

God's Three Deadlines

by J. Harold Smith

This sermon emphasizes the seriousness of three specific sins with eternal consequences: blaspheming against the Holy Spirit, sinning away the day of grace, and committing the sin unto death. It warns believers of the danger of hardening their hearts, backsliding, and persisting in sin, leading to God's judgment and potential physical death as a consequence of unconfessed sin. The urgency of repentance and returning to God's grace is highlighted throughout the message.

Scripture: Matthew 12:31, Proverbs 29:1, 1 Corinthians 5:5, Amos 4:6, Isaiah 1:19, John 3:7, 1 John 5:16

Topics: "Eternal Consequences of Sin", "Urgency of Repentance"

Description

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Transcript

...that in the word of God we can find three definite positive deadlines. I have but one purpose in bringing you this message tonight and that is that I may present to you a message that will keep you from stepping over finally that fatal line that will mean your eternal destiny and your eternal destruction. Deadline number one is blaspheming against the Holy Ghost, our committing the unpardonable sin.

Deadline number two is singing over your day of grace and deadline number three is the sin unto death. And as we look at these three I trust tonight that we will study them carefully, prayerfully and scripturally. Deadline number one, blaspheming against the Holy Ghost, our committing the unpardonable sin.

Now I believe that all of you that are here in this great church tonight and all of you that are out there looking by television will agree with me that the only way that you can understand any portion of the word of God is to study that passage of scripture in its proper context. Now you remember that our Lord had just performed a wonderful and a marvelous miracle. The Bible declares that our Lord had performed a miracle of healing.

They had brought to him a man that was possessed with a devil of blindness and a devil of dumbness. And our wonderful Lord had healed that man in the fact that he both spake and saw. And when all of those

that had gathered around, primarily the scribes and the Pharisees and especially the Pharisees, when they saw this wonderful miracle, realizing that they were going to lose and going to get out of the will of the people and lose their faith, they said, why sure, this man has performed a wonderful miracle.

But the thing that you don't understand is the fact that this man has performed this miracle by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of devils, or the prince of flies, or the prince of filth. And then our Lord turned and looked into their face and said to them, he that speaketh a word against the Son of God, it shall be forgiven him. He that speaketh a word against God the Father, it shall be forgiven him.

But whoso speaketh a word against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come. As I said a moment ago, you've got to take that passage of scripture or any scripture in its proper context to understand it. For example, many of the false cults of our day and many of the things that we hear today on radio and television and many of our churches has been pulled out of its proper context.

And by so doing, they have their false cults and their false doctrine. For example, I can prove almost anything that I want to prove out of the word of God, if I pull that scripture out of its proper context. For example, the Bible says that Judas went out and hanged himself.

Another passage of scripture says, go thou and do likewise. A third passage of scripture says, what thou doest, do quickly. Now, if I were to pull all of those scriptures out of their proper context, I could justify all of us going out and committing suicide.

And you know that the Bible does not teach that. So as we look at our Lord, as he gives this wonderful and marvelous doctrine of the unpardonable sin, it brings to our mind the word unpardonable. Now, that is a very hard word to look at.

And it just, it carries with it a most despairing and disparaging meaning. There are many things that I consider and you consider as unpardonable, but I'm talking about a sin that you cannot be forgiven for. The Bible declares, and Jesus Christ said, that there is a sin that if you commit it, you cannot be forgiven, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

That brings before my vision, screaming, dying, doomed, damned men and women. I see their horrified gaze. I see their despairing look.

I see their hopeless end. I believe that if you would ask me to select a quartet of words out of the Bible, that I consider to be the most horrible words in all of the Bible, it wouldn't take me but a second to say those words that our Lord uttered when he said, shall never be forgiven. I do not know anything more horrible than for the Lord to say to you, you have sinned a sin whereby you can never be forgiven in this world, neither in the world to come.

When I stop to think of this sin, I want to say as dogmatically as I can say it, that such a sin is possible for you to commit in this day. You say, what is this sin? How do we commit this sin? And which member of the body does one use in committing this sin? And how long, preacher, may I expect to live if I commit this sin? Before I answer those questions, there comes to my mind another word that I want to explain to you, and that's the word blaspheme. Now the word blaspheme comes from two Greek words, meaning to speak hurtfully.

