

LUKE I God Will Provide

Text: Luke 12:8-12

—Bill Turner

Trusting God in Times of Persecution

1. **Rookie NFL QB of H. Texans** made news last week: NBC news selectively edited his witness: The powers that be at NBC didn't want him confessing Christ before millions
2. **Speaking the Truth has made Jesus enemy number 1 of the powers that be...**
3. **And from this point forward Jesus is being hunted. (Luke 11:53–54)**
4. **Now anyone with Jesus is in danger just by their association with Him**
5. **We see two court scenes: one before men and the other before angels**

I. COURAGE TO CONFESS CHRIST (v.9)

A. THE GOOD CONFESSION

1. The Bible calls this 'the good confession' (1 Timothy 6:12)
2. A confession Christ Himself made standing before Pilate (1 Timothy 6:13)
3. A confession necessary for our salvation (Romans 10:10)
4. A confession that unites all the saints through the centuries (Acts 8:36–38)
5. A confession that will One Day be made by ALL! (Philippians 2:10–11)
 - a) when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord!

B. A CONFESSION THAT CAN COST YOUR LIFE

1. A way the Enemy seeks to destroy our Faith through Fear (Matt. 10:21–22)
 - a) Jesus warned that Christians would even be betrayed by their own family
2. Even the Apostles would be dragged before courts (Luke 21:12–19)
3. Jesus wanted them to understand so they could stay strong (John 16:1–4)

C. A CONFESSION WE SOMETIMES FAIL TO MAKE

1. The night when Jesus was arrested and brought before the High Priest...
 - a) Peter and John followed in secret to the courtyard where Jesus was on trial
 - b) That fateful night 2 Apostles openly denied Jesus...
 - c) and the Rest of the Disciples deserted Him in Fear for their lives.
2. Judas conspired with the Jewish Rulers to Betray Jesus for 30 pcs. Silver
—and Peter, in fear for his life, Denied Jesus 3x times...
 - a) and Luke records a devastating detail the other accounts do not (Luke 22:54–62)
3. Peter wept bitterly and later he repented and was forgiven!
 - a) And later when he was arrested and beaten he sang songs of praise in prison
 - b) He knew in his heart he would never deny Jesus again!
 - c) Judas experienced terrible sorrow but it did not lead to repentance

(2 Cor. 7:9–10) **One Sorrow Leads to LIFE – the Other Leads to DEATH**

which brings us to one of the most controversial passages in the Bible...

II. THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN (v.10)

A. QUESTION: WHAT IS THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN?

1. **Referred to several different ways: Sometimes called: ‘the unforgivable sin’**
 - a) It is even translated: The ‘eternal sin’ (Mark 3:28 ESV)
 - b) also called the ‘blasphemy of the Holy Spirit’ (Matthew 12:31–32)
2. **What is this unforgivable sin? (Lk 12:10; Mt 12:31-32)**
 - a) How would we know if we committed this sin and are unforgiven?
 - b) What is Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit? –Word “blaspheme” means to speak against.
 - c) **Unger’s Bible Dictionary**: “Speaking evil of God” or “curse the name of the Lord”
ALSO: “attributing some evil to God” (Unger’s Bible Dict. p.148)
3. **Some Think this would be like mocking God or denying Christ...**
 - a) Imagine being dragged before a court judge under penalty of death and being asked
Not Just to Deny Christ but to curse His name. This would be ‘blasphemy’
 - b) But Jesus said whatever blasphemies men utter can be forgiven (Mark 3:28)
 - c) But Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven (Mk 3:29a)

B. OBSERVATION: 1st NOTICE CONTEXT [speaker, listener, circumstance]

1. **Matthew, Mark and Luke each record these words of Christ... And in each account it directly follows the accusation of the scribes and pharisees...**
 - a) When Jesus cast out a demon right in front of everyone and they couldn’t deny it
 - b) so instead of admitting the Truth—that Jesus cast out a demon by the Spirit of God
 - c) They accused Jesus of casting out demons by the demonic power of satan.
2. **Notice the Clear Connection we see in Mark! (Mark 3:23-30)**
3. **By the context we see Jesus is talking TO His disciples—
—but ABOUT the Scribes & Pharisees who just accused Him.**

C. INTERPRETATION: NOTICE THE HEART...

1. **So Ask yourself: What kind of heart would blaspheme the Holy Spirit?**
 - a) What kind of heart would call good / evil and evil / good?
 - b) What kind of heart would call the work of God, the work of Satan?
 - c) Paul described this type of heart as those: “who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator” (Rom. 1:25)
2. **This is not just an ignorant mistake—It is a deliberate, stubborn arrogance that refuses to admit the truth even when it is plain to see**
3. **This is a Heart That Would Rather Blaspheme God Than Obey God**

“The three dispensations of God’s grace are in view here. Blaspheming God in the patriarchal period, or Christ as the culmination of the Mosaic period, or the Holy Spirit in the age of the gospel were in the ascending order of seriousness. “The Holy Spirit with his teachings is the last that God has to offer man; and, if one blasphemes the Holy Spirit by rejecting the New Testament, there is no chance for forgiveness.”¹

¹ James Burton Coffman, Gospel of Luke commentary, ACU press

"One could reject Jesus during his personal ministry [ex. Paul] and still accept Him by accepting Spirit-inspired preaching. But reject the latter and there would be no further overture from God."²

4. This would explain the passage... (Hebrews 6:4-6).

Meaning: If we turn our back on the only available way of forgiveness—
then there is no more forgiveness available.

