

Message Transcript

CALLING LIGHT DARKNESS: WHAT IS BLASPHEMY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT | THE KINGDOM BREAKS IN AARON BROCKETT | MARCH 7 & 8, 2026

Alright. Look at you all. I would never be able to tell that you had an hour less sleep. Man, come on man. This is a resilient crew right here. Man, I would charge hell with a water pistol with this crew right here, man.

It's good to have you guys. It's great to be with you across all of our locations, those of you joining us online. If you are new to our church we are just continuing on in our year-long study in the gospel of Mark, which is an action packed, fast-paced story of the life and ministry of Jesus.

Today we are finishing up Mark, chapter 3 as well as Part 1 of this series. So, we're making our way through this. Next weekend we begin Part 2, which is entitled The Kingdom in Word and in Power. And then, in three short weeks, Easter is upon us. One of the biggest weekends of the year.

If you were here last week I asked you, if this is your church home, if you would begin helping us with three things as we prepare for Easter weekend.

Pray and invite "your one"

The first thing is: Pray for your and invite your "one more". And I want you to think about that—family member, neighbor, co-worker, or friend. And you would say, "You know what? It would take nothing short of a miracle to get them here."

Write their name down and begin praying over them and invite them to come with you on Easter. Now, here's the key to the invitation. Don't just do a general invite, say, "Hey, would you please come to Easter and sit with me." And that last little part makes all of the difference.

Attend a non-prime hour

The second thing is would you attend a non-prime hour? So, anything other than 9:30 or 11:15. I know that some of you all are going, "Yeah, I ain't ever doing that." Some of you may. Some of you may. We're going to add more services that weekend. I need you to clear the way, empty your seat, so that way our guests can attend our prime house.



Serve as a Difference Maker

And then third: Would you serve as a Difference Maker in one of these hours that you do not attend? Guys, I can't stress enough how Easter is just such an impactful day. Obviously, we're celebrating the resurrection of Jesus.

I'm already beginning to work on that message. I just want preach a straight-up gospel message, invite people to give their lives to Jesus, and we'll do baptisms that day. So, we need your help to make it a really, really special day.

The weekend after Easter we're going to do something that is also going to be really amazing and we're going to invite people back. I can't tell you what we're going to do, but it is going to require us to add additional services and days.

I will give you a little clue as to what we're going to do that weekend. I've got this little icon. Alright? [head of a horse or pony] Just a little clue. Some of you are like, "What?" And some of you know exactly what I'm talking about. So, that's the weekend after Easter.

But today is a special day as well. Because we are going to sponsor a whole bunch of kids today. Alright? And if you are new or newer to our church, we host a child sponsorship weekend every 18 to 24 months. So, if you are like, "Man, it just kind of feels like we did this 18 to 24 months ago," that's because we did this 18 to 24 months ago.

And we rotate between two of our global partners: Compassion and the one that is here today, Missions of Hope International. When we talk about them we'll say MOHI for short. And MOHI is one of our top global partnerships. We began this partnership when I first went over in 2008. And we have been partnering with them since then. It has been nothing short of amazing to see what God has been doing over there.

We send this organization dollars, but in addition to that, as a church, we are currently sponsoring over 3,500 kids. In fact... Yeah, man. We give that up. We currently have a medical mission team that left to go there on Thursday.

I'm jumping on a plane tomorrow night to head over there for the next five days. And I'm taking my future son-in-law with me. He and my daughter are getting married in May. So, pray that he comes back. Pray nothing accidentally happens to him. Alright? I'm totally joking. I love him. So, he's going over with me.



And if you follow me on social media, just follow along. I'm going to be sharing pictures and videos of the work that is going on there. In fact, we are very, very honored today because Mary and Wallace Kamau, who lead Missions of Hope International, are with us this morning. Can you guys please stand? Let's just honor them. And we're going to be hearing from them in just a minute.

But I want you to know that child sponsorship is a tangible way we can serve some of the most vulnerable children in the world. And when you sponsor a child—I know many of you are already doing this—you play a meaningful role in their spiritual, physical, emotional, and educational development providing an effective and lasting way out of poverty.

Now, our prayerful goal is that every child at Bondeni and Kiparani schools, which is where we work, will have a sponsor. And so, if we can sponsor more in those schools, then we'll take it. And, guys, through us, roughly 14 to 15 thousand people this weekend, I think that sponsoring the number of kids we have a goal for is totally feasible.

