

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

How much time do we have to prepare for heaven? Some people have until they die. Others will close their probation before death by committing the unpardonable sin. We are filled with awe as we contemplate the awfulness of committing the unpardonable sin. What is this terrible sin that God cannot forgive? There are some who think that it is committing murder, suicide, killing an unborn child, or some other terrible black deed.

Does the Bible define the unpardonable sin as one particular, horrible sin? No, I do not believe that the unpardonable sin is the committing of murder, suicide, or adultery. The Bible says that Mary Magdalene committed adultery seven times, and was also possessed of the devil; but when she confessed these sins, God forgave her. Some commit suicide while mentally ill, and are not responsible for their actions. So it is doubtful that the unpardonable sin is the committing of murder, adultery, or even suicide.

What is the unpardonable sin, according to Jesus Christ? In Matt. 12:31 Jesus says: "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." I am so glad that Jesus says, "ALL MANNER OF SIN" shall be forgiven. One may sin against God, or against Jesus Christ and be forgiven, but he cannot sin against the Holy Ghost and be forgiven. So, according to Jesus, the unpardonable sin is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

According to the Bible, there are three members of the Godhead—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. In Gen. 1:1, 2, and 26 we read that all three worked together in the creation of this world. "In the beginning GOD created the heaven and the earth . . . And the SPIRIT OF GOD moved upon the face of the waters . . . And God said, Let US (God, Jesus, and the Holy Ghost) make man . . ."

In I John 5:7 it distinctly says that there are three members of the Godhead, all united as one. "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word (Jesus), and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." It is clear that the Holy Spirit is Christ's representative on earth today. He is the true Vicar of Christ.

The Bible reveals that there will be two spirits in the world, the Spirit of God, or the Holy Ghost, and the spirit of the devil. We are told in I John 4:1: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God . . ." Many are in danger of being deceived by the spirits of devils. The work of the Holy Spirit has been misunderstood by many, and the work of the devil has in many cases been attributed to the Holy Ghost.

There are some who teach that the reception of the Holy Ghost results in a wild demonstration, with loud noises and perhaps some unintelligible mumbling. But I want to say right here and now

that the Holy Ghost DOES NOT affect men this way. In I Cor. 14:33 it says: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as IN ALL THE CHURCHES OF THE SAINTS." And in the 40th verse it says: "Let all things be done DECENTLY and in order."

One of the greatest instances in the Bible of the reception of the Holy Ghost was at the baptism of Jesus. In Matt. 3:16, 17 we read: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw THE SPIRIT OF GOD descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Now I am sure that Jesus received the greatest outpouring of the Spirit in the history of the world, but after receiving the Holy Ghost, He did not start dancing a jig and clapping His hands, nor did He throw Himself in the dirt, shrieking at the top of His voice. Nowhere is there a record of Jesus ever acting that way, yet He received the GREATEST OUTPOURING of the Spirit that anyone could possibly receive.

Another outstanding instance of the outpouring of the Spirit was at Pentecost. It is described thus in Acts 2:2-4: "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind . . . And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost . . ." This was one of the greatest events in the history of the church.

Although the disciples received this great outpouring of the Holy Ghost we have no record in the Bible of any wild antics, or speaking in an unknown gibberish. They did not climb up poles like monkeys, nor grovel in the dust, nor stamp their feet to some jazzy rhythm while those around clapped their hands. No such demonstration EVER OCCURRED at the time of Pentecost.

We do find that the apostles received great power to preach the Word of God, and they preached it with such power that there were thousands converted in a single day, crying out: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" "But," says one, "did they not speak in tongues at that time?" The answer is, "YES, they did speak in tongues. They received the gift of tongues. They also received other gifts."

The Bible tells us of many gifts to the church after the ascension. In Eph. 4:8 we read: ". . . When he ascended . . . HE . . . gave gifts unto men . . . And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

The Holy Spirit gives various gifts to the church. In I Cor. 12:28 it says: "And God hath set some in the church, FIRST apostles, SECONDARILY prophets, THIRDLY teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, DIVERSITIES OF TONGUES." Notice that

the gift of tongues is the last one mentioned. Yet today the gift of tongues is often ELEVATED above all other gifts.

