

God's Three Deadlines -2/05/23

Great Sermons – J Harold Smith

TEXT – Mat. 12:22-32 *Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil*

INTRO – God's Three Deadlines – Dr. J. Harold Smith

J. Harold Smith (June 14, 1910 – November 13, 2001) was a Southern Baptist evangelist and founder of *Radio Bible Hour*, "broadcasting the Gospel since 1935" He helped to develop Christian radio in the 1940s and was the pastor of a number of churches of various sizes and always loved the work of the pastorate. In 1953, as pastor of the First Baptist Church of Fort Smith, Arkansas, he started televising the morning worship services. The broadcast was one of the first regular television broadcasts of a church service in the United States. Smith was also a missionary-minded evangelist, supporting 31 home and foreign mission projects, two children's homes, three seminaries and individual missionaries to Russia, Haiti, Japan, the Bahamas, the Philippines, Central America and Africa. During his ministry Dr. Smith preached more than 70,000 sermons.

Dr. Brown remembers him preaching this sermon in his church with over 600 people responding to the message.

People often wonder if they have committed the unpardonable sin. Not being sure of what it is, they can become overwhelmed with guilt and fear.

- **Deadline number one – Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost or the unpardonable sin**
- **Deadline number two – Sinning away the day of grace**
- **Deadline number three – The sin unto death**

An unsaved sinner can only cross the first two deadlines and the third deadline can only be crossed by a saved Christian.

Dr. Smith's goal of this sermon was to warn every man, woman or child of the fatal mistake of crossing over these deadlines.

We want to look at these three deadlines prayerfully, carefully and scripturally.

At many of the crowd of listeners the Pharisees and religious leaders attended and they sat on the front row. Of course, their purpose was to find some fault not to learn a lesson.

Jesus just healed a devil possessed man blind and dumb. He could not see and he could not hear but he was healed of all his infirmities. The Pharisees were being belittled by the miracle of Jesus so they tried to explain His miracles by Him doing them by the power of the devil.

However, every miracle He performed was by the power of the Holy Ghost.

I. Blasphemy Against the Holy Spirit

The word unpardonable is a very hard, harsh and often misunderstood word. We observe life in the scope of the ability to forgive. In Good's sphere there is nothing that is unforgivable in this life except for one sin. The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

The wood chipper killing of Helle Crafts by her husband, Richard, was the first murder conviction without a victim's body in Connecticut state history. Evidence showed that before Helle disappeared on Nov. 18, 1986, Richard bought a freezer and a chainsaw and rented a wood chipper and a truck; authorities believe he froze his wife's body, sawed it into pieces, and ran the remains through the wood chipper. Among piles of wood chips in various locations, police found pieces of bone and tissue, a fingernail, an envelope with Helle's name, and crowns of her teeth.

As heinous as his crime if he were to repent, he could be forgiven.

The shooter in Sandy Hook. As heinous as it was could be forgiven.

In 1978, John Wayne Gacy was arrested for molesting and killing 33 boys. The jury, which found him guilty of all 33 murders of which he was accused; He was executed by lethal injection in 1994. As awful and despicable as his crime it could have been forgivable if he truly repented.

A young surgeon 31 years old came home in a drunken stupor. His wife went across the street for supplies. He found a poker and heated it on the stove and put out the eyes of their little boy while he slept and put it down his throat and fell on the floor passed out. He was arrested but deemed insane and placed in a mental institution.

Every crime and sin you could consider will never be as great as the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

- **Shall never be forgiven.**

Blaspheme – Speak hurtfully

Matthew 12:31-32 *Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. 32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.*

James 3:6 *And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.*

Therefore, an unsaved person's tongue, which is controlled by hell, can cause a sin that WILL NEVER BE FORGIVEN.

Basically, in context, these two verses mean that to deny the involvement

and power of the Holy Spirit and to give that credit to the devil is unforgivable for all time and you will be damned to hell forever. It won't be forgiven by the ONLY one who can forgive everything.

Speaking against the power of the Holy Spirit is an unpardonable sin.

Rebellion against God's chosen man, Moses, and what God did to those who spoke out against His chosen one.

And Moses said, **Numbers 16:28-30** *And Moses said, Hereby ye shall know that the LORD hath sent me to do all these works; for I have not done them of mine own mind. 29 If these men die the common death of all men, or if they be visited after the visitation of all men; then the LORD hath not sent me. 30 But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD. All 250 went into the pit below them.*

And if you read the entire chapter, you will find out that Moses was exactly right and God did put to death those who blasphemed the Holy Spirit.

