



# My Bible School Lessons

Exploring the Word of God

## Lesson #18: "Going too Far in Sin"

SCRIPTURE READING: GENESIS 25:29-34; 27:30-40 HEBREWS 12:16-17

**Memory Verse:** *"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:" John 15:26.*

### 1: WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Let us notice four facts about the Holy Spirit:

#### 1. He is closely associated with God and Christ.

The Holy Spirit is a divine person, a member of the Godhead (1 John 5:7).

**Matthew 28:19:** *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."*

#### 2. He took part in creation.

**Genesis 1:1-2:** *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."*

#### 3. He descended upon Christ at His baptism.

**Matthew 3:16-17:** *"And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, Lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him."*

#### 4. He represents Christ on earth.

**John 14:26:** *"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name. He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance. whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 16:7).*

Here we are on holy ground, for the Holy Ghost is the representative of Christ on earth. He is here with us, so let us tread softly. Some things about the Spirit will always be a mystery. One writer has well said:

"The nature of the Holy Spirit is a mystery. Men cannot explain it, because the Lord has not revealed it to them. Men having fanciful views may bring together passages of Scripture and put a human construction on them: but the acceptance of these views will not strengthen the church. Regarding such mysteries, which are too deep for human understanding, silence is golden."

## Lesson 1: God's Amazing Word

Jesus, as the Son of man, was in only one place at a time. He sends the Spirit to be everywhere. "It is expedient for you that I go away," He said (*John 16:7*). It was better for Him to go away and send the Spirit in special power to be with His children in all parts of the world at all times.

### 2: WHAT IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Spirit's work for man may be divided into ten areas of ministry.

#### 1. He convinces men of sin.

***John 16:8: "When He is come, He will reprove ["convince," margin] the world of sin, and of righteousness and of judgment."***

"Of sin," said Jesus, "because they believe not on Me" (*John 16:9*). It is sin to reject Christ, the remedy for sin. The Holy Spirit, reproves, or convinces, men of sin and "sin is the transgression of the law." Because Christ came to save us from our sins, from which we could not save ourselves, we doubly commit sin when we refuse His help. Suppose a man develops blood poisoning. His wife calls a doctor who is equipped to save her husband and who is eager to administer aid. But the man refuses all help. He dies. He is fully and undeniably responsible for his own death.

#### 2. He convinces men of righteousness (*John 16:8*).

Paul says: First of all, He convinces of the righteousness of the law.

***Romans 8:3-4: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."***

Since the Holy Spirit convinces of sin, and since "sin is the transgression of the law," the Spirit must of necessity uphold the righteous and unchangeable character of the law; and, second, the righteousness of Christ. Said the Saviour: "Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more" (*John 16:10*).

The Spirit rallied to support the righteousness of Christ. Jesus was accused of being what He was not, and of not being what He was. He was accused of teaching what He did not teach, and of doing what He did not do. Though guiltless, He was put to death on the cross like the vilest sinner. Yet the Spirit upheld His righteousness.

The Spirit descended upon Him after His baptism, thus signifying that Jesus was the Messiah, or Anointed One. The Spirit led Him into the wilderness of temptation, and led Him always. The Spirit was at the tomb of Jesus when the angel rolled away the stone. Jesus was "quicken[ed] [made alive] by the Spirit" (*1 Peter 3:18*).

Jesus appeared to His disciples that night and breathed upon them, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (*John 20:22*).

***Luke 24:49: Then He said, "Behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Acts 1:4).***

The power was the power of the Holy Spirit. When Christ ascended to heaven and was accepted at His Father's side, the Holy Spirit descended upon His followers as a token of this exaltation (*Acts 2:33*).

The Spirit glorifies Christ and His sacred law. To reject these is to reject the work of the Holy Spirit.