So the Lord Jesus Christ was saying here that the man that speaks a word hurtfully of the holy gospel, that man has committed a sin whereby he can never be forgiven in this world, neither in the world to come. So when we see this sin, we turn in our Bibles to a verse of scripture found in James chapter 3 and verse 6, and I do believe that this is one of the most unusual and certainly one of the strangest verses in all of the Bible. Since a man must speak a word, there is but one member of his body with which he can use to commit this sin.

Listen to what the Bible declares in James chapter 3 and verse 6, and the tongue is a fire. A world of iniquity, so is the tongue among our members that he defiled the whole body and set it on fire, the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell. God realizing that the tongue is the only member of your body with which you can commit a sin whereby you can never be forgiven in this world nor in the world to come, has enclosed that little deadly member, that little fatal member, behind a double prison wall.

First of all there are the ivory bars your teeth, and then there are the moat out there called our lips, and behind that double prison wall lurks that little member that is ready to spring out and cause you to commit a sin whereby you can never be forgiven in this world neither in the world to come. Now you remember that Belshazzar committed this sin. The Bible tells us that Belshazzar, this mighty monarch of Babylon, he brought in all of his lords and all of his concubines, and they put on a banquet in a feast that lasted for a hundred and eighty days, and as they were gathered there in that awful and terrible deluge of sin, the Bible declares that he said we've done everything that I know to do.

Go up there and bring down the golden vessels that my grandfather Nebuchadnezzar, when he pillaged Jerusalem, got out of the temple, and the Bible says that when he came down and began to pour in that wine, into that vessel that was dedicated and sanctified, the Bible says that a man, a hand appeared, like a man's hand, over against the candlesticks and began to write out the doom of Belshazzar, and the Bible says that in that night was Belshazzar king of the Chaldean slain. The Bible tells us that Herod committed this sin. You remember that he made a great speech and gave not God the glory, and the Bible declares that the worms laid hold upon him when God struck him, and before he could take off his regal robe or walk off from the platform where his throne room was, he was devoured of worms.

You say, preacher, have you ever known anybody to commit this sin? I have never known but 21 men to commit this sin. I have never known a woman out of all of the millions that I've ever preached to for these 41 years, I have never known a woman to commit this sin, that is personally, but I have known and I do know 21 men personally that committed this sin. You say, Brother Smith, how long does one live after they commit this sin? I have never known a man after he commits this sin to live out a 24-hour, one-day period, all of them to die before that day is out.

I never will forget as long as I live. When I was in a revival meeting in a little country church down in the lower part of South Carolina, I do not remember that night what I preached about or on the theme or the subject, but when I was giving the invitation, I saw a young man stand up on the very back row in the pew and begin to look out over that congregation. I turned and walked down the aisle of the church on their wall side until I was right in front of him.

I looked up into his face and I said to him, young man, do you know the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior? He said, no sir, no sir, I do not know the Lord. And he said, I didn't come here to get saved, I didn't come here to hear you preach, I came here to get a couple of girls to go to a dance, and sir, as soon as I can locate them, you can have our space. I said, young man, the Lord sent me back here, the Holy Spirit sent

me back here to speak to you about your soul.

He said, you and the Holy Ghost both go to hell. God said, get away from him, don't speak another word to him, he's blasphemed against my spirit and I'm going to kill him. I turned and walked back to that platform and I said, folk, do you see that boy that's standing on there on that pew? Everybody turned around and looked.

I said, I do not know who he is, I do not know his name, but he's just blasphemed against God's Holy Spirit, and God spoke to my heart and said he was going to kill him. I'll never forget it, the boy pulled his hands up like that and out loud said, oh yeah? I dismiss the service. It was about 9.15. He got the two girls and they went to a little dance hall about five miles away.