Now, I know that many of you already sponsor and that's fantastic. Maybe God will prompt you to sponsor another. That is between you and Him. It is not my job to do a hard sell. I'm just presenting to you the opportunity and you do what you feel led to do.

Now, some of you are going, "How many kids should we sponsor?" And I would just say this. A good rule of thumb, if you have a family with children, sponsor a child overseas for every child you have in your family. Some of you are like, "Well, I'm not married, I'm single." Well, sponsor a child for every niece or nephew you have or maybe every pet you have. I don't know. I don't know. But I will say this. This is so important.

Maybe it's not your time to sponsor a child. Please do not take the packet with you out of the room you are in if you are not going to sponsor a child. Don't say, "Well, I'm going to take it with me and pray on it." Don't do that because if you take a packet and you don't sponsor them, that child will be out of circulation for six months.

So, Mark, chapter 3 starting in verse 20, I'm going to hard transition. We'll come back to this in a minute. But go ahead and find that in your Bible. Let me set up what we're going to talk about today with this illustration.



Several weeks ago I was standing in my closet folding some laundry and hanging some clothes. I had cut my ankle a few days before and I didn't realize that I was bleeding. So, blood was running down my ankle to the carpet in our closet. And by the time I looked down there was a small pool of blood that had pooled on the carpet in our closet.

And I ran out and cleaned it up and then walked up to my wife and tried to be as casual as I could. I was like, "Hey, babe. Hypothetically, what cleans blood out of carpet? Just curious." And she was like, "What happened?" And I showed her. And we got the cleaning solution put it on and we blotted out the stain. Thankfully, I was able to get the blood stain out of the carpet.

Now, as relieved as I was, can I say this? I am way more relieved that there is a way for the stain of my sin to be removed in my life. Aren't you glad for that too? That's the way that the Scriptures describe it. It is a cleansing of our sin.

David would describe it this way in Psalm 51, verses 1 through 2:

"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion," here it is, "blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin." (NIV)

Man, the concept of forgiveness is so hopeful. Aren't you grateful for it? Which is why the idea that we could never be forgiven of something is downright terrifying. In fact, Jesus oftentimes says things that make us uncomfortable in the best way.

In fact, if you don't think that Jesus ever said anything that made people uncomfortable, if you think He was a Mr. Rogers kind of a guy who wanted everybody to love each other, read the gospels carefully. Because Jesus says things that make us uncomfortable.

And that is certainly true of the passage that we are going to walk through today. Because He brings up, within it, the concept of an unforgivable sin. And He refers to it as:

Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit

Now some of you maybe didn't grow up in church or it's been a while since you've been here and you're like, "What in the world is that?" Others of you maybe you grew up in church and maybe you've heard the term.



I'm trying to think about how many sermons I've actually heard specifically on this topic. Not very many. And, by the way, the only reason why we are covering it is because it's what is next in the text.

And maybe you have some confusion around it. Maybe it's been a little scary. Maybe you have some questions. If you are anything like me the questions around this topic are namely this:

What is that?

Have I done it?

How do I make sure I don't?!

What is that, followed very quickly by have I done that? And then the third question: How do I make sure that I don't do that?

As a pastor, I get these questions regularly. And, potentially, there may be a lot of confusion or even fear around this. If I do my job right... I want to teach this in such a way that when you walk out of the room after this message, I do not want you to be worried about this unnecessarily. However, that doesn't mean that we shouldn't consider the topic with a sober mind and that there might be some sort of action that God wants you to take.

Look with me at verse 20. It says this:

"Then Jesus entered a house, and again a crowd gathered, so that he and his disciples were not even able to eat." (NIV)

One of the things that, hopefully, you've begun to see so far in our study in Mark is that he mentions crowds gathering around Jesus. This is a regular theme from Mark. And here he says that they were so crowded that they weren't able to eat.

Sounds to me like a cruise, which is why I don't go on many. The idea of being in a buffet line with people in swimsuits bumping up against me is not my idea of a good time and I lose my appetite.

Verse 21:

"When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, 'He is out of his mind.'" (NIV)

So, here's what I want you to see. It says His family. That means like the family that He grew up with: Mary and His half-brothers and sisters. And they hear about this and they say, "He must be out of His mind."