### **3. He convinces men of judgment (John 16:8).**

***John 16:11: "Of judgment because the prince of this world is judged."***

The Spirit of God impresses every responsible being on earth, that he must give account to God. The law of God is the standard of the judgment, and God will judge us by Jesus Christ. As long as we live, any-time, anywhere, we can never escape the issue of God's law and God's Son. In the judgment we shall meet them. It is the work of God's Spirit to impress upon men this unavoidable truth and to lead them to salvation. Listen to these words:

***James 2:12: "So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty" (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).***

***Acts 17:31: "He hath appointed a day, in the which He Will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom He hath ordained."***

If all the world is to be judged, if Satan is to be judged, and if the fallen angels (*Jude 6; Hebrews 2:2*) are to be judged, "how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation" (*Hebrews 2:3*)?

### **4. He does the work of a comforter.**

***John 14:16: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide With you for ever" (Revelation 22: 17).***

If we will throw ourselves upon God's mercy and utterly abandon ourselves to the doing of His will, His Holy Spirit will comfort our troubled hearts through all our days in this sinful world.

### **5. He brings about the new birth.**

***John 3:5: "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."***

To those who receive Christ as a personal Saviour the promise is given:

***John 1:12-13: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."***

To be born of the Spirit means to have a new life altogether:

"The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit" (*Desire of Ages, p. 172*).

### **6. He dwells in men.**

***John 14:17: "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."***

Yes, it is through the Spirit that Christ dwells in us.

***Colossians 1:27: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."***

And the Spirit writes God's law in our hearts (2 *Corinthians* 3:3; *Hebrews* 8:10; *Romans* 8:10). Here again we find Christ and the law together. Christ dwells in us by the Spirit, and the Spirit writes the law in our hearts.

### **7. He intercedes for men.**

***Romans 8:26: "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."***

Since the Spirit dwells in us, He knows all our needs. And being one of the Godhead, He knows just how to present our problems in heaven. If we permit Him to lead us, He will deliver us from fear and sin (*Romans* 8:15).

### **8. He gives men power to witness.**

***Acts 1:8: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me."***

We should be willing to witness for Christ. A man bore his testimony telling how he had been "on the mountaintop" for five years. Mr. Moody asked him how many souls he had won to Christ. The man confessed that he had not won any. Said Moody, "That is not the kind of mountaintop experience we need—Christians should be soul winners."

### **9. He guides men.**

***Romans 8:14: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."***

***John 16:13: "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth" (John 17:17).***

We do not receive all truth at one time (*John* 16: 12). The forward movements of true religion have been given their momentum by great characters who dared to study, to believe, to teach, to practice, and even to die for unpopular truths. The names of Wycliffe, Huss, Jerome, Luther, Knox, Calvin, Wesley, and many others shine with luster on the pages recording the eradication of error and the advancement of truth. Unfortunately, too many stop right in the tracks of these great men and go no further.

God does not hold us responsible for light we do not have, but He does hold us responsible for that which we do have or might have if we improved the opportunities we have (*John* 9:41; *Matthew* 13:15).

### **10. He seals men unto the day of redemption.**

***Ephesians 4:30: "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Ephesians 1:13; Revelation 7:3).***

The Spirit is not the seal. He is the agent who seals us with the seal of God. In another lesson, we shall touch upon the seal of God and the mark of the beast.

### **3: WHAT IS PRESUMPTUOUS SIN?**

Presumptuous sin is deliberate sin against light.

***Psalms 19:13: "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression."***

## Lesson 1: God's Amazing Word

The presumptuous sin is choosing our own way instead of God's and presuming that God will always forgive. It leads to the unpardonable sin. Noah's message was rejected, and a whole generation was lost. It is dangerous business to presume that a good God will forgive all sins under all conditions and, therefore, to sin deliberately on this basis.

The following experiences in the Bible illustrate this:

1. Nadab and Abihu (*Leviticus 10:1*).
2. Esau and the birthright (*Genesis 25:29-34; Hebrews 12:16-17*).
3. Ananias and Sapphira (*Acts 5:1-11*).
4. People in Noah's day and our own day (*Genesis 6:3-7; Luke 17:26, 27*).

### 4: WHAT IS THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST?

It is the rejection of the Spirit's call (*Matthew 12:24-32*).