About five minutes till 12 that night, he stepped out on the little porch in front of that dance hall. He and his buddy, they're smoking a cigarette and to take a drink. When they had licked their cigarettes and his buddy had taken a drink out of the flask, he started to hand it over to his friend, and that boy pulled it up like a jackknife, fell on that porch and began to scream like a panther.

And before they could stop the orchestra and get out to pick him up, he was a corpse. They sinned, sinned for the medical doctor in that area. And when that doctor arrived, he said, I was three seats in front of him tonight.

I saw him and I heard him when he said what he had to say. That's the boy tonight that Preacher Smith said God was going to kill in less than three hours. He was in hell.

You say, well Preacher, it would have happened anyway. I don't believe it. I was holding a revival meeting in Greenville, South Carolina, and two young men drove up in front of the church on a motorcycle riding piggyback.

One of the deacons invited the boy that was driving the motorcycle to come into the church and worship with us in the service. That boy began to curse that pastor, curse this deacon, curse everybody in that church, and said some words that I would not dare use in this auditorium. The boy riding piggyback put his hand on his shoulder and said, you express my opinion exactly.

They started the motorcycle. They went about a half a mile and started to do a long upgrade of a winding hill and at the inquest I heard one of the witnesses that was going up that hill driving his car say, I did not realize that there was a motorcycle near me until these boys pulled up along beside me. And when they did, I thought it was a motorcycle, motorcycle officer, and so I looked at my speedometer and I was going 60 miles an hour.

The man coming down the hill and around the curve said, I saw the other car approaching but I had no idea that there was a motorcycle behind it and until I was about 50 feet away I didn't see it until they pulled up immediately in front of me and before I could ever catch the brake. They had crashed head-on into that oncoming car. That was less than 30 seconds after those two boys were cursing God, cursing the work of the Holy Spirit, and assigning God's servants to hell.

You say, well this really was just an accident. Never will I believe it. I believe if those boys had gotten off of that motorcycle and come in that church, I believe that both of them could have been saved.

I was holding revival meeting in Asheville, North Carolina and one of the professors there, when he was invited to come to the services as he was cutting the lawn and mowing his lawn, he was invited by one of the deacons to come to the service that night. This deacon said, well I'll tell you, I'll not be found at that pimp meeting. He said, J. Harold Smith is nothing more than just a religious racketeer.

He has majored in hypnosis and he knows exactly how to hypnotize you. He knows how to get you to where when he starts to take the offering, that left hand will just go right back and get ahold of your purse and pull it out and empty it up in one of the tubs in which he takes the offering. I don't know a thing about hypnosis.

And if I did, I would not use it in a religious service. This deacon, after this professor had cursed and sworn, said I'm sorry Pop, I didn't know you felt that way about it. I'd have never mentioned the revival meeting to you.

He backed his own will be allowed and started with a revival meeting. This professor started his motor according to a testimony of a lady across the street and he had gone just about 20 feet mowing his lawn when he grabbed himself and screamed and fell over on the ground dead. 29 years old in perfect health and in a minute after he was cursing God, he was dead and in hell.

I was holding revival meeting in Louisiana in one of the big rodeos. We came to the last night of the revival meeting and I was preaching the sermon that I'm preaching tonight and I gave the invitation. All during the meeting, all during that service, on my right in the extreme corner of that rodeo were three businessmen of that city.

They laughed. They made fun. They lit their cigarettes.

They cursed. They cursed me. They cursed the said ushers.

They cursed the sponsors of that revival meeting and when about 400 people got up out of their seats and began to walk down to give their hearts to Christ, they began to make all sorts of petty remarks and filter remarks about those who were coming to the altar. I met them as they came down out of the rodeo and I said I do not know who you gentlemen are, but all three of you are blasphemed against God's Spirit and you've stepped over God's deadline. One of them said is that right? I didn't say another word.

They left. The next morning at 8 o'clock one of those businessmen put his key in his door to unlock his business and dropped dead in the street before he could open the door. At 1130 that day, the second businessman started to cross the street in that little city and dropped dead in the middle of the street with a heart attack.