It is believed and taught by many that if one does not receive the gift of tongues, he cannot be saved. Many of the greatest Bible characters never received the gift of tongues, and yet I am sure they will be saved. There is no record of Jesus ever speaking with tongues; if He had, I believe it would have been mentioned. John the Baptist is another who did not manifest the gift of tongues in all his preaching, yet I am sure he will be saved. And do you recall any instance when Moses demonstrated the gift of tongues in his long and interesting career?

Now when the disciples spoke in tongues on the day of Pentecost, does that mean they spoke in some strange language that nobody understood? No, for we read in Acts 2:6: ". . . EVERY MAN HEARD THEM SPEAK IN HIS OWN LANGUAGE." The disciples did not begin to shriek and shout in strange sounds that no one understood, nor talk in a peculiar language that had never been heard before, but they spoke in tongues that the people understood.

There were people gathered in Jerusalem, on that special occasion, from different parts of the world, and the apostles preached to them in their own tongues. And the people said to one another: "And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born?" Therefore the disciples spoke intelligible languages, understood by the people of different nationalities. They did not shout unintelligible sounds that no one could comprehend.

Satan has tried to counterfeit every truth in the Bible. He has endeavored to counterfeit the gift of tongues also. Strange though it may seem, the African medicine men and witch doctors speak in unknown tongues, but would you say this is the gift of the Holy Spirit, or is it the gift of the spirit of devils? These devil worshippers become very excited, shouting unintelligible sounds, clapping, screaming and chanting. With the rhythm of the tom toms, and the hand clapping, they sound very much like the self-styled Holy Ghost meetings in some of the churches today.

Paul says: "GOD IS NOT THE AUTHOR OF CONFUSION . . ." What does God think when He sees a so-called Holy Ghost revival, claiming the gift of tongues, but acting too disgraceful to be called Christians. In one instance loud screams, strange jabbering, and hellish sounds emanated from the revival tent. Women acting most disgracefully, lying in the sawdust! Young girls rolling around on the ground as if demon possessed! And later the minister was actually arrested for drunken driving. Was this a true demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit of God?

In the Houston (Texas) Press, Nov. 17, 1952, it tells of a 61-year-old carpenter who carried his crippled wife to a church to be healed. Soon she jumped to her feet and rushed outside to die beneath the wheels of a passing car. She prayed, preached, jabbered in an unknown tongue, and then it was as if an unseen power raised her up and took her outside, throwing her under the

speeding automobile. Would any true Christian say that the Spirit of God would cause one of God's children to commit suicide? My personal conviction is that it was the spirit of the devil that did all this.

Many people today are deceived by Satan, thinking they have received the Holy Ghost when it is really just a manifestation of the devil's power. God tells us in Acts 5:32: "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath GIVEN TO THEM THAT OBEY HIM." Many who claim to have the Holy Ghost today are wilfully breaking the commandments of God. God distinctly says that He will not give the Holy Ghost to those who disobey His commandments.

Let us read the words of Jesus in John 14:15-17: "If ye love me, keep my commandments. (Then what does He say He will do next?) And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; EVEN THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH . . ." The life of anyone who receives the Holy Spirit, will be characterized by obedience. "KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS," says Jesus. "Then I promise to send the Holy Spirit."

In John 14:21 Jesus says: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." Anyone who does not keep God's commandments, every one of them, cannot expect to receive the Holy Ghost. If you love God, you will want to keep His commandments—the first, the second, the third, the fourth, and all the rest.

The Bible says in I John 5:3: "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT GRIEVOUS." How can a person claim to love Jesus, claim to have been converted, and yet absolutely refuse to obey His commandments? What would you think of a child who claimed to love his parents, but refused to obey them?

In I John 2:4 we are told: "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a LIAR, and the truth is not in him." Many say that they know Jesus, that He is their Saviour, that they have been saved by grace, and yet they are not willing to obey Him. God says such people are liars. Please remember that I did not say that anyone is a liar, but God says so in His Word.

Only those who are carnal will refuse to obey God's commandments. "Because the carnal mind is ENMITY AGAINST GOD: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Will the Lord impart the most wonderful gift of all, the Holy Spirit, to a man who is in open rebellion against Him? No, dear Friends, the gift of tongues, the gift of healing, and all of these other gifts are not given to individuals who oppose God's law. Many who think they have these gifts are truly deceived.