Whenever this unpardonable sin has been committed, often the offender has never lived beyond 24 hours of committing it.

II. Sinning away your day of grace

Proverbs 29:1 *He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*

God's second deadline:

In other words, when presented with the good news of Jesus Christ, if you deny it and do not receive God's grace through Jesus Christ, you will end up in hell when you die. There are those who say that God will hold true to the unsaved and continue to provide them with chances and eventually provide salvation. But **Proverbs 29:1** refutes that, as does **Romans 2:5-8**.

Every refusal and avoidance of God adds fuel to the fire. The day is coming when God's fiery and righteous judgment will be evident. In the end you get what's coming to you. **Romans 2:5-8** *But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds: 7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: 8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,*

Dr. Smith got saved after spending 8 years studying to be a doctor.

So many people think it is simply a matter of living how they want to live and then waiting to make that decision when they get older. You may want to wait for God, but what if God won't wait for you. It will be too late and

once condemned to hell, that is it!

2 Corinthians 6:2 *For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.*

You may not get the chance to repent and receive Christ's gift in your own time. God may just lose patience with you and end your life. **Acts 5:1-10** to God took the lives of a husband and wife because they told a lie. He lost patience with them. Most people think that God's patience is eternal. It evidently is not. **Proverbs 16:6** *By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from evil.*

If they don't fear God, they will be complacent about their eternal salvation. Look at examples from the bible regarding those who refused Christ.

A rich, young ruler even asked Jesus what he had to do to be saved.

When Jesus told him, the man refused to accept it and is in hell:

Someone came to Jesus with this question: **Matthew 19:16-22** *And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? . . . 21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. 22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.*

Paul witnessed to Agrippa and the king turned away from the gift of salvation and is in hell:

Acts 26:26-29 *For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. 27 King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. 28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. 29 And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.*

Another great example of this is the parable of the rich fool:

Luke 12:16-21 *And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: 17 And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? 18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. 20 But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? 21 So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.*

Those who say they will repent in their own time lack the fear of God. Their

understanding of His nature is erroneous. If they caught a glimpse of His holiness, His righteousness, and His consuming justice, they wouldn't trifle with His mercy. Such arrogance needs to be confronted with the thunders of Mount Sinai.

If someone tells you about what Jesus did for you and you ignore or refuse it, you will die in your sins. Don't squander your opportunity.

Genesis 6:3 *And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*

Hosea 4:17 *Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.*

Proverbs 1:28 *Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me:*

John 12:39-40 *Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, 40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.*

There is a time we know not when
A place we know not where
That marks the destiny of men
From glory to despair
There is a line by us unseen
Which crosses every path
The hidden boundary between
God's mercy and His wrath

14 year old girl at revival said she wouldn't let Dr Smith pray for her.

Agrrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

Acts 24:25 *And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.*

III. The sin unto death

Only a saved believer can commit this sin.

1 John 5:16 *If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.*

John illustrates praying according to God's will with the specific example of the "sin leading to death. Such a sin could be any premeditated and unconfessed sin that causes the Lord to determine to end a believer's life. It is not one particular sin like homosexuality or lying, but whatever sin is the final one in the tolerance of God. Failure to repent of and forsake sin may eventually lead to physical death as a judgment of God. No intercessory prayer will be effective for those who have committed such deliberate high-

handed sin

Amos 4:6-12 *And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. 7 And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city: one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered. 8 So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. 9 I have smitten you with blasting and mildew: when your gardens and your vineyards and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmerworm devoured them; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. 10 I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD. 11 I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the LORD.*

I sent famine and you would not come back to me

I sent draught and you would not come back to me

I sent pestilence and you would not come back to me

I sent war and you would not come back to me

I sent destruction and you would not come back to me

12 Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God O Israel.

If you have an unconfessed pet sin God knows it.

Ephesians 4:30 *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

1 Corinthians 5:5 *To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

CONCL - God has made every attempt to stir you up to meet Him. But when you try to hide what's in your heart, which God knows anyway, you are basically telling Him that you can handle something and don't need Him. Therefore, God can physically take you from this world.

Acts 5:1-3 *But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, 2 And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?*

1 Corinthians 11:30 *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.*