At 530 that afternoon the third one was sitting in his office with his secretary and he said to her before the sun goes down I'll be in hell. She said ask God to forgive you. He said it's too late and pitched out in his chair a corpse.

I had left on Monday morning to go to another revival. My telephone rang about 930 that Monday night. Oh the other end of the line was one of the preachers that had been with us in this revival meeting and he said Brother Smith, he said our whole city is in a turmoil.

Would you come next Sunday night and preach in the First Methodist Church? I asked the preacher with whom I was in a revival meeting to excuse me and he gave me the leave and the privilege of leaving on

Sunday after the morning service. That night when I arrived in that little city, stood up to preach. Nineteen men jumped up out of their seats and ran to that altar and gave their hearts to Christ before I could ever preach a word.

You say Preacher Smith that was just an accident. You'd never make me believe it. When you accredit the work of the Holy Spirit to the work of the devil you are doomed and condemned forever.

I do not believe, I do not believe that if you ever commit this sin and you accredit the work of the Holy Spirit to the work of the devil, I do not believe that you'll live out 24 hours and I do not believe that you're gonna ever be forgiven. If you had all of the evangelists and all of the preachers and all of the pastors and all of the world, you'd never be able to get saved when once you step over this deadline you, the Bible says, shall never be forgiven. Now what is this sin? It's with your lips to accredit the work of the Holy Spirit to the work of the devil and if you ever do it you are damned forever.

Deadline number two is sending away your day of grace. You say Brother Smith what is the difference between sending away your day of grace and the unpardonable sin in their final result? There is absolutely no difference. But I've known men, I've known men by the hundreds and by the thousands I've known women to step over this deadline and to commit this sin and yet I tell you they were fine people, they were honest people.

Many of them I tell you were church members, many of them were some of the finest friends that I ever had in my life and many of them were some of the richest, some of them were some of the poorest, some of them were the most educated and cultured while others who could not read their name and yet they committed this sin. You say Brother Smith what is it? If you have your Bibles I wish you would turn to Proverbs 29 and verse 1. And there in Proverbs 29 and verse 1 the Bible said he that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy. I ask you could anything be any plainer? The Bible says here that he, now notice this, that often is reprov'd and hardeneth his heart and stripping of his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy.

When I think of this sin and when I think about the multitudes that have committed it under my own ministry my heart aches. Never will I forget as long as I live in a form of pastorate. When I'd preach one Sunday morning sitting directly out in front of me was a mother, a sweet mother.

One of the finest, sweetest mothers in our church and her two lovely daughters. The two daughters were members of our congregation but I've never been able to reach the mother. I've never been able to win her to Christ.

She was a virtuous woman. She was a good woman. She was a fine neighbor.

She attended church services far more regularly than some of my own members and on that particular Sunday morning I had a special burden for her. And when I gave the invitation I walked down and took her by the hand and I said, will you come this morning and give your heart to Christ? She stood there and trembled and the tears ran down her face and in a moment she looked me in the face and said, Brother Harold, not this morning, not now. And I turned and walked back to the pulpit and dismissed the services.

That afternoon about five o'clock she was sitting on the front porch with her daughters and they had a lovely, beautiful rose garden and she said to one of her daughters, she said, I believe that I'll go out and pick Brother Smith, I'll cut Brother Smith some of those beautiful roses and take them down so he can

enjoy them next week. I'll put them on his desk in his office. She got her scissors, went down the steps and started down the path of that rose garden and fell dead.

I was preaching her funeral Tuesday morning. While I was in that great church preaching that funeral, the oldest daughter got up and I thought that she was going to the ladies lounge, but instead she turned and came to that casket that was open there at the altar, bowed on her knees and put her hands up in that casket on her call mother's hand and said, my mother, my sweet mother is in hell. I was about halfway through the message.

I closed the sermon. Everybody in that church was mourning. Brother Jerry, I couldn't help but think if all of our people had wept that Sunday morning while I was begging her to come to Christ, like they were like they were weeping Tuesday morning because of her death, we might have been able to have won her to Christ.