Guys, the only thing worse than getting a nasty google review is when it's from your mom. Right? So, here's what's going on. Last week I said that word was spreading about Jesus all through the region so people were traveling from a really long distance to come see Him, which would have included His own family and they didn't get it.

Like, "Why are all of these people coming to see Jesus? It's Jesus. We love Him. But it's just Jesus." And Mark says that they went to take charge of Him. What that is implying in that terminology is that they went to pull Him away to save Him from more embarrassment. They were embarrassed for Him.

Any of you know what that is like? Some of you, if you do not have the support of your family as you follow Jesus, Jesus knows exactly what that's like. Some of you are the only Christian in your family. That is the reason why you are here today by yourself and they are home getting an extra hour of sleep. Jesus knows what it's like to be the only one in your family pursuing Him.

What I want you to see in this scenario is that Jesus is flanked on one side by his doubting family members. That would have been demoralizing. Then on the other side He's got the Scribes and the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who are looking to kill Him. And then all around the fringes (Mark has already brought it up several times) there are unclean spirits or demons that are taunting Him from the fringes. He's surrounded.

And look at what it says in verse 22:

"And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said, 'He is possessed by Beelzebul!' Or Beelzebub, whatever. It's just a term for Satan. "By the prince of demons he is driving out demons.' So Jesus called them over to him and began to speak to them in parables..."

Which are earthly stories with heavenly meanings. In fact, in the next couple of weeks we are going to be unpacking several of them. And Jesus asked this question:

"How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house without first tying him up. Then he can plunder the strong man's house." (NIV)



So, understand what is going on is Jesus is casting demons out and His family is embarrassed for Him. The religious leaders think that He's doing this because He is possessed Himself. And Jesus asks the obvious question, "Why would Satan help Me cast out Satan?"

And then I love the analogy that He gives. If you want to know what I'm like, He goes, "I'm kind of like a strong man who breaks into another strong man's house and plunders him." I love that. We talked about this. Even in the description it says that Satan has a kingdom and Satan has a house.

Several weeks ago we talked about the 40 days of fasting in the wilderness that Jesus went through and Satan came to tempt Him. One of the temptations was that he said, "If you'll bow down I'll give you the kingdoms of this world." Satan has a temporary, limited domain. And here Jesus is saying, "I have come to literally take ground for My coming Kingdom on earth." And He is still doing so today. Only Jesus has the power to overcome Satan.

Paul would say it this way in Romans, chapter 16, verse 20. I love this verse because when I was in school growing up, I went to a Christian Bible school and we had chapel twice a week, and we would sing these 1980s Christian songs and this was one of them:

"The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." Hey! That's how we would sing it. Just making sure you are awake. Alright?

In Hebrews chapter 2, verses 14 through 15, the author of Hebrews says this: "Since the children have flesh and blood, he," referring to Jesus, "too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil..." (NIV)

So, it is in the midst of this explanation that He brings up the subject of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Look with me at verse 28. It says:

"Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter,"

Aren't you glad that is there? That is such good news, man. Underline that verse. I'm going to circle back to that. In the midst of kind of an unsettling topic, He gives us this reassurance in verse 28. But then in verse 29 He says something unsettling.



“but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin.” He said this because they were saying, “He has an impure spirit.” (NIV)

Alright? So, here’s the question:

What is Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit?

If you are jotting down some notes or taking pictures with your phone I’d encourage you to do so, so you can go back through and just kind of think through this or discuss this in your small groups. What is it?

Is it the unforgiveable sin?

What makes it unforgiveable?

Have I done it?

How do I make sure I don’t?!

Is it, as Jesus refers to it here, the unforgiveable sin and if it is what makes it unforgiveable? Followed by these personal questions, which we’ve already asked: Have I done it? And, How do I make sure that I don’t?

I think that the best way to kind of unpack this is to, first of all, to start with this. Let’s take a few things off of the table so that we can see clearly about this. There are four things:

Number one:

What is it not?

Not accidental

Not an intrusive thought

Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is not accidental. It is not an intrusive thought that just pops into your mind. You are not just sitting there having your morning coffee and all of a sudden you are like, “Oh, no. I think I just blasphemed the Holy Spirit. No, that’s not how it works. It’s not accidental.