From the statements of Jesus in Matthew 12:24-32, it is clearly evident that the sin against the Holy Ghost is final rejection of Christ and His teachings, and attributing His work to an evil power. It is persistently rejecting the Spirit's call to repentance. It is the sin we do not forsake. If we do not shield our conscience, it will become hard and callous, and we will tread the paths of sin with utter abandon, giving no heed to the promptings of the Spirit of God. Remember, no sin is too great for God to forgive if it is confessed and put away. The sin against the Holy Ghost is the failure to confess or put away sin and unbelief in Christ, our Saviour.

### 5: CAN A MAN KNOW WHEN HE HAS COMMITTED THE UNPARDONABLE SIN?

Many will commit this sin and think that all is well. Jesus said:

***Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."***

When human probation closes, many will seek for the Word of God, but it will be too late. Probationary time will be over.

***Amos 8:11-12: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it" (Jeremiah 8:20).***

But, thank God, He will accept all who come in sincerity to Jesus.

***John 6:37: "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."***

If a man will come to Christ and accept Him as Lord and Saviour, in faith confess his sins and fully surrender to do God's will, He may know that he has not committed this sin. If he does not come, He may know that he is in danger of committing it. If he professes Christ, yet rejects truth and continues in his own way, he may commit it and still think he is acceptable with God.

Jesus tasted "death for every man" (*Hebrews 2:9*). Yet most men will never benefit by Christ's death because they will not heed the gentle calls, the persistent movings of the Holy Spirit.

## Lesson 1: God's Amazing Word

Let us pray with David, "Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me" (*Psalm 51:11*)? Let us "grieve not the holy Spirit of God" (*Ephesians 4:30*), who alone can seal us for the day of redemption.

Be of good courage, dear student, and put away every sin. God will help you to be victorious. But beware of delay. Continue with these lessons. In the very next Bible study you will learn how to outwit your greatest enemy, the devil, and fully overcome through faith in Christ. One more word: Do not think that you have sinned against the Holy Ghost if you have a desire to follow Jesus. This very desire is the work of God's Spirit on your heart.

### **SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL**

### **The Sin against the Holy Spirit**

"When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature. The soul that is yielded to Christ becomes His own fortress, which He holds in a revolted world, and He intends that no authority shall be known in it but His own. A soul thus kept in possession by the heavenly agencies is impregnable to the assaults of Satan.

"But unless we do yield ourselves to the control of Christ, we shall be dominated by the wicked one. We must inevitably be under the control of the one or the other of the two great powers that are contending for the supremacy of the world. It is not necessary for us

deliberately to choose the service of the kingdom of darkness in order to come under its dominion. We have only to neglect to ally ourselves with the kingdom of light. If we do not co-operate with the heavenly agencies, Satan will take possession of the heart, and will make it his abiding place.

"The only defense against evil is the indwelling of Christ in the heart through faith in His righteousness. Unless we become vitally connected with God, we can never resist the unhallowed effects of self-love, self-indulgence, and temptation to sin. We may leave off many bad habits, for the time we may part company with Satan; but without a vital connection with God, through the surrender of ourselves to Him moment by moment, we shall be overcome. Without a personal acquaintance with Christ, and a continual communion, we are at the mercy of the enemy, and shall do his bidding in the end.

" 'The last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so,' said Jesus, 'shall it be also unto this wicked generation' [Matthew 12:45]. There are none so hardened as those who have slighted the invitation of mercy, and done despite to the Spirit of grace. The most common manifestation of the sin against the Holy Spirit is in persistently slighting Heaven's invitation to repent. Every step in the rejection of Christ is a step toward the rejection of salvation, and toward the sin against the Holy Spirit.

"In rejecting Christ the . . . people committed the unpardonable sin; and by refusing the invitation of mercy, we may commit the same error. We offer insult to the Prince of life, and put Him to shame before the synagogue of Satan and before the heavenly universe when we refuse to listen to His delegated messengers, and instead listen to the agents of Satan, who would draw the soul away from Christ. So long as one does this, he can find no hope or pardon, and he will finally lose all desire to be reconciled to God." Desire of Ages.