One night I was preaching in a tent meeting. Somehow or another I was impressed by a little girl, 14 years old, sitting to my right between her dad and her mother. All three of them were strangers to me.

When I gave the invitation I walked down and into that aisle and I said to this little girl and I learned their name was Katie. And I said, Katie, are you a Christian? And she said, no sir, I'm not. I said, do you want to be saved? She said, someday.

But she said, I'm only 14 years old and I've got a bid. I've got a bid to the sorority. And Brother Smith, I know that if I give my heart to the Lord I can't join that sorority with what they are doing and I just can't go.

I said, Katie would you go tonight if you knew this was the last call you'd ever have? And she thought a moment and then she said, no, I wouldn't go tonight if I knew this was the last invitation I'd ever receive. I wouldn't go tonight if I knew that I'd be in hell before morning. I wouldn't go.

I turned and walked away. That father stopped on his way home. They lived about four miles out of the little city.

And on the way home they had stopped to fill up their automobile tank with high octane gasoline. And on the, as they drove out to their home he was turning in to the left to go into their, into their driveway. An automobile filled with four Negro men under the influence of liquor was coming in behind them.

The father said, I saw the lights but I had no idea that they were going a hundred miles an hour. Before he could get across the lane those men had struck his car. They turned it over three times.

The first time it went over the father fell out. The second time the mother was thrown out. But Katie was pinned in that automobile and the automobile was upside down.

The Negro men went on about a hundred yards and wrecked their car. The gasoline began to pour out of that wrecked automobile in which Katie was trapped and run down the incline of that highway. One of those drunken men got out and lit a cigarette and he didn't realize that the gasoline was there and threw it down in that gasoline in a moment like a flame of death.

That fire was racing up that highway and engulfing that car. By that time four or five of the automobiles had come on the scene. One of the men that witnessed it said, Preacher Smith, we had to hold that mother and that father and he said, I hope if I live to be a hundred years old I'll never experience anything like I

experienced on that highway that night.

He said, Preacher, Katie began to cry, Mama, Daddy, get me out of this car, Mama. Daddy, get me out of this car. I'm gonna burn to death, Mama.

I'm gonna burn to death, Mama. I'm going to hell. I'm going to hell, Mama.

Get me out of this car, please, Mama. Help me. Daddy, Daddy, run in the house.

Run in the house and get your gun and shoot me, Daddy. Shoot me. Don't let me burn here in this car, Daddy.

My feet are on fire. My feet are on fire, Daddy. Daddy, go in the house and get the gun and come out and shoot me, Mama.

Get me out of this car. That witness said, Preacher, the last thing I heard her say was I wish I'd have gone tonight when Preacher Smith begged me to give my heart to Christ. Mama, Mama, I wish I'd have gone tonight.

I'm going to hell, Mama. I'm going to hell. Mama, get me out of this car.

Three, four young people were riding along as I was preaching on the radio one night, and three of them, two boys and a girl, was laughing. And when I mentioned the Holy Ghost, one of these boys and girl, one of these girls said, Oh, I'm afraid. I'm scared.

He's talking about ghosts. And the girl that survived the accident said, Preacher, we struck the abutment of the Tennessee River. Three of them were instantly killed.

I want to tell you as Jewish, I'm on this platform. God will go along with you so far, and His Spirit will knock on your door, and He'll urge you through the evangelist and the preacher to give your heart to Jesus Christ. But one of these days, He's going to knock for the last time.

One of these days, He's going to make His last plea. One of these days, He's going to make His last call, and you're going to shake your head and say, Not now! And the minute you do it, you're going to be over God's deadline, and never will the Spirit knock, and never will He call again. September the 4th, 1932, about 630 that Sunday afternoon in Greenville, South Carolina.

I was sitting on the front porch of my sister's home with my feet propped up on the banister around her front porch, and she and her husband were sitting in their swing, and she said, Harold, you have tried everything that the devil has to offer. Why don't you give Jesus Christ a chance in your heart? And I turned around to curse my sister, but those words never came out. I didn't know that there was such a person as the Holy Spirit.

