


No Turning Back

A composite image showing three skydivers in various poses and a white twin-engine airplane flying upside down. The scene is set against a bright blue sky with white clouds. The entire image is framed by a thick, curved yellow border.

Amazing Facts
Study Guide

Amazing Facts Study Guide 27 - No Turning Back

When a skydiver steps to the edge of the aircraft door and leaps away from the plane, he knows there is no turning back. He's gone too far, and if he should forget to strap on his parachute, nothing can save him and he will certainly plummet to a frightening death. What a tragedy! But there is something even worse that can happen to a person. Indeed, it is far worse to come to the point of no return in your relationship with God. Yet millions are approaching this point and have no idea! Is it possible that you are one of them? What is the awful sin that could lead to such a fate? Why can't God forgive it? For a clear and penetrating answer, yet also full of hope, take a few minutes with this fascinating Study Guide.

1. What is the sin that God cannot forgive?

"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." Matthew 12:31.

Answer: The sin God cannot forgive is "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost." But what is "blasphemy against the Holy Ghost"? People have many differing beliefs about this sin. Some believe it is murder; some, cursing the Holy Ghost; some, committing suicide; some, killing an unborn child; some, denial of Christ; some, a heinous, horrible, extremely wicked act; and others, worshipping a false god! The next question will shed some helpful light on this crucial matter.

2. What does the Bible say about sin and blasphemy?

"All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." Matthew 12:31.

Answer: The Bible clearly says that all kinds of sin and blasphemy will be forgiven. So none of the sins listed in the previous answer is the sin that God cannot forgive. No single act of any kind is the unpardonable sin.

Sounds Contradictory

Yes, it sounds contradictory, but both of the following statements are true:

- A. Any and every kind of sin and blasphemy will be forgiven.
- B. The blasphemy or sin against the Holy Ghost will not be forgiven.

Jesus Made Both Statements

Jesus made both statements in Matthew 12:31, so there is no error here. To harmonize the statements we must discover the work of the Holy Ghost. By the way, the word "ghost" comes from "ghast", the Old English word for "spirit".

3. What is the work of the Holy Ghost, or Spirit?

"He [the Holy Spirit] will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." "He will guide you into all truth." John 16:8, 13, NKJV.*

Answer: The work of the Holy Spirit is to convict me of sin and to guide me into all truth. The Holy Spirit is God's agency for conversion. Without the Holy Spirit, no one feels sorrow for sin, nor is anyone ever converted.

* *The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (C) 1979, 1980, 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.

4. When the Holy Spirit convinces me of sin, what must I do to be forgiven?

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

Answer: When convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit, I must confess my sins in order to be forgiven. When I confess them, God not only forgives me but He also miraculously cleanses me from all unrighteousness. God is waiting and

ready to forgive me for any and every sin I may commit (Psalms 86:5), but only if I confess and forsake it.

5. What happens if I do not confess my sins when convicted by the Holy Spirit?

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Proverbs 28:13.

Answer: If I do not confess my sins, Jesus cannot forgive my sins. Thus, any sin that I do not confess is unpardonable until I confess it, because forgiveness always follows confession. It never precedes it.

Terrible Danger of Resisting the Holy Spirit

Resisting the Holy Spirit is terribly dangerous because it so easily leads to rejection of the Holy Spirit, which is the sin God can never forgive. It is passing the point of no return. Since the Holy Spirit is the only agency given to bring me conviction, if I permanently reject Him, my case is thereafter hopeless. This subject is so important that God illustrates and explains it many different ways in Scripture. Watch for these different explanations as you continue exploring this Study Guide.

6. When the Holy Spirit convicts me of sin or leads me to new truth, when should I act?

Answer: The Bible says:

A. "As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me." Psalms 18:44.

B. "I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments." Psalms 119:60.

C. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Corinthians 6:2.

D. "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptised, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts 22:16.

The Bible repeatedly states that when I am convicted of sin, I must confess it at once. And when I learn new truth, I must accept it without delay.

7. What solemn warning does God give about the pleading of His Holy Spirit?

"My spirit shall not always strive with man." Genesis 6:3.

Answer: God solemnly warns that the Holy Spirit does not indefinitely continue pleading with a person to turn from sin and obey God.

8. At what point does the Holy Spirit stop pleading with a person?

"Therefore speak I to them in parables: because ... hearing they hear not." Matthew 13:13.