Why did Jesus promise to send us the Holy Spirit? Let us read the most outstanding reason in John 16:13: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, HE WILL GUIDE YOU INTO ALL

TRUTH: . . ." Notice that Jesus says the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth. Now the question is, "Are we willing to let the Spirit of God guide us into all the truth? Is it possible that the Spirit has impressed some truths upon our hearts and minds that we have refused to receive?"

Many people reject the truth saying: "What was good enough for my grandfather is good enough for me," just as they did in the days of Christ. The people in those days said: ". . . WE ARE MOSES' DISCIPLES . . . as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is." John 9:28, 29. Thus they rejected the truth, following what their parents had always believed rather than accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour. So today many say: "The religion of our forefathers is good enough for me. New light I will not accept."

Dear Friends, God will not hold your forefathers responsible for what they had not heard. For in Acts 17:30 it says: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at . . ." But if after hearing the truths from the Bible, you reject them, God says: "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17.

Let us pray earnestly that the Spirit may lead us into all truth. Jesus says in John 14:26: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." It is clear from this text that the Holy Spirit will teach the followers of Christ all the truth.

Just before Jesus ascended to heaven He said to His disciples: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations . . . Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you . . ." Matt. 28:19, 20. So the Holy Ghost helps us to understand all the truth and we will be so filled with the Holy Spirit that we will tell others what we have learned.

In John 16: 7, 8 Jesus told His disciples: ". . . if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, HE WILL REPROVE THE WORLD OF SIN, and of righteousness, and of judgment." The Spirit is the convicting power. The Holy Spirit may work through preachers or others to bring conviction to human hearts. The question is, how do we respond to that influence?

Some put off the decision. In Acts 24:25 we read: ". . . Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time: when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Dear Friends, do not harden your hearts when truth is presented. Do not say "No, I will not receive it NOW. I cannot make the sacrifice NOW. I do not want to stand for the truth TODAY. Somebody might laugh at me, or persecute me! Perhaps some day I will do what God wants, but NOT TODAY." I beg of you, do not procrastinate until it is too late.

In Heb. 2:3 Paul says: "How shall we escape, if we NEGLECT so great salvation . . ." NEGLECT! O, let us pray for the Holy Spirit to come into our hearts TONIGHT. God's Spirit will guide us into all truth, and convict us of our sins, so that we will want to put them away, confess them, and do wrong no more, if we will only open

our hearts to the truth. Let us not NEGLECT salvation. Tomorrow may be too late!

Now the important question is, "WHAT IS TRUTH?" Jesus says in John 17:17: "Sanctify them through thy truth: THY WORD IS TRUTH." If the Holy Spirit is to guide us into all truth, and the Bible is the TRUTH, then the Spirit will guide us into the whole truth of the Bible. I have heard people say, "Yes, that is in the Bible all right, but I am going home to pray that the Holy Spirit will show me what is right." Now, Friends, the Spirit will never show you anything that is not in the Bible.

The Holy Spirit is the Author of the Bible and He will never contradict Himself. In II Peter 1:21 we read: "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they WERE MOVED BY THE HOLY GHOST." One woman went home and prayed about which day she should keep as the Sabbath, and while praying she saw the word "SUNDAY" in burning letters on the wall, and was convinced that was the day to keep. She rejected the truth of God, grieved His Spirit. For the Holy Spirit, Author of the Bible, was surely not the Spirit that told her to keep Sunday.

It is through the Word that the Spirit stirs our hearts and we have the desire to do right. In Heb. 4:12 it says: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." We must not turn our backs on the truths of the Bible and harden our hearts to the pleading of God's Spirit.

I have had people tell me that they would like to go home and pray about the matter of baptism to see what the Spirit would show them. Whenever we do this we are actually tempting God, and are leaving ourselves wide open to the deceptions of the devil. For we read in II Thess. 2:11, 12: "AND FOR THIS CAUSE God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who BELIEVED NOT THE TRUTH, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." This shows plainly what the results of rejecting the truth will be. God will leave us in utter darkness.