I didn't know there was such a thing as Holy Ghost conviction, but the Spirit of God convicted me of my sins. And before I knew what it was all about, I bowed on my knees on that porch, and I was praying the best I knew how. I'd never uttered a prayer.

I didn't know one verse in all of the Bible. I didn't know that it says that if you call, who shall it shall call, upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. I was praying.

I was saying, God, have mercy on me, a sinner, have mercy. And all of you that have ever prayed that prayer, you know what took place? The Lord saved me. That was at 630, September 4th, 1932.

At nine o'clock that night, two hours and a half later, I had started due to the Greenville News to pick up my wife that was working there, and a big trailer truck ran out in front of me on Pendleton Street. I threw on the brakes and got my car stopped, and right under that truck, God showed me that that's where I would have died. I was two hours and a half from hell.

You were looking into the face of a preacher that was just two hours and a half from hell, and accepted the last call God ever gave me. I just can't help but wonder how many in this great audience tonight, and how many out there in that great unseen television audience, God allowed you to hear and to see this program, and I wonder how many of you will snap off that TV set tonight, go to your room, and go to your bed, and wake up in hell tomorrow. I wonder how many of you God is giving your last call for the last time the Holy Spirit is knocking upon your door.

You say, Brother Smith, do you mean to tell me that I can be saved right here in my home? Do you mean to tell me that I can be saved right here around my television set? Yes. I told you, you don't have to lay your hand over on the TV set and make a contact with God. I told you, God is right there, and He'll speak to your heart.

He is speaking to your heart, and if you look up and say, Oh God, I'm a sinner. Have mercy upon me, O Lord, and forgive me of my sins. The Bible says that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

But if you say, Well, I'll just wait till I get down to church. I'll just wait till the next time my pastor is in town, and I can have an interview with him. I'll just wait till I feel a little better.

I'll wait till I get a little better. If you do labor, you may skip over deadline number two. Sin away your day of grace, and never again have a call from God.

The Bible says, My spirit shall not always strive with man. Is God striving with you? You remember what the Bible says about Ephraim? The Bible says, Ephraim is joined to his idols. Let him alone.

What if God says to some young man or some young woman? What if God says to some grandfather or grandmother or some husband or wife that just got married? What if God says to you tonight, Let him alone. I've done everything that I can do to win her. I've done everything I can do to win him to Christ.

Let him alone. And if the Spirit of God takes this flight from you, you can never be saved. The Bible declares, Then shall they call me, but I will not answer, for they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord.

Therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own doing and be filled with their own devices. You'll remember that over in John, talking about the people of Nazareth, Jesus Christ said, Therefore they could not believe. It didn't say they wouldn't believe.

It said they could not believe. No man can come into the Father except the Spirit drawing. Do you feel the wooing of God's Spirit? Do you feel the plea of God's Spirit? If so, do not turn him away from the door of your heart.

There is a time we know not when, a place we know not where, that marks the destiny of men from glory to despair. Are you about ready to step over God's deadline number two and sin away your day of grace? Now if you sin away your day of grace, you're just as much doomed as if you had blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, although you may live many, many years. I was conducting a revival meeting in Lawrence, South Carolina, and on the Sunday night, the opening of that meeting, I'd preached, sitting over on my left in the Lucas Avenue Baptist Church with two beautiful sisters.

I went over and spoke to them and asked them would they come to the Lord Jesus. The oldest one said, Preacher Smith, this is the first night of the revival meeting and my sister and I have made up our mind that before this revival meeting is over we're going to be saved. I said that's presumptuous sin, you have no right to say that.

The Bible says now is the accepted time. Today is the day of salvation. Harden not your heart.

This is the moment to be saved. To make a long story short, both of those girls left without being saved. Before that night was over, they had been murdered, their whole family, their house burned.

Never will I forget as I stood by the ashes of that house and watched the firemen bringing out the remains of those once beautiful girls. And then as I stood in Lucas Avenue Baptist Church with all of those caskets of all of that family lined up in front of me as I preached the funeral, I said, Oh God, did I do my best to win those two girls to Jesus Christ. There are some of you sitting here tonight saying, I'm going to be saved, Preacher.