Number two:

Not cursing

Not taking the Lord’s name in vain or cursing God (sinful, but not unforgivable)



It is not cursing. It's not taking the Lord's name in vain or cursing God. It is not that curse word you said when you smashed your fingers. Now, listen. Those things are sinful, but they are not unforgivable.

The third thing:

Not suicide

Historically, scripturally, theologically — those things are not the same.

This is a little more serious. It is not suicide. Sometimes it's often misunderstood or misconstrued for that or equated with it. But historically, scripturally, theologically those things are not the same.

Lastly:

Not doubting

We all have doubts (emotionally, intellectually).

It is not doubting. Now, we all have doubts emotionally and intellectually. Even if you've been following after Jesus for 10, 20, 30 years occasionally you will have a doubt. Faith implies some doubts.

So, it is none of those four things. It is also important to point out that Jesus made a distinction in Matthew's gospel between what is called blasphemy of the Son of Man, which the Son of Man is just another description of Jesus, and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

In Matthew's account of the exact same scenario, we see this played out. Jesus is talking about how can Satan drive out Satan? He'd be divided. But then Matthew provides this additional commentary, which is helpful for our understanding. Look at what Matthew says. He says:

"But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or again, how can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can plunder his house.

Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters. And so I tell you, every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.



Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man," that's Jesus, "will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come." Matthew 12:28-32 (NIV)

Alright. Is that as clear as mud? It's kind of confusing at first reading. If you read that and you are like, "Wait a second. Aren't Jesus and the Holy Spirit kind of the same?" Well, they are not kind of the same. They are two parts of the Triune God. You go, "Well, okay. How is it that blasphemy against Jesus, the Son of Man, is forgivable and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is not?" Or to say this in more layman's terms: Why is insulting one of them worse than the other?

Listen. The difference is not in who they are but in their function and how they are revealed to us and the moment of blasphemy, which is what makes the difference. See, blasphemy against Jesus, the Son of Man, was a sin of ignorance and confusion. So, when Jesus walked the earth, His glory was veiled. His identity as God was somewhat shrouded in His humanity, which is why His own family members didn't get it. He looked like an ordinary Jewish man from an ordinary Jewish town.

In fact, the prophet Isaiah describes Him this way in chapter 53:

"He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. He was despised and rejected by mankind," (NIV)

So, Jesus is saying it's understandable that they would have gotten caught up in His humanity and missed His divinity. We see all through the gospels people asking questions like, "Who is this guy?" "Isn't that Mary and Joseph's boy?" "What good can come from Nazareth?" "I think we played on the same t-ball team. He sat the bench." "We worked the same summer job together. There is nothing special about Him."

All of those things are blasphemy based on a lack of information, confusion, or spiritual blindness, which, thankfully, can be remedied and forgiven. In fact, I would say this. Prior to your conversion if you ever thought or said, "I believe that Jesus was a good, moral teacher, not the Son of God," that's blasphemy of the Son of Man.

"You are like, "Well, I'd like to follow Jesus' teaching, I just don't subscribe to the fact that He took my sin upon Himself and paid for it on a cross. Or, that He was God in the flesh." That is blasphemy of the Son of Man, which, thankfully, you can be forgiven of when you come to see the truth of who He is.



The apostle Paul is a prime example of this. He blasphemed Jesus, but he did so out of ignorance and later was forgiven. Look at his own testimony in 1 Timothy, chapter 1, verse 13:

“Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.” (NIV)

Do you need to be forgiven of that?

So, what is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?

Well, if blasphemy against the Son of Man is one of ignorance and confusion, then blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is a few things.

Number one:

A sin of a hardened rebellion

It is a sin of hardened rebellion. It is a deliberate moral inversion. It's what the Scribes and Pharisees were doing in this passage. Jesus was doing something good, man. He was casting demons out. And they called it bad. They were calling the work of the Holy Spirit the work of Satan. It's the sin of Romans 1, which says that in the end times they will exchange the truth of God for a lie. So, one: It is a hardened rebellion.

Number two:

It's a rejection of the "One" who brings salvation

It is a rejection of the "One" who brings salvation. The function of the Holy Spirit, this agent of the Trinity, is that He convicts of sin, He prompts you toward conversion, and then He seals your salvation.