My Friends, are YOU being led by the Holy Spirit? In Rom. 8:14 it says: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." If the Spirit is leading you, then you will walk in the light just as soon as God reveals it to you. It will not matter what your preconceived opinions may have been, you will not hesitate when you see God's way, but you will WALK IN IT.

Let us not place our opinions above the will of God. He says in Isa. 5:20, 21: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil: that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; . . . Woe unto them that are WISE IN THEIR OWN EYES, and prudent in their own sight." After answering one man's questions by reading text after text from the Bible, the man replied: "But that is not the way I believe it." God says: "Woe unto them that are WISE IN THEIR OWN EYES."

There are so many people who will not believe what the Bible says. They are only interested in some preconceived idea or creed. Beloved, we must take the Bible, and the Bible only, as our authority. If anyone preaches or teaches contrary to the Bible we must reject him. Remember that Satan is trying to deceive the whole world in these last days. There will be many false teachers in the world as the end draws near. It does not matter how earnest and zealous a man may be, nor how friendly he is. The thing that matters is: "Does he preach strictly according to the Bible?"

In II Cor. 11:14, 15 we read: "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." Remember, we must all stand individually before the judgment seat, our preacher will not be there for us to stand behind. We will have to answer for ourselves. We will not be judged by any church creed, but by the great Bible standard.

In Isa. 8:20 we read: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." So God has given us a test whereby we may know truth from error. I have seen some who have shed tears under deep conviction; but someone, perhaps a relative, or a friend, or even a preacher has turned them away from the truth.

A man who had been living in sin a long time once attended a series of meetings and fell under deep conviction. After a stirring sermon on the judgment the man came to the minister with tears streaming down his cheeks and said: "I believe what you preach. I am not able to sleep, and I have paced the floor night after night. My soul is greatly troubled. I know I should surrender to the pleadings of the Holy Spirit and give my heart to Jesus.

But his wife opposed him and brought in every obstacle and objection that she could—what the neighbors would think, how hard it would be for the children, and how fanatical, anyway! He listened to her and hesitated about accepting the truths that had been so clearly presented from the Bible. Hoping she might change her attitude, he put off the day of decision. Finally the meetings closed and still he had not surrendered his heart to God. Such a sad thing to grieve away the Holy Spirit by rejecting the truth.

Months later the minister returned and visited that man. As they sat on the porch he said: "Friend, do you remember the night you said you were convinced that you should give your heart to God?" The man replied: "Yes, I remember it very well. I was very deeply convinced. But I put it off and as time has gone by I don't have any burden to keep the Sabbath anymore. In fact, I am working on the Sabbath now, and it does not bother me a bit." The minister plead with him, telling him the danger of grieving away the Spirit of God, but to no avail. His heart was like stone.

When the Spirit of God has convicted us of His truth and we let someone else be conscience for us, whether we realize it or not, we are grieving away the Holy Ghost. In Gen. 6:3 God said to

Noah: "MY SPIRIT SHALL NOT ALWAYS STRIVE WITH MAN . . ." God's Spirit will not always strive with us either. There will come a time when the Spirit will leave us and we will have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost.

In John 6:44 Jesus says: "No man can come to me, except the Father . . . DRAW HIM . . ." The Father draws us through the working of the Holy Spirit. We do not come to God whenever we choose, but we come as the Spirit draws us. When we refuse to be drawn, and we harden our hearts, or hold back, we are grieving the Holy Spirit. When we become true Christians, the Spirit will lead us day by day into a higher and higher experience.

Some people think that it doesn't matter how they live or act, or what they do just as long as they profess to be believers in the Lord Jesus Christ; but this is not so. For in James 2:19 we read: "Thou believest that there is one God: thou doest well: THE DEVILS ALSO BELIEVE and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD." So whatever profession we make, it is useless unless we do what God tells us to do.

Have you ever heard that still small voice speaking to you? Some people call it CONSCIENCE. In Isa. 30:21 the Lord promises to speak to us when we are tempted: "And thine ears shall hear A WORD BEHIND THEE, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left." I trust that we will keep ourselves in tune with heaven so we may hear the Spirit's voice as He guides us. Do not grieve your Saviour, for by continuing to do so, you grieve away the Spirit.