I don't intend to go to hell, but not now. There are some of you sitting right here tonight that God is knocking and the Holy Spirit is knocking at your door. Will you say yes? Or will you say no? The Holy Spirit knocked at the door of Agrippa, and he said, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian, Paul.

He knocked at the door of Felix and Festus, and they said, In a more convenient season. And besides that, Preacher, much learning hath made thee mad. The rich young ruler of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Bible says, and the Lord looked upon him and loved him.

But all of them are in hell because they put it off and stepped over God's deadline number two, the sin against God's grace. Deadline number three is the sin and the death. Deadline number one and deadline number two cannot be crossed over by a real born-again believer.

It can be crossed by a church member, but not a believer. In 1 John chapter 5, the Bible says in verse 16, the Word says, 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. Now what is the sin that you can commit or I could commit as a born-again believer? And God says it carries with it capital punishment. The Bible declares that there is a sin recorded in this book that I hold in my hand.

But if you commit it as a believer, if you have been a, if you're a child of God, it's possible for you to commit a sin and God sign your death warrant and kill you for committing that sin. What is it? What is the sin that Jerry Falwell could commit? And in my opinion he's one of the greatest men of God I have ever known in all of my life. I have more respect for Jerry Falwell than I have for any man that I know today that's preaching the gospel.

But Jerry, there is a sin you could commit. And God says if you did it, he'd kill you for committing it. What is this sin? The Bible says if any man see his, B-R-O-T-H-E-R, sin, a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask and he shall give life to them that sin not unto death.

There is a sin unto death and I do not say that he shall pray for it. Now what is the sin? That is the sin unto death. If you'll have, if you have your Bibles, I wish you would turn to Amos chapter 4 and then we read in verse 6 these words.

Amos 4, 6, 12. And I also have given you cleanliness of teeth in all of your cities, and want of bread in all of your places, yet have you not returned to me, saith the Lord. And also I have withholding 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, and one piece was rained upon, and a piece whereupon it rained not withered, so two or three cities wandered into one city to drink water, but they were not satisfied, yet have you not returned to me, saith the Lord.

I have smitten you with blasting and mildew, when your gardens, and your vineyards, and your fig trees, and your olive trees increased, the palmer worm devoured them, yet have you not returned to me, saith the Lord. I have sent among you the pestilence after the manor of Egypt. You are young men of our slain with a sword, and have taken away your horses, and have made the stink of your temps to come up into your nostrils, yet have you not returned to me, saith the Lord.

I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning, yet have you not returned to me, saith the Lord. Five times God said, yet have you not returned unto me, saith the Lord. He sent famine, the Bible says he sent drought, he sent pestilence, he sent war, he sent destruction, and yet they hardened their heart, and stricken their neck, and refused to come back to God.

Now what is this sin? I firmly believe that it's a backslide to lose the joy of his salvation, to get out of the will of God, to get away from God. And after God does all that he can do to bring you back, and you harden your heart, and you stiffen your neck, and refuse to return, God says, all right, I'm going to turn you over to the devil. I'm going to turn you over to the devil for the destruction of the flesh.

I want you to turn, everybody in this audience, I want you to turn your Bibles to 1 Corinthians 5, 5. And I'm reading from the King James Version, and if I misquote this verse of Scripture, and you're reading out of the King James Version, if I misquote it, I want you to put up your hand and challenge me. The Bible says here in 1 Corinthians 5, 5, to deliver such an one under Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Did I quote it right? Yes.

Now what does the, what does the Scripture say? There's a man that's gone into sin that was a church member, yes, a Christian, yes, and now he's to be turned over to the devil for the devil to kill him, for the destruction of the flesh, that means death, in order that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Now there are some of you sitting right out here before me tonight, now I'm not talking to church members, I'm talking to Saints, I'm talking to real born-again believers. And when I say that it doesn't make any difference to me whether you are Methodist or a Presbyterian or a Lutheran or a Roman Catholic or whatever you may be, if you are a child of God, if you have been born again according to John chapter 3 and verse 7, then I'm speaking to you.