Jesus would say to the disciples, "Hey, I'm going to leave but better for Him to be in you than for me to be with you." He's talking about the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, verse 3 says:

"...no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit." (NIV)

Titus 3:5:

"...he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit." (NIV)



So, understand this. The Scriptures teach nobody becomes a Christian of their own accord. You didn't just wake up one day and say, "I think I'm going to become a Christian," without the work of the Holy Spirit preceding that in your life.

The book of Ephesians says that you are dead in your sins. Dead people don't respond without the wind of the Holy Spirit reviving them, giving them spiritual eyes to see what once they were blind to. Which is why I've said to you before, don't try to argue family members or friends into faith. If you debate them into faith, all it takes is a better argument to argue them out of it.

So, you pray that the Holy Spirit would be upon them. Sick the Holy Spirit on them. That's what you do. In the name of Jesus you just say, "Go after. Go after." And you, yourself, became a Christian because the Holy Spirit was prompting you, wooing you.

So, blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is when somebody persistently rejects the Holy Spirit, or worse yet calls Him evil, and you risk cutting yourself off from the source that could lead you to repentance.

Third thing:

It's a refusal to repent

It is a refusal to repent. It is a state of willful unbelief where the heart becomes hardened. And Jesus is saying this sin will never be forgiven because it creates the condition where repentance becomes impossible.

Now, this next part is so important. So, listen. It's not because God isn't willing. That's oftentimes how we read this, "Well, it's unforgiveable because God refuses." No. It's not because God isn't willing, but because we are no longer receptive.

Many theologians like Augustus and John Calvin would categorize blasphemy of the Holy Spirit not as a sin that God refuses to forgive, but a sin the sinner refuses to repent of, because the Holy Spirit brings repentance. It's rejecting the very means of that forgiveness. So, forgiveness requires repentance. Repentance requires a soft, malleable, humble heart. And when you reject Him over and over and over and over and over again, your heart becomes hard and is no longer responsive.



So, blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is when the door to salvation becomes locked, but from the inside by the sinner, not the outside. It's not that God couldn't forgive, it's that the sinner isn't willing to ask for or receive it.

In fact, I want you to have the assurance to know that as long as you continue to call upon the name of the Lord, He will hear you. Psalm 51, verse 17 says:

Psalm 51:17 "You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God." (NIV)

So, blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is unnerving to think about, I know. But I want you to consider this warning with a promise of reassurance that preceded it in verse 28. I already read it once. I'm going to circle back again because we need some good news right now. Verse 28:

"Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all of their sins and every slander they utter..."

I want you to hear this loud and clear. You can be forgiven of anything, man. Anything. You are like, "I don't know, man. You don't know what I've done." No. Anything. The only exception is a consistent, persistent hardened heart that rejects the prompting and testimony of the Holy Spirit.

If you continue to keep your heart soft, which is why confession and repentance is not a onetime thing—an annual, quarterly, or monthly thing—confession and repentance for a Christian is daily if not hourly.

I don't know about you, man, my heart can get hard really quickly. And I've got to continue to say, "Holy Spirit, continue to speak to me and continue to give me ears to hear, eyes to see, and bring something to mind that maybe I need to repent of that I didn't even notice so that my heart will stay soft and pliable.

Which is why I say to you that if you feel the conviction of the Holy Spirit in a sermon or a setting like this, do something with it. Take a step. Have a conversation. Write something down. It doesn't need to be a huge thing. Just something.

Some of my favorite conversations when I'm praying with people right down here after the service—somebody will come up to me with wet eyes and say, "I got halfway home in my car and the Holy Spirit wouldn't leave me alone and flipped a u-ie and came back to pray with you."

See, when you walk out of here and you feel conviction, "Thanks but no thanks," you take one more step toward a harder heart and you become more unreceptive to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. I want you to have assurance that as long as you continue to cry out to God, He will hear you.



Now, for some of you, I say all of that and you are like unsettled right now. Listen, man. I know if worry burns calories you would have a six-pack. And I know right now bringing this up you're worried. You are going to spin on this all week long. If God says, "Fear not." You are like, "Okay, define not." Alright?

Three tests to see if you've blasphemed the Holy Spirit

So, what I want to do really quickly is I want to give you three tests to see if you've blasphemed the Holy Spirit. And I think most of you all are going to pass. So, it's going to be helpful.

