

## SINS AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT

(Acts 7:51-53)

### I. Lying to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-11).

- a. In the beginning of the church, the brethren that were in Jerusalem gathered together continually to pray, study, and worship.
- b. This continual gathering together to learn more and grow spiritually kept some from working.
- c. To deal with this, we are told that many sold possessions and lands and brought the proceeds and laid them at the feet of the apostles (Acts 4:34-35).
  - i. This is how we first meet Barnabas, who having some land, sold the land and brought the purchase price to the apostles.
  - ii. He was commended by inspiration for this in that he was specifically recorded as having done such.
- d. I believe it is significant that the first word of Acts 5 is “but”.
  - i. Barnabas brought it all, but Ananias and Sapphira decided to keep back part of the purchase price of the land they sold.
  - ii. It seems as if this couple was jealous of the praise given to Barnabas.
  - iii. They seemed to have wanted the praise but not make the same sacrifice.
- e. This couple sold their land and brought some of the sale price to the apostles and kept some back for themselves, which was totally in their right to do.
- f. What got them in trouble is that they presented the portion of the price as the entire amount of the price.
- g. When Ananias came to the apostles to deceive them, in reality he was lying to the Holy Spirit.
  - i. This is the case because the apostles were led directly by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
  - ii. Ananias, and three hours later Sapphira, sought to deceive Spirit-inspired men, thus were guilty of lying to the Holy Spirit.
- h. This passage shows us that the Holy Spirit is part of the Godhead and is deity.
  - i. Peter charged Ananias with lying to the Holy Spirit in verse three.
  - ii. He then told Ananias that he had not lied to men but to God.
  - iii. So we see from this that the Holy Spirit is deity.
- i. What we have here is a case of spiritual hypocrisy: Ananias and Sapphira claiming something that was not true to make themselves look better in the eyes of the church.
  - i. This was brought on by temptation from Satan (why hath Satan filled thine heart).
  - ii. It is a heart matter.
  - iii. It can't fool God.
  - iv. It is connected with other sins (here: envy, pride, greed).
  - v. It is intentional – both walked in that room with the intent to get away with lying.
  - vi. God's views this as a very serious offense.
- j. Some might say that we can't do this today because there are no men led by inspiration to direct the Lord's church like the apostles.
  - i. While it is true that there are no Spirit inspired men today, we still can commit this act of spiritual hypocrisy.
  - ii. We can look and sound good when at worship services, but be something different when we are away from brethren.
  - iii. This is just as sinful.
- k. Back then, it needed to be known that God knew and saw all and that He would not let the church be derailed by hypocrisy and sin.