If you're a church member and nothing more, then this doesn't apply to you. But if you are a real born-again believer, you cannot sin and let that sin go unconfessed and not have God sign your death warrant. You say, well preacher, I know that's not true because I'm a church member and I've been living in sin and I've been getting bothered for years.

Now wait a minute, you may be a church member, I was. I was a church member for ten years before I was ever converted. I've had preachers saved and preachers wives saved and deacons by the hundreds and stewards in the Methodist Church and elders in the Presbyterian Church by the hundreds to be saved.

So if you are just a church member, that's not it. But if you are a real child of God, you cannot get by with your sin. What is that little pet sin in your heart? Are you angry with the preacher? Are you mad at the church? Have you withheld your tithes? I know one man that said, we'll starve out the preacher because we don't like him.

And brother, they set up a little organization and where they could put their tithe, all of them put their tithe in there and robbed the church and took it away from the church. God spoke to that man. He hardened his heart and God turned him over to the devil and killed him.

Is there hate in your heart? Are you lifted up in pride? Do you have a haughty spirit? Are you a robber of God, of his tithe and of his offering? Do you just go to church when you want to go? Have you lost your interest in the house of God? How often do you read the Bible? Have you lost interest in it? Was there ever a time when you witnessed for the Lord and gave a testimony for the Lord Jesus Christ, but now you have lost that interest in lost people and it doesn't make any difference to you whether they die and go to hell or whether they do not? I ask you, was there ever a time when you loved Jesus Christ better than you do now? You say, yes there was. Then I want to tell you neighbor, you've actually been to that degree. And God sent me here tonight to warn you.

God is permitting us to come out there into your home and out there into your living room through your TV set to warn you. And you say, well I'm going to harden my heart. I'm going to live on.

It doesn't make a particular difference to me what you say, J. Harold Smith. I'm going to live on in my sin. God will take his great pen in hand and call his recording angel and there he'll sign your death line and pin that on your back.

And then you can call all of the preachers you want to call. You can bring in all of the great evangelists you want to bring in. You can hire all of the doctors that can be hired, but you're going to die when once you are turned over into the hand of the devil for the destruction of the flesh.

Brother Jerry, when I come down to die, I don't want to die in the devil's slaughterhouse. I know five preachers personally that God has killed, signed their death warrant because they got away in the sin. I know, I believe, a hundred deacons personally that got away in the sin and God signed their death warrant.

Tonight there are some of you sitting right here before me. You've got a little pet sin tucked away in your heart that your dad doesn't know about. Your mother doesn't know about it.

Your wife doesn't know about it. Your husband doesn't know about it. Your pastor doesn't know about it.

The police do not know about it, but you know about it and God knows about it. I believe God sent you here tonight and I believe that God had you to tune in on television and He's speaking to your heart. What will you do? Will you take that fatal, final step over God's deadline? I was in one of the mill towns in South Carolina in revival meeting and the president of the company came to hear me preach.

I was preaching this message and I'm preaching tonight. On the way home he said to his wife, when we get home honey, I want to review with you all of my insurance policies. God signed my death warrant as I stepped off the steps of that church tonight.

She said, oh John, you don't mean it. You just got excited. No, he said, I'm not excited.

He said, God spoke to my heart and told me to walk down that aisle tonight. Honey, for the last five years, every other week, I've been going to New York and Chicago. You thought I was going on business.

I'd catch one plane and my secretary would catch the other plane and we've been living together every other weekend. And he said, when God spoke to me tonight and said, give her up, I wouldn't do it. But when we stepped off those steps tonight, God signed my death warrant.

He went over those insurance policies with her and before the next morning, he was a corpse. Tonight, God is speaking to your heart about that little pet sin that you say is not so bad, but it's enough to grieve the Holy Ghost. And God is speaking to your heart tonight and giving you an opportunity to walk this aisle and confess it.

Will you do it? Brother Jerry, I believe tonight that there are many folk in this audience and many out there in TV land that belong to a church, but do not belong to Christ. Search your heart.

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