

CALVARY CHAPEL COSTA MESA

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

“The Unpardonable Sin” Mark 3:20-39

MAIN IDEA

There is probably nothing more important in this life than one's family. If they are healthy, they launch us into life with a strong identity and foundation that gives us confidence. If they are unhealthy, life can be a struggle, and future relationships can be harder to discern and trust. We look for affirmation and approval from our families. This is why parents have to be so careful in the attention that they give not only to their children, but how they treat each other. The home is a fortress where we should feel safe and eventually emboldened to step out. It's tragic instead when the home is abusive and a prison which a child can't escape from. Jesus grew up in a loving home, it was hand-picked just for Him. God wanted specific kinds of people to nurture His Son in a way that would be consistent with the His life's purpose. But how frustrating as an adult to finally be in the moment that you were designed for and those closest to you lose confidence. Sure, there was the pressure of their community leaders, shaming their son publicly, and Jesus was confronting the hierarchy of power and influence. What mother wouldn't try to protect her son, even if the excuse was, "He's just a little crazy." Thank goodness all those years of raising their Son to love and serve God won the day as Jesus stayed the course of His mission.

SCRIPTURAL INSIGHT

“Assuredly, I say unto you...”, “Truly, truly...”, “Verily, verily...” Mark 3:28 is the first of Jesus' very unique way of prefacing His truth statements. Translated from the Hebrew word, “Amen” (אָמֵן), placing it at the front was an unprecedented way of using the word in Scripture. We are even accustomed to affirming truths at the end with an “amen.” Why does Jesus put this at the front? It may have something to do with the authority of God in His statements. Isaiah 65:16 speaks of God as the God of Amen (Truth). The writer of the book of Revelation follows in referring to Jesus as, “The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness.” (Rev. 3:14). In fact, in speaking of Himself as the divine truth of God, Jesus says He is the “beginning and the end.” (Rev. 1:8) *Amen*.

READ & DISCUSS

Read out loud together Mark 3:20-39 and discuss below how to apply this passage.

KEY VERSE

Mark 3:28-29 *Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation.*

- Fear of having committed the “unpardonable sin” is more common than you might think. *What are some of the interpretations you've heard before regarding this hard teaching? Share stories or examples. Why are all other*

sins forgivable but not this one? How does the Gospel resolve the “unpardonable sin?”

- Jesus did not shy away from talking about judgment and hell during His time on earth. Eternal condemnation is a hard concept to comprehend. For some it is a barrier to belief, and even Christians question its severity. *What are some reasons Christians struggle with the concept of hell? Have you ever had a hard time with the idea? What are some reasons we might not want hell to exist? Some reasons why we would?*
- Jesus still loved his mother and family, but in vs. 33-35, He gave precedence to his disciples, redefining what the most important relationships were to Him. *Why does discipleship create such strong relationships between believers? What are the benefits of the Church being like a family? What should a discipleship relationship look like? Have you, or are you currently being disciplined or are you disciplining someone? What is that like? If not, how do you envision that starting?*

PRAYER & TESTIMONY

Spend time either with your group or on your own this week confessing your need for God. Talk to Him about how difficult it is to love Him, yourself, and others. Then, read these verses from Psalm 103 and enter into the assuredness of His forgiveness:

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.

SPIRITUAL APPLICATION & PRACTICE

Practicing Generosity with Others: Nothing can separate you from the love of God—your forgiveness and security is completely dependent on Him. Just as God looks at you with abundant grace, with deep kindness in His eyes, *how can you look on others that way this week? Knowing that God doesn’t hold you to a standard of behavior, how can you let someone else “off the hook” of your expectations?* The more we learn God’s generosity, the more we will give it to others; the more we move forward into graciousness with others, the more we will internalize God’s graciousness toward us.

RESOURCES

Is Hell for Real or Does Everyone Go to Heaven? Christopher W. Morgan and Robert A. Peterson, Editors. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.
<https://www.amazon.com/Hell-Real-Does-Everyone-Heaven/dp/0310494621>



Community Group Discussion Guide

Based on Brian Brodersen on October 28, 2018

<https://cccm.com/teaching/jesus-christ-son-of-god-savior/video/the-unpardonable-sin/>

When the Church Was a Family: Recapturing Jesus' Vision for Authentic Christian Community. Joseph H. Hellerman. Nashville: B&H Publishing, 2009.

<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0805447792>