"Only the man who sets himself against forgiveness is excluded from it." (Mark Roberts)

5. Think of SATAN & HIS ANGELS... They were there! They were in heaven!

- a) They know the truth! even the demons believe and tremble!
- b) But they refuse to repent! and the Abyss awaits them

D. APPLICATION: CAN THE UNFORGIVABLE SIN BE COMMITTED TODAY?

**1. The Direct Answer is YES it can—There are Still People Today
Who Would Rather Blaspheme God Than Obey God.**

- a) But This is not just some ignorant mistake of your past...
—or something you might've said in anger and later regretted...
- b) This is a deliberate, stubborn arrogance setting itself against God...
—that refuses the truth, refuses to Repent, refuses forgiveness

"Jesus gave the solemn warning in these verses to people whose hard-heartedness placed them on the brink of disaster. Blasphemy against the Spirit evidently is not just a one-time offense; rather, it is an ongoing attitude of rebellion – a stubborn way of life that continually resists, rejects and insults the Holy Spirit. This is what makes it, in effect, an eternal sin (Mark 3:29). Blasphemy against the Spirit is not unforgivable because of something done unintentionally in the past, but because of something being done deliberately and unrelentingly in the present." (Quest Study Bible)

"The blasphemy of the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven – not because it is a sin too big for God to forgive, but because it is an attitude of heart that cares nothing for God's forgiveness. It never has forgiveness because it never wants forgiveness God's way. It may want forgiveness on its own terms, but never God's way." (David Guzik, Enduring Word Commentary, Luke)

2. If you are still afraid you may have committed the unforgivable sin:

"Fear that one has done so is probably a good sign that one hasn't, for full-fledged apostasy is a defiant rejection of everything Christian and lacks the tender conscience that would be worried about such an action." (Apologetics Study Bible)

E. WE KNOW GOD FORGIVES SIN

- 1. Peter denied Jesus 3x and wept bitterly—but he repented and was forgiven**
- 2. King David committed adultery & murder—but repented & was forgiven**
- 3. King Mannassah, the most wicked king of Israel—repented & was forgiven**
- 4. The Woman Caught in Adultery was forgiven!**
- 5. Paul the 'chiefest of sinners' who arrested Christians and took part in
killing the 1st Martyr for Christ!**
- 6. Even on the Cross Jesus prayed for those crucifying Him and said,**

'Father forgive them, they know not what they do'

God "is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish! (2 Pet 3:9)

² Anthony Lee Ash, Luke, Living Word Commentary, Sweet Publishing

7. –Key word: **REPENTANCE: To turn away from sin, back to God**

“Only the man who sets himself against forgiveness, is excluded from it.” (Mark Roberts)

8. **Godly sorrow leads to repentance / worldly sorrow leads to death.**

- a) There are some who want forgiveness from God but refuse to forgive themselves
- b) and therefore remain chained in a prison / unable to be free of their own self-guilt, even if they have been baptized for the forgiveness of their sins.

“I think that if God forgives us we must forgive ourselves. Otherwise, it is almost like setting up ourselves as a higher tribunal than Him.” — C.S. Lewis

III. DO NOT WORRY – GOD WILL PROVIDE (v.11–12)

A. TRUSTING GOD IN THE FIRE...

1. **This promise was given to the Apostles**

- a) This is not a promise to preachers who think they don't have to study, and the HS will tell them what to say in the pulpit!
- b) Bible says: ***“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15)***

2. **Stephen the 1st martyr was given the words he needed while on trial**

- a) Paul was there! Paul Instigated it! And as Stephen is being killed he looked up into heaven and he saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God! **(Acts 7:51–56)**
- b) All other passages refer to Jesus SITTING at the right hand of God!
- c) But when 1st martyr gave his life—Jesus was standing—allowing Stephen see Him

B. BEING FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH

1. **Many christians were put on trial for their faith in the early church...
but they did not face persecution alone.**

“It was not the humiliation which early Christians dreaded, not even the cruel pain and the agony. But many of them feared that their own unskillfulness in words and defense might injure rather than commend the truth. It is the promise of God that when a man is on trial for his faith, the words will come to him.” (Barclay)

2. **We are called to be prepared to give an answer for our Faith (1 Peter 3:15)**

But there are situations no one is prepared for—when God will provide

- a) The Holy Spirit gave Stephen the strength and peace to be executed for his faith
- b) and the Pharisee named Saul of Tarsus was there and saw it!
- c) When Paul faced Persecution — He received strength! **(2 Timothy 4:16–18)**

3. **God has Promised He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able to bear, He Will Provide a Way!**

***“Worry is a conversation you have with yourself about things you cannot change.
Prayer is a conversation you have with God about things He can change.”***

CONCLUSION:

1. **We have a Promise from Jesus our Lord: (Matthew 28:18–20)**