Do not dare to put away the Holy Spirit when He is trying to draw you nearer to the Saviour. So many times when we come to some cherished sin that we do not wish to give up we turn away from the pleadings of the Holy Spirit. We all have battles: some have violent tempers, others struggle with pride; some have habits of lying, or stealing, or other sinful thoughts and deeds. Even if you do not desire to go any further in your Christian experience, it is a serious thing to refuse to be led by the Spirit of God.

When God's Spirit speaks to us and convicts us of sin, we should welcome that conviction; but if we will not heed the warning of the still small voice, the time will come when it will no longer be heard. When an individual reaches the point where there is no more conviction for that sin, and no longer any inclination to ask God to forgive him for that sin, HE HAS COMMITTED THE UNPARDONABLE SIN. Why is it unpardonable? BECAUSE HE WILL NOT ASK GOD TO FORGIVE HIM.

God will pardon any sin that we ask Him to forgive, for in John 6:37 we read: ". . . And HIM THAT COMETH TO ME, I WILL IN NO WISE CAST OUT." The one who has grieved the Holy Spirit reaches the place where he has no desire to do what is right, and does not ask to be forgiven. The unpardonable sin is the Unconfessed sin. Many harden their hearts and finally reach the

place where those sins of which they were convicted no longer seem to be wrong.

Take the Sabbath, for instance. Many who at one time confessed that the seventh day is God's Sabbath have hardened their hearts against it, and reached the point where they will argue that it is not the Sabbath at all; therefore they will not ask God to forgive them when they break the Sabbath. It is a very dangerous condition when a person says that the sin he is committing is all right, that he does not see anything wrong in it, for God cannot forgive when we reach that state.

The Jewish people committed the unpardonable sin when they rejected the truths as brought to them by Jesus. God did not give them up in a day, a week, a month, or even a year. He labored with them for many, many years. In Eze. 22:8, 31 God says: "Thou hast despised mine holy things, and hast PROFANED MY SABBATHS. Therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them: I have consumed them with the fire of my wrath: THEIR OWN WAY have I recompensed upon their heads, said the Lord God." Israel had profaned the Sabbath, and rejected many other truths that God had given them, and finally they rejected Jesus Christ and crucified Him.

It is apparently not the degree of sin but the measure of repentance and forgiveness that counts. Moses was forgiven murder. Paul persecuted and put to death the Christians. Jacob lied to his father and stole from his brother. Peter cursed and denied His Lord. But all these sins were forgiven and these men became good Christian workers for God. Why? Because they heeded the still small voice calling them back to God. They let the Spirit of God lead them back to repentance.

David had committed some great sins against God. But in his sorrow he cried, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me." David had broken the commandment that says: "Thou shalt not commit adultery." Yes, and he had broken the commandment that says: "Thou shalt not kill," and he was concerned lest God should take the Holy Spirit away from him. O, how I wish we would be so concerned today!

Do you recall the young man who came to Jesus and said: "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth." (Mark 10:17-20).

"Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, TAKE UP THY CROSS, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions." Jesus loved this young man and wanted him to be a disciple. But the young man had another god before him, the god of his possessions. He only had time to ac-

cumulate riches, no time for Christ. He could not make the sacrifice.

The sin against the Holy Ghost is a gradual process. Suppose a little boy steals an apple from a fruit stand, runs away in guilt and fear, hiding as he eats it. Each day he steals an apple and each day his feeling of guilt becomes less. After a while he is not the least bit convicted of its wrong. Finally he is brazen, even boasts, claiming that he has a right to the apple. That is the way it is with people who grieve the Holy Spirit.

Prov. 16:25 says: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Many criminals today try to justify themselves for their deeds. In fact it is a rare thing to hear anyone admit his guilt. It is possible to pursue a wrong course so long that one finally feels that he is right. When he first begins the downward path he is deeply troubled; but finally the conviction leaves him. He has grieved away the Holy Spirit.

If we turn off our alarm clocks every morning as soon as they ring and go back to sleep again, after a time we will not even hear the alarm go off. If we have other gods before the God of heaven; if we love this world, its fashions and its pleasures more than we love our heavenly Father; or if we continue lying, stealing, or breaking any other commands of God, WE WILL EVENTUALLY GRIEVE THE SPIRIT AWAY, and conviction will be gone.