Answer: The Holy Spirit stops talking to a person when that individual becomes deaf to His voice. The Bible describes it as hearing, but hearing not. There is no point in setting the alarm on a clock in a deaf person's room. He won't hear it. Likewise, a person can condition himself to not hear an alarm clock ring by repeatedly shutting it off and not getting up. The day finally comes when the alarm goes off and he does not hear it.

Don't Shut Off the Holy Spirit

So it is with the Holy Spirit. If I keep shutting Him off, one day He will speak to me and I will not hear Him. When that day comes, the Spirit sadly turns away from me because I have become deaf to His pleadings. I have passed the point of no return. What a solemn, disquieting warning against resisting the Spirit's voice!

9. God, through His Holy Spirit, brings light (John 1:9) and conviction (John 16:8) to every person on earth. What must I do when I receive light from the Holy Spirit?

"The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness." Proverbs 4:18, 19. "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." John 12:35.

Answer: The Bible rule is that when the Holy Spirit brings me new light or conviction of sin, I must act at once--obey without delay. If I obey and walk in the light as I receive it, God will continue giving me light. If I refuse, even the light that I have will go out, and I will be left in darkness. The darkness that comes from a persistent and final refusal to follow light is the result of rejecting the Spirit, and it leaves me without hope.

10. Can any sin become the sin against the Holy Spirit?

Answer: Yes, if I steadfastly refuse to confess and forsake any sin, I will eventually become deaf to the Holy Spirit's pleading and thus pass the point of no return. Following are a few Bible examples:

A. Judas' unpardonable sin was covetousness (John 12:6). Why? Was it because God could not forgive it? No! It became unpardonable only because Judas refused to listen to the Holy Spirit and confess his sin of covetousness. Eventually he became deaf to the Spirit's voice.

B. Lucifer's unpardonable sins were pride and self-exaltation (Isaiah 14:12-14). God can forgive these sins. Lucifer could have been pardoned and cleansed, but he refused to listen until he could no longer hear the Spirit's voice.

C. The Pharisees' unpardonable sin was refusal to accept Jesus as the Messiah (Mark 3:22-30). They were convinced repeatedly with deep, heartfelt conviction that Jesus was the Messiah--the Son of the living God of heaven. But they hardened their hearts and stubbornly refused to accept Him as Saviour and Lord. Finally they grew deaf to the Spirit's voice. Then one day, after another great miracle by Jesus, the Pharisees told the multitude that Jesus received His power from the devil. Christ at once told them that attributing His miracle-working power to the devil indicated they had passed the point of no return and had blasphemed the Holy Ghost. God could have, and joyfully would have, forgiven them. But they refused until they were stone deaf to the Holy Spirit and could no longer be reached.

I Cannot Choose the Consequences

When the Spirit makes His appeal, I can choose to respond or refuse, but I cannot choose the consequences. They are fixed. If I consistently respond, I will become like Jesus. The Holy Spirit will seal, or mark, me in the forehead as a child of God (Revelation 7:2, 3), and thus assure me of a place in God's heavenly kingdom. If I persistently refuse to respond, I will grieve the Holy Spirit away and He will leave me forever, thus sealing my doom. What a solemn warning against ignoring the Holy Spirit!

11. After King David had committed a terrible double sin of adultery and murder, what anguished prayer did he pray?

"Take not thy holy spirit from me." Psalms 51:11.

Answer: He pleaded with God not to take the Holy Spirit away from him. Why? Because David knew if the Holy Spirit left him, he was doomed from that moment. He knew that only the Holy Spirit could lead him to repentance and restoration, and he trembled at the thought of becoming deaf to His voice. The Bible tells us in another place that God finally left Ephraim alone because he was joined to his idols (Hosea 4:17) and would not listen to the Spirit. He had become spiritually deaf. The most tragic thing that can happen to any person is for God to have to turn away and leave him alone. Don't let it happen to you!

12. What serious, weighty command did Paul give to the church in Thessalonica?

"Quench not the Spirit." 1 Thessalonians 5:19.

Answer: The Holy Spirit's pleading is like a fire that burns in a person's mind and heart. Sin has the same effect on the Holy Spirit as water has upon fire. As I ignore the Holy Spirit and continue in sin, I pour water on the fire of the Holy Spirit. Paul's awesome words to the Thessalonians also apply to us today. Don't quench the fire of the Holy Spirit by repeatedly refusing to heed the Spirit's voice. If the fire goes out, I have passed the point of no return.