Here's the first one:

Test of Want

Here's what that means. Do you want to be forgiven by God? Do you want to be in right relationship with Him? And if you have even the smallest desire to be right with God, then the door to God is not locked to you. If you were guilty of blaspheming the Holy Spirit you wouldn't want God or anything He was offering. In John, chapter 6, verse 37 it says that whoever comes to Me, I will never drive away. Romans 10:13:

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." (NIV)

There is no question there. There are no qualifications. It's not if it's a promise. Now listen, man. Maybe you've been hurt in the past and you retreated from God. You've been away for a long time. This is your first week back to church. And I've preached on blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. You're welcome. You're welcome.

Maybe you had a season of rebellion or pain that had distanced you from God. Maybe you've strayed from God due to some sin in your life. Listen. Those things are sinful and they are rejection, but they are not necessarily permanent rejection. You can always come home.

It's the prodigal son, man. Which is why Jesus taught... I didn't mean to interrupt your clap. You didn't clap at first. The prodigal son comes to his father and blasphemed him. He says, "I wish you were dead." I think that qualifies. "I'd rather have your money than you."

So, he takes his share of the inheritance, goes to a distant land, and there he squanders it. Now he's left with nothing and he's feeding the pigs and he's hungry. And he wants to eat the slop that they are eating. And he says, "The pigs are living better than me."



So, he goes, "I could never go home. My father would never receive me. But maybe I can go home and he can hire me on to his staff." So, he leaves to go home. He's got his rehearsed speech.

And his father sees him from a distance, he runs to the boy, and he puts a robe on his back, a ring on his finger, and he kills the fatted calf and he throws a party because this lost son of his was in a distant country and has come home.

The same is true for you and me. If you want it. Do you want it?

Here is the second test:

Test of Profession

Now I'm not talking about your occupation. I'm talking about the confession of your lips.

Profession: public, verbal declaration of allegiance or belief

You should not be ashamed to follow Jesus and to say so. That's what we ask people in the baptistry all of the time. Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the Living God? It's a profession of faith. We get this right out of Scripture. Romans 10, verse 9:

"If you declare with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (NIV)

Matthew 10:

"Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven." (NIV)

So, there is the test of want, there is the test of profession. The last is the test of worry.

Test of Worry

This is going to be a little strange to hear in church. But it's really this simple:

If you are worried that you have committed the unforgivable sin, then you haven't!



If by now you are worried that you have committed the unforgivable sin, relax. You haven't. People who commit this sin are not trembling, they are smirking. What you are likely feeling, though, if you are uncomfortable, is conviction.

And that's a good thing. Because conviction means that you're still receptive to the Holy Spirit. If you were guilty of blasphemy of the Holy Spirit then the Bible says that your conscience would be seared, which means that you don't feel anything. But if you are convicted, that means that your conscience is pricked, which means that you respond to it. In 1 Timothy 4, verses 1 through 2 it says:

"The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith,"
deconstruction, "and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons."

Untruth in your algorithm. You may be especially cognizant of what you are rejecting and receiving into your worldview.

"Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences," here it is, "have been seared as with a hot iron." (NIV)

My oldest daughter who is going to get married in May, when she was a toddler—don't make me cry—when she was a toddler just crawling around the house, her older brother was walking and they were a handful at the time. And we always had to keep an eye on them.

I remember coming home from work one afternoon. And Lindsay was in the kitchen preparing dinner. She preheated the oven and Conner had gotten into the habit of walking over to and opening up the oven door. And she had her back turned to it. She didn't know that he did so. He pulled the hot, preheated oven door down.

And Campbell crawled over to the oven door and she propped her arm up on the inside of it to lift herself up. Thankfully, she kept her hand up in the air, but she burned herself from her wrist to her elbow. And we could hear the flesh sear. And immediately I ran over to her. Her skin was discolored. It was starting to blister. And I rushed her to the emergency room. It was a busy emergency room that evening. So, for like 45 minutes to an hour with her in the emergency room it completely bubbled up. Not once in the entire hour did she shed a tear. Not because she's a tough girl, even though she's a tough girl, but it was because the nerves were seared. She didn't feel anything.



And that's what blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is. It's when your conscience is seared and you feel nothing. But when your conscience is pricked and you are convicted that is a good thing and you respond to that.

