to do is believe in this free gift He has given us. We didn’t deserve it. We couldn’t earn it It was a FREE GIFT. The one negative stipulation was, if we refused it, rejected it, we do not get out of the consequences of our sins which now become unforgiven. And the wages of sin is death, by God’s rightful and just declaration. God does not force anyone to believe and win the prize. Non-believers have now joined the ranks of those on His left: *“Then He will say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”* (Matthew 25:41) Deserving of our text for today in Hebrews 10:28-29

NO, my friends, not everyone wins, only those filled with the Holy Spirit who believe in the Lord Jesus and have not turned away from that free gift from a loving and righteous God. Welcome home!