

Think You've Committed the Unpardonable Sin?

Find a Promise

Tim Conway | *Excerpt from the full sermon, "People of Promise"*.

Just this week, I received a phone call from a man. Professing Christian for a long time. Even in the ministry. Living in all manner of immorality. Do you know what happened? A friend of his turned on Paul Washer's message - I think it's the same one that was preached here: "Examine Yourself" Maybe the very same message. This man was laid bare, and he recognized, I don't measure up. And do you know what he fears now? Is being in the ministry, having so much light, having this false profession for so long, living in this immorality. You know what he's afraid of now? That he's Esau. He's afraid he's committed the unpardonable sin. He's afraid he's gone too far and there's no way back.

Now, I'll tell you this - I'll tell you what I told him. I can't tell you that there is a way back. The truth is there is a line in Scripture that when men cross it, there's no way back. There is a Hebrews 6 reality. There is a place men come to that there is no more repentance. He told me that his friends and counselors had sent him to the Word of God. That's good. To look at passages that dealt with the cross. I told him that's good. But you see what he could tell me: "Well, I believe He went to the cross. I believe He died. I believe everything I'm reading. I just don't know if it's for me." I told him, "exactly." That is exactly the issue. I said, "What you need to do is you need to find that one verse..." that he can sink his faith into; that he can say, "That's for me." You see, that's where faith is. Saving faith isn't saying: "I believe Jesus was a true historical figure." It's not saying, "I believe Jesus went to the cross." It's got to be personalized. There's got to be something you can hang on that you know is for you, because you know what the devil's going to do to him? The devil's already doing it to him. He's there whispering in his ear: "After what you've done, there's no hope for you. You are Esau." He just keeps hearing that in his ear over and over and over. You know how you answer that? You answer that with the kind of promise that resists the devil; that the devil simply cannot answer.

What do you tell him? I told him, "You may have crossed that line." But I know this, that if he can find any promise in this book that he can lay his faith onto, he will not be disappointed. He will not be confounded. He will not be cast away. Because that's what saving faith is. And you know as I was thinking after I got off the phone with him, I start thinking about, what sort of verses are they

that a man in that condition might find? I mean, if he was going through Scripture, what might be one verse? I'll tell you one that jumped out at me. And sometimes they can be obscure verses, and sometimes you may think that they're not even dealing with the very thing that you take it in faith to mean. But if you take it in faith to mean it; if you take it in faith that you're trusting the God behind these things...

I mean, we could just look at that - the broadness of some of God's promises. I mean, you know what? You think about how in Isaiah 53, how by His stripes we're healed. Does it blow anybody away that Matthew basically in Matthew 9 says He's healing the people, thus fulfilling that? You're like wait a second, I thought that was spiritual healing back there. And Jesus is physically healing. We might just talk about the broadness of some of God's promises. But I got to thinking about this. Jesus Himself says, "If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also." If a man could just find hope there. I've struck Him in the cheek by my actions, but He is such a God who sends His Son who is the radiance of the glory of God, and He is the kind that teaches us that if we're struck, turn the other also. I mean, if He's teaching that to us, is He not also a God who takes many blows, many dishonorings and yet is still willing to turn the other cheek? Or, how about this? In Joel 2, God says, "Yet even now..." Those three words could be something that somebody's faith could cling to. "Yet even now..." Wait, what's that? "Yet even now, declares the Lord, return to Me with all your heart." You know when you say that - "yet even now" - it's after people have done a lot of bad. Yet even now after all you've done, "if anyone will turn to Me with all their heart with fasting, with weeping, with mourning, rend your hearts and not your garments, return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful..." How about these three words? "...slow to anger." I mean if a man's faith can get into that. God is slow to anger. I can put my weight on that promise, because I've provoked Him for a long time, but He's slow to anger. Oh, certainly the God of Scripture in all of His infinite mercies, certainly I could not wear out His kindness just in these years I've done this. Certainly God is greater than that. Those words, "yet even now."

Or how about this? God's kindness is meant to lead to repentance. Because one of the things I told him, I told him one of the things that tells me God is not done with you, is He led you to that Paul Washer sermon. And He convicted you. And you came clean! He confessed. He confessed to his wife. He confessed to his church. That is a kindness. And what would you say? God's kindnesses are not meant to lead him to repentance? You see, that isn't the indication in my estimation of somebody that God is done with. Or how about this? To Sardis - Oh, when I preached about those seven churches in

Asia Minor, Sardis jumped out at me. "You have a name that you are alive, but you are dead." This is a church. You talk about people exposed to light. But, you're dead. What did He say? No hope? You've crossed the line? He doesn't. He says, "Wake up." You see if our faith can just grab words like that: "Wake up."

Of course, there's these words. John 6:37 Our Lord says, "Whoever comes to Me, I will never cast out." Whoever! It doesn't matter what you say you've done. If you go to Christ, He won't cast you out. Period. It's amazing when I come across people who are struggling with the unpardonable sin and I bring up this text, immediately, "Yeah, but..." Look, if you want to find every reason not to believe a text, that's classic unbeliever. And you will perish. See, the only hope is that our faith can find a place to stay.