Just a little word of caution here. If you have not blasphemed the Holy Spirit, and I'm going to say a whole bunch of you have not, that doesn't necessarily mean that God doesn't have a work to do within you. Or, that you are saved. The question still needs to be asked: Why are you worried? Why are you uncomfortable?

And it may not be because you've blasphemed the Holy Spirit, but it may mean that there are some things going on in your life that need to be submitted or confessed to God. Maybe you are looking at something right now that you know you shouldn't be, you are smoking something you shouldn't smoke, drinking something you shouldn't drink, hiding something you shouldn't hide.

Maybe the Holy Spirit has been convicting you and you've been ignoring Him and the feeling is getting more and more intense. You've got to do something with that. Maybe what you are feeling is that you are not in a good place with God and you need to get realigned with Him.

You know you shouldn't be living with your boyfriend or girlfriend but you've been rationalizing it. You know you shouldn't be gossiping, but it just happens. You know you aren't being generous, you are tipping God, not tithing. And you need to do something about that.

You know you need to get that thing right, whatever that thing is in your life. And, even though nobody else knows, you know He knows. And you take that uneasy feeling as a gift. Conviction—I'm learning that conviction is a friend in my life.

Conviction is a sure indicator that I am in the tractor beam of God's love and pursuit of me. And the same would be true of you. But every time you feel conviction and you ignore it your heart grows harder. The Bible says every time you confess and repent, your heart stays soft and pliable.

It's kind of like watering plants. Whenever my wife leaves for a few days she'll say to me, "Please don't let the plants die." I'm not doing a great job with that. Alright? And oftentimes I forget. Here's the thing. If she leaves for a week and she says, "Hey, would you please water the plants," If I just take a minute and give the plants a little bit of water every single day, the soil stays soft, the roots stay nourished, the plants stay vibrant.



But if I wait too long, no amount of water will matter. Not because I don't want the plant to come to life, but the plant no longer responds to water. It's the same deal.

Now one final thing, you know enough to maybe worry about your salvation but you don't yet know enough to have assurance of salvation. And I want to encourage you to get to know God's Word better so that you will not worry and obsess unnecessarily about things you should have peace about.

Jesus went to a cross, paid for all of your sin, not 90 percent of it. And He gave you a mission to be a part of, and to be others focused. And if you are constantly obsessing about your status with God, then you become distracted by that. And Satan can eventually use that as a foothold.

Guys, if my kids constantly doubted my love for them and they kept coming in and were constantly worried and were like, "Hey, Dad. Did you pay the mortgage payment this month? Dad, did you pay the utility bills? We're kind of worried the lights are going to go out. Dad, did you order groceries because we want to make sure we have enough to eat."

If I reassured them once or twice it's one thing. If they kept coming to me every single day, not only would my heart break, but eventually it would become annoying. And eventually I'd be upset, "I'm telling you that I love you. Why are you doubting me?"

Can I say this very lovingly, very gently but very directly?

Some of you need to think more highly of God's unfailing love for you

His love for you is not easily shaken or circumstantial. Yours is. His is not. His love is not fragile. It is unfailing. He loved you enough to send Jesus when you were still in sin, the book of Romans says His mercies are new every morning. And just because you let God down, doesn't mean that He will.

Last few verses here. Jesus is going to tie a bow on this whole family conversation. Look with me at verse 31. It says:

"Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, 'Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.'"



Think about this for a minute. Jesus has just dropped a heavy teaching and somebody goes, "Jesus, Your mom wants you." And He says in verse 32:

"Who are my mother and my brothers?" he asked. Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother." (NIV)

He's not trying to trash on His mom and half-brothers. He's trying to provide the assurance to the rest of us; the spiritual family is a big deal.

You may have more in common with people who share the Spirit of God than with those who share your DNA

And I know that some of you, you are the only Christian in your family. And maybe right now you may have more in common with people who share the Spirit of God than those who share your last name or your DNA.

And I want you to take heart. The spiritual family is a big deal, which is what we find within the church, the big C church, and the small c local church. Your attendance in a church does not save you, it doesn't make you any holier than anybody else. But what is provided here is a stirring up of the faith, it is an opportunity to hear the Word of God, and to respond to it, in vertical worship to God, and to participate in the sacraments that connect you to Him so that you may never forget what He has done. And it is not about you. It is about building relationships with other spiritual family that we need as sojourners in this world. I'll tell you what, man. From now until next weekend you are going to go through something tough and you need spiritual family around you. You need to be connected to a local church, not because the local church is perfect. It is not. That old axiom, you find a perfect church, stay away. You'll just ruin it.