Any Sin Can Quench the Fire

Any unconfessed or unforsaken sin can ultimately snuff out the fire of the Holy Spirit. It could be refusal to keep God's holy seventh-day Sabbath. It could be use of tobacco. It could be failure to forgive one who has betrayed or otherwise injured you. It could be immorality. It could be keeping God's tithe. Refusal to obey the Holy Spirit's voice in any area pours water on the fire of the Holy Spirit. Don't put out the fire. No greater tragedy could take place.

13. What other shocking, almost inconceivable statement did Paul make to the Thessalonian believers?

"And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned [lost] who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.

Answer: What powerful, shocking words! God says that those who refuse to receive the truth and conviction brought by the Holy Spirit will (after the Spirit departs from them) receive a strong delusion to believe that error is truth. Talk about a sobering thought!

14. What wrenching experience will some who have been sent these strong delusions face in the judgment day?

"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 will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." Matthew 7:22, 23.

Answer: Those who are crying "Lord, Lord" will be shocked and stunned that they are shut out. They will be absolutely positive that they are saved. Jesus will then doubtless remind them of that crucial time in their lives when the Holy Spirit brought new truth and conviction. It was crystal clear and obviously true. It kept them awake nights, troubled and wrestling over a decision. How their hearts burned within them! Finally, they said, "No!" And they refused to listen further to the Holy Spirit. Then came a strong delusion that caused them to feel saved when they were lost. Could a human being face any greater tragedy?

15. What special words of warning does Jesus give to help us avoid believing we are saved when we are actually lost?

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." Matthew 7:21.

Answer: Jesus solemnly warned that not all who have the feeling of assurance will enter His kingdom, but rather, only those who do His will. All of us desire assurance of salvation. It is a divine imperative. However, there is a false offer of assurance sweeping Christendom today that promises people salvation while they continue living in sin and manifest no changed lifestyle whatever.

Pastors Alarmed

More and more prominent church leaders are alarmed that so many church buildings are packed with people who have the feeling of "assurance", yet really have not been changed by Jesus Christ. Nor do they obey Him.

Jesus Clears the Air

Jesus says that true assurance is only for those who do His Father's will. When I accept Jesus as Lord and Ruler of my life, my lifestyle will change radically. I will become a completely new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17). I will gladly keep His commandments, do His will (John 14:15), and joyously follow where He leads (1 Peter 2:21). His fantastic resurrection power (Philippians 3:10) transforms me to His image (2 Corinthians 3:18). His glorious peace floods my life (John 14:27). With Jesus dwelling in me through His Spirit (Ephesians 3:16, 17), "I can do all things" (Philippians 4:13) and "nothing shall be impossible" (Matthew 17:20).

Fabulous True Assurance Versus Counterfeit Assurance

As I follow where the Saviour leads, He promises that no one can take me out of His hand (John 10:28) and that a

crown of life awaits me (Revelation 2:10). What amazing, glorious, genuine security Jesus gives His followers! Assurance promised under any other conditions is counterfeit. It will lead people to heaven's judgment bar, feeling certain they are saved when they are, in fact, lost (Proverbs 16:25).

16. What is God's blessed promise to His faithful followers who crown Him Lord of their lives?

"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Philippians 1:6; 2:13.

Answer: Praise God! Those who make Jesus the Lord and Ruler of their lives are promised the miracles of Jesus that will see them safely through to His eternal kingdom. Nothing could be better than that!

17. What additional glorious promise does Jesus make to us all?

"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Revelation 3:20.

Answer: Jesus promises to enter our lives when we open the door to Him. It is Jesus who knocks on the door of your heart and mine through His Holy Spirit. He--the King of kings, the Saviour of the world--takes time from superintending the universe to come to you and me for regular loving visits and friendly, caring guidance and counsel. What folly, what an unbelievable calamity, that we should ever be too busy or too disinterested to form a warm, loving, lasting friendship with Jesus. Jesus' close friends will be in no danger of being rejected on the judgment day. Jesus will personally welcome them into His kingdom (Matthew 25:34).

18. Will you decide to always open the door as Jesus knocks at your heart and be willing to follow where He leads you?

A Parting Word

This is the final Study Guide in our series of 27. Our loving desire is that you have been led into the presence of Jesus and have experienced a fantastic new relationship with Him. We hope that you will walk closer to the Master every day and will soon join that joyous group who will be translated into His blessed kingdom at His appearing. If we do not meet on this earth, let us agree to meet in the clouds on that great day.

Please call or write if we can further assist you in your journey heavenward.

Answer:
