

What Question Do You Get Asked the Most?

Unpardonable Sin

Tim Conway | illbehonest.com

James: Maybe you could end on this question. Someone asked: What is the question that you get tired the most of hearing as a pastor?

Tim: Well, we have literally in the history of our church had certain people that get so hung up over the unpardonable sin. And I mean, I have had people that have gotten a hold of my personal phone number - or maybe it was before I handed the church number over to James - where people could call multiple times a day like they're just being tormented. And it doesn't matter how many times you try to dispel their false notions, they can't hear you. And then at the same time, you get the feeling like they feel like they have to talk to me, like I'm some magic formula for fixing their problem. And that becomes really exasperating. I guess I feel like doing the Asahel Nettleton thing. When he ever would discern that people were relying too much on him because God had used him in the past, he at times would walk away from meetings. I think sometimes I just realized people were thinking way too much of me and my ability to help them. I would just not answer the phone any more. I feel like sometimes leaving people alone with the Lord is the best thing you can do; not try to be a crutch to them. But some people, I think it's a real demonic ploy to just aggravate people over, torment their souls with this unpardonable sin. Some people just seem so, so demonic.

James: Yeah, and the truth is the five times we've done this live Q&A, every time questions come up in the YouTube chat about the unpardonable sin. And people are looking for hope or afraid that they've committed it. And we'll link them to the 10 plus videos that have already been done on it.

Tim: It's like they can't hear it so often. I think it's a real demonic ploy. And look, I dealt with it when I was a brand new Christian. You know, if you go back and you read different things you'll see that Bunyan dealt with it. This is something that seems to be a very common demonic strategy.

James: Maybe I can read that - I saved that quote of Nettleton. He said this, "I have since thought the effect of my leaving these thirty people under conviction as I did in the advanced stages of their conviction was evidently beneficial. It drove them from all human dependence, distressing as it is and cruel as it may seem. It is necessary for them to feel that no arm but God's can help them. Similar effects from like circumstances have heretofore been witnessed."

Tim: Yeah, look, let's just very simply deal with the unpardonable sin. That's somebody thinking that they've done something obviously so terrible they can never be forgiven. They've blasphemed the Holy Spirit. Nobody ever knows they've done it. But it's like they have a voice in

their head that's telling them they've done it. Nobody can know they've done it. And so, here's a truth from God's Word. "Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out." Okay. That is true no matter what you've done. No matter what anybody's done. If they will go to Christ, Christ will not cast them out. But you know what? People can't hear that. "I've committed the unpardonable sin." Yeah, but wait, you have to hear me here. If you go to Christ, He won't cast you out. Whatever the unpardonable sin is, it leaves people where they won't go to Christ, obviously. Because if you go to Christ, He won't cast you out. And you see what you're doing is you're trying to get their eyes on Christ. And so, if you feel like Nettleton where they're putting too much confidence in the preacher, you know it's like, oh, they've got to talk to Paul Washer. He's the guy that's going to fix it. I've got to talk to John Piper. Only that guy can help me. Only that guy can fix me. And we get people that call our church. They've got to talk to me. It doesn't matter that the other elders have told them exactly the same counsel.

You know, brethren, to be a believer, I've said this to certain people that have felt like they struggled with whether they could ever be saved, whether they've committed the unpardonable sin, to be a believer, you don't have to believe everything that God's Word says all the time. At any given time, all you need to be able to do is lock in on one promise. That's it. If you'll take one promise of God's Word at any given time and be able to lock in on that, that is what a believer does. I would encourage any of you that if you're trying to deal with somebody that's dealing with the unpardonable sin, try to bring some text that you can get their faith to lay hold of. Because if that happens, those who believe on Him will not be ashamed. If you can just get somebody to see, look, if you go to Christ, He won't turn you away. "But I've committed the unpardonable sin." Yes, but that doesn't undo this truth that if you'll go to Christ, He'll receive you. "But... I had this thought." "I told myself that if I ever did this and this happened..." Or people have made these bargains with God, these contracts, and then they feel like they've broken them or they feel like they had a certain thought and they told themselves that if they had this certain thought that they could never be saved or they'd sell their soul if they had a certain thought. You get all sorts of things. People are just plagued with, they're in bondage to, they're just tormented. But if they could just hear Christ's voice: "If you come to Me, I won't cast you out." So what you want to get them doing is calling on the Lord. Not thinking they've got to talk to a certain guy, a certain preacher to fix it.