But you get connected with spiritual family within the church. I want to encourage you, if it is not this church, find a church that makes much of Jesus, and teaches the Word of God unapologetically, and plant roots. Stay connected, the dividends of longevity.

Listen. I know that it is not that there is never a good reason to leave a church. And it's not that God may ever call you to another church. Maybe He moves you across the country or you go to school or you get a job, whatever it may be.



There may be a season where you are church shopping and hopping to find home. But you should not be in a season of perpetual church shopping and hopping. Find someplace and you plant roots and you develop spiritual family. That's what Jesus is talking about.

Right now there are a whole bunch of vulnerable children looking for spiritual family on the other side of the world. Today, there are thousands of children in Kenya who not only need provision, but connection, love, and a spiritual family. We've been talking about the difference between a hardened heart and a soft heart. And a hardened heart resists the prompting of the Holy Spirit. A soft heart responds when He talks. And this would be one of those moments.

Now, I'm going to invite Mary and Wallace to join me on stage and as they are making their way to the stage, I want to just remind you, they lead Missions of Hope ministry on the ground and they know these children by name. They see their faces every day.

In fact, last night I ended up talking to Mary as the service was getting started. She said, "It is emotional for me to walk around and see the packets on the seats because I know these kids. And she knows that every child sponsored will make a difference for all of eternity.

So, before we do anything else, I want to ask you right now to take the packet that was on your seat when you walked in, and to pick it up and hold it for a minute. Now some of you are going, "Now, wait a second. I don't know if I'm going to sponsor a child today. That's okay. Still, we're going to pray over that child. And I want you to know that that is a child, not a packet, created in the image of God. Each has a name and a story, and a personality. Each has fears and dreams and a future.

Now, some of you may already feel a very clear prompting to sponsor a child and others of you, maybe you're unsure. Your financial situation, whatever it may be, that is your business. It's between you and God. It is not my decision to make for you or to put pressure on you. I'm just here to give you the opportunity. What matters is this. Stay open to what the Spirit of God is leading you to do.

And I want to take a moment and pray together and cover every child in prayer and then ask God to prompt us toward what we might do. So, I'm going to ask Mary right now if she would pray over our church and over every child right now.



Mary:

Our Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we thank you. We honor you. Thank You for revealing Yourself to us so that we can be Your children through Your Son, Jesus Christ who died on the cross for the sake of our sins.

Our God, in the name of Jesus we thank You for the way You brought us together many years ago with Traders Point so that we can partner together to bring the hope of Jesus Christ to many children, families, and communities in Kenya.

We thank you dear Lord for the way You have used our dear brothers and sisters here at Traders Point even through their generosity so that we can be able to help these children, and their families, and their communities get to know You, Jesus.

Father, we pray that You will bless each and every family represented here. We pray that, Lord, You will bless the leadership of this church. Our God, in the name of Jesus You have given us an opportunity today so that we can make a difference in the lives of the children whose pictures and information we have even in this congregation.

Our God, we pray that You will use us, Oh God, even to make a difference in the lives of these dear children so they can get to know You and get deeper with You. We pray that, Lord, You will continue to use us, even to bring honor and glory to Your name. Father, we thank You and bless You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Aaron:

Amen. Amen. Hey, it's such an honor to have Mary and Wallace with us today. Hey, Traders Point family here's how we respond. If you feel prompted today, then I'm going to invite you to sponsor the child in your hand. For those of you who give financially to our church, your generosity supports the work that God is doing in Kenya in the building of schools and churches in an ongoing partnership. And that generosity is making a real difference.

Sponsoring a child allows you to step into something personal and it provides education, meals, discipleship, and hope. And it connects you directly to a child who will know your name and your prayers. In fact, here's the cool thing about it. You can actually travel over to Kenya and meet your sponsored child.



So, here's the reality. There are more than 7,000 children who need a sponsor. We want to be a church marked by radical generosity sponsoring as many kids as the Lord enables us to. So, right now I'm going to invite your campus pastor to come up and walk us through what these next steps are. And as they do, I'm going to ask you to respond in faith and just simply follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