There will be many when Jesus comes who have committed the unpardonable sin without realizing it. In Matt. 7:22, 23 we read: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then I profess unto them I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." It is evident from this that many think they are good enough because they belong to a church, and attend regularly.

But there are many in the church who are still living in adultery, or lying, and cheating; and of course most of the people in the churches today are wilfully breaking the Sabbath commandment. There are many who are at odds with their neighbors holding grudges in their hearts. Jesus will say to all these people when He comes: "DEPART FROM ME, ye workers of iniquity, I never knew you." Dear Ones, it is not enough to belong to a church. We must also obey God and do what He wants us to do.

Iniquity is sin, and sin is the transgression of God's law. I John 3:4 tells us: "... sin is the transgression of the law." And in James 2:10 we read: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." So it is very important that we understand God's commandments, and obey all of them. It will not be good enough to obey all the other commandments but still not keep the Sabbath. It will do no good if we obey all but still have hatred in our hearts.

In Rev. 22:14, 15 God tells us: "Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in

through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." There will be many people who love lies and love the sins of this world more than God, and who will therefore not be permitted to enter the Holy City.

It is a sad thing when someone forsakes the truth of God for this world. A very fashionable woman once attended some evangelistic meetings, and when she realized what a sacrifice it would mean to be a Christian, she became so troubled that she got up and left the meeting. One of the evangelists followed her outside the church and heard her say, "O God I cannot give up my social career and all the pleasures of life. O, Spirit of God, please leave me alone!" Five weeks later she was killed in an accident. From all appearances, she had no hope of salvation.

In a hospital of a distant city a young man lay dying. His mother suggested calling the minister, but the son answered: "No, Mother, it would do no good. Two years ago I was in a revival meeting and was deeply convicted, but I walked out and prayed, 'O, God, take this conviction from me and leave me alone!' God heard my prayer and the Spirit left me. I have no desire whatever to be a Christian." Isn't that a terrible way to die?

The Bible says in Eccl. 8:11: "... The heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. And in I Tim. 4:2 we read: Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." Many consciences have been seared, and they no longer hear the still small voice pleading with them to repent. Let us remember that we cannot hide our sins from God. There is no secret sin so deeply hidden but God can see. We must be willing to forsake all our sins for Jesus.

An explorer once lost in the Arctic was freezing to death. He became very cold and very drowsy. Finally he realized that if he went to sleep he would be lost without hope. So he started praying earnestly that God would save him. He exercised as much as his strength permitted. He pounded

his arms and stamped his feet, and shouted at the top of his lungs. Some of the other members of the party heard him and finally found him and saved him.

There are many Christian people who are lukewarm toward religion. God describes them thus in Eph. 4:19: "WHO BEING PAST FEELING have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." These people come to church and listen to the Bible, but it doesn't impress them very much. Many of these so-called Christians are grieving away the Holy Spirit. They are falling asleep spiritually, they are past feeling. They need to pray like the man who was freezing, that God will save them. They need to be warmed up and stirred, for their religion has become cold and lifeless.

In Acts 7:51 God says: "... YE DO ALWAYS RESIST THE HOLY GHOST." Unless we resist the Spirit, we will be led back to God, dear ones. It is only by RESISTING that we commit the unpardonable sin. It causes sadness in heaven when we resist the pleadings of the Spirit. In Eph. 4:30 we read: "... GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT." Dear Friends, if there is still a desire in your heart to do right and to follow Jesus, you have not entirely driven the Spirit away. But in I Thess. 5:19 God says: "QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT." The Spirit is like a burning fire convicting of evil. I pray you, do not quench this Spirit by refusing to accept the truths in God's blessed Book.

I hope that each one of us will sense the sounding of the alarm, and if we find that we are growing cold, that we will wake up before it is too late. We must be true Christians, for the hour is late and Jesus soon will come. May God help us that we may never grieve away His Holy Spirit; that this fire of conviction may never be quenched in our hearts, and that tonight each one of us may cease to resist the pleadings of the Spirit. Remember, dear ones, the unpardonable sin is just the unforgiven sin, and God will forgive tonight, if you will just ask Him to do so. Let us pray.