- i. This is exactly what happened because the whole church feared after this.
    - ii. This also allowed people to go to work and help the church grow, which also happened (Acts 5:14).
  - I. If we would ever realize that God sees all and knows all, then we might get to work as well.
- II. **Resisting the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51-53).**
  - a. Stephen was brought before the council for teaching about Jesus and none of the Jews being able to prove him wrong.
  - b. He began to preach to the council and we have the second longest sermon recorded in scripture after the Sermon on the Mount.
  - c. Stephen preached Jesus to them by going through the history of the Jews.
    - i. He was showing how the Jews repeatedly turned away from God.
    - ii. He went on to point out that those before him were doing the exact same things their forefathers had done.
  - d. What was it that they had done?
  - e. They resisted the Holy Spirit.
  - f. How did they do that?
    - i. The forefathers had persecuted the prophets of God.
    - ii. Those men had brought God's message to the Jews and the Jews had beaten and killed God's messengers.
    - iii. Those men had been given the message of God by the Holy Spirit.
    - iv. Thus, they resisted the Holy Spirit by rejecting and resisting the message.
  - g. The word "resist" means to set oneself against.
  - h. The Jews of Stephen's day were setting themselves against the Holy Spirit by failing to follow the teaching of Spirit-inspired men like the apostles and Stephen.
  - i. They should have known that Jesus was the Christ, the Holy One, because the prophets had showed that He was coming and Jesus had fulfilled all the prophecies given by those men about the Christ.
  - j. We resist the Holy Spirit today when we resist the teaching that is found in scripture.
    - i. When people hear God's word and reject it, they are resisting the Holy Spirit.
    - ii. When Christians hear God's word and reject the transformation of themselves by that word, they are resisting the Holy Spirit.
- III. **Grieving the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30).**
  - a. Paul, in writing to the Ephesians, told them and us to "grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" (Ephesians 4:30).
  - b. The word translated "grieve" means, "to make sorrowful; to affect with sadness".
  - c. How can one grieve the Holy Spirit?
    - i. We tend to think of grief when someone dies and loved ones grieve over their loss.
    - ii. When you and I separate ourselves from God by sin, we become spiritually dead.
  - d. When you and I act like we are spiritually dead, we grieve the Holy Spirit.
    - i. Notice the verses that surround Ephesians 4:30.
    - ii. Ephesians 4:28-29, 31.
    - iii. You can go back farther in the text as well (Ephesians 4:17-19).
    - iv. You can go forward in the text as well (Ephesians 5:3-7).
  - e. When you or I live as the world lives, those outside of Christ, we bring grief to the Holy Spirit.
  - f. We are not living according to the teaching of the Spirit, or walking in the Spirit, as Paul wrote to the Galatians (Galatians 5:16).
- IV. **Quenching the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19).**
  - a. The word translated "quench" means to "stifle, or suppress" according to Thayer.
  - b. Paul was writing brief instructions to the brethren in Thessalonica.

- c. One of these was to quench not the Spirit.
- d. There are those who limit this sin to miraculous gifts.
  - i. One writer talked about how it meant that the Thessalonians were not to stifle spontaneous utterances in the worship services.
  - ii. It was pointed out by br. Coffman that Paul did all he could to regulate such spontaneous utterances in Corinth, so such could not be the meaning.
- e. It is interesting that the next verse says to “despise not prophesyings”.
  - i. It is probable that the Thessalonians were not paying attention to the prophetic statements of inspired members of the congregation.
  - ii. Those men were inspired by the Holy Spirit and to ignore their prophecies would be a quenching of the Spirit for them.
- f. Today, we quench the Spirit when we ignore the Spirit’s teaching through God’s word.
  - i. When we purposefully ignore what the Bible tells us, we are quenching the Spirit.
  - ii. When we fail to study God’s word, we are quenching the Spirit.
  - iii. It is hard to walk in the Spirit if we refuse to take the Spirit’s word into our hearts to allow Him through the word of God to direct our steps.
- g. Br. Coffman gave an example of a gas lighted lamp in Atlanta that dated back to the Civil War.
  - i. It was maintained for many years by the citizens to keep a link to the past.
  - ii. We must maintain God’s Spirit inspired words in our hearts or we are quenching, putting out, the Spirit in our lives.

**V. Doing despite to the Spirit of grace (Hebrews 10:29).**

- a. The Hebrews writer charged those who ignore the death of Jesus as having done despite to the Spirit of grace.
  - i. The word for “despite” means to treat with contumely according to Thayer.
  - ii. I had to look up what contumely means, and its definition is “contemptuous or humiliating treatment, insulting”.
  - iii. In fact, some newer translations have “has insulted the Spirit of grace”.
- b. The idea is that those who profess to be Christians but fail to hold to Christ count the blood of Jesus as an unholy thing, and by doing so, are insulting the Holy Spirit who revealed God’s grace to them.
- c. When we leave the gospel for something else or refuse to give up our sinful habits, we are insulting the Holy Spirit.
- d. False doctrine is insulting to the Holy Spirit.
- e. False living is insulting to the Holy Spirit.
- f. It is so because the message that He delivered through inspired men says those things cause us to be lost and when we ignore His teaching, that is an insult to Him, just like it would be to any of us.

From material written by Robert Taylor, Jr.