This is a topic discussed amongst many people, and persons ask themselves about the Holy Spirit and if someone can sin against Him and if they blasphemed against Him or not. I’ll just give you my opinion, and I’ll try to give you an answer based as much as I can on the scriptures and personal experience. There is much more information on this topic, and we need to examine it all. I hope the few things you find here can be profitable for you.

       Surely the Holy Spirit is the most sensitive part of God, and we need to respect it. It is the part through which He manifested Himself to us. It is God Himself with a particular function and role. It is the part that teaches us and guides us in all the truth.

“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.” John 16:13

As we see, this is important because everything God wants to tell us, all His commandments, everything He is, is expressed to us through the Holy Spirit. This is the way He communicates with us. Even the words we are reading in the Bible are here with us because people inspired by the Holy Spirit have written it for us. Now, to the question if we can sin against the Holy Spirit, the answer is yes. In the scripture, we read we mustn’t grieve the Holy Spirit.

“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” Ephesians 4:30

     And to the other question, if we have blasphemed against it, then we need to consider and understand what the scripture tells us about that. Even if we know that we cannot always understand everything. I’m sure that many believers have asked themselves if they have blasphemed against the Spirit. It happened to me, at least. Surely sometimes they grieved Him, but to blaspheme is something else. It is not only a question of words but what stays behind those words as well. If you say a story or joke and you use the name of God or the Holy Spirit in vain, God doesn’t like that, and you can grieve His Spirit, but I don’t think this is to blaspheme against Him. We obviously need to be careful not to grieve Him repeatedly.

I once heard if we really have blasphemed against the Holy Spirit, we will never ask that question or worry about it. Our hearts will be so hardened that we will not worry at all about it. So, if we worry about it, it means that the Holy Spirit is still working in us and showing us that something is wrong, meaning we haven’t blasphemed against Him. Let’s see the verse that speaks clearly about the topic.

    “Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.” Matthew 12:31,32

Here we see how Jesus plainly explained how serious this topic is. Many times, we would even avoid this part for the harshness it contains, but we need to know that God has taken this issue seriously. The issue of His Holiness. If in His word He takes so seriously the matter of His Spirit and holiness, we need to know that He also took seriously the matter of how lost we are, and He came here, He descended here on the earth and died for us to save us. If He did this for us, and this is written in His word, then we need to take seriously also the rest we find there, and this is His holiness and what His Spirit requires from us. He came and did this sacrifice for us. We can gain out of it. He didn’t do it for Himself. He would be fine even without it. If what He did is for us, then we need to consider what the whole word is saying about each topic and situation. We need to face and consider each word from the Bible.

Why is the Spirit so important? We know that He is important, but from this verse the offence against the Spirit seems to be harder than anything else. Why? Because if we look at any spirit, even the spirit of a man, it is what guides and drives a man to do things. It is his being. Everything he likes, dislikes or approves. It is like an engine of a car. What guides us. Same is with the Spirit of God. He expresses Himself through the Spirit. These are His thoughts, His words, His feelings. All come to us because of His Spirit.

     As for the verse speaking about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, we first need to know the exact situation in which this verse was said. Let us read the verses coming before it and see the reason.

**22**Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. **23**And all the multitudes were amazed and said, “Could this be the Son of David?”

**24**Now when the Pharisees heard *it* they said, “This *fellow* does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.”

**25**But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: “Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. **26**If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? **27**And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? Therefore they shall be your judges. **28**But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. **29**Or how can one enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. **30**He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

**31**“Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy *against* the Spirit will not be forgiven men. **32**Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the *age* to come. Matthew 12:22-32

Here we see Jesus healing someone who was demon-possessed, blind and mute. Then the Pharisees seeing this, accused Him that He casts demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons. It means they openly expressed what was in their hearts, that they didn’t believe in Him, that they despised His Spirit. And they meant it. Look at something. God looks at the intention of our words when we say something. He looks at what’s in our hearts. He looks at the intentions. And this is about the words we say in His favor or against Him. He looks if we really believe what we said and judges us according to that. Not like this when we say something to our neighbor. Then even if we didn’t mean something wrong, we can still offend someone because he will understand it in the wrong way maybe. But God scrutinizes our hearts. He looks at the very depth of it, and nothing can escape Him. So, when we say something toward man is one thing and when we say something toward God another. I do not include when we speak of God to someone. Then we also need to be careful with our words because we need to represent God in the right way in front of others. The testimony we give is important. But this is more about other person’s conscience, and if we hurt someone or represent God in the wrong way, then we can also offend the Spirit of God because He is sensitive toward those things. But let’s go back to the topic of the blasphemy against His Spirit that is something different.

      We see here that the Pharisees accused Him that He casts out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons and they really believed that. It means they didn’t believe in His words, in His Spirit and in His way. They completely opposed themselves to His power and Spirit. This is a hard condition, as the way He must reach us and work in us is through His Spirit. He doesn’t have another way. It is through His way and Spirit. So, for someone to repent or believe, he needs to believe what the Holy Spirit is telling him. The words of the Holy Spirit are always confirmed by the words of the Bible, as the Bible is inspired by the Spirit.

Obviously, everyone is a sinner, and no one just believes. It is His work in us that helps us to believe. But when someone opposes completely what He is, then it is different. We are not speaking here for opposing ourselves to whatsoever might be but opposing ourselves to the very basics of Christianity. In the Bible is written that it is the Spirit the one that convicts us in sin.

“Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:”

John 16:7,8

Everyone in his natural condition opposes himself to the word of God, but if he is still opposed, even after being convinced repeatedly in the truth of God, then we speak about the hardening of that person against God. This is something different. No one can repent if the Spirit of God doesn’t convict him in sin. So, how can someone repent and accept Christ if he keeps on hardening himself to the admonitions of the Spirit and His convictions about sin? If he rejects that completely? He just cannot repent while being in that condition. That’s why also Jesus gives such importance to the Spirit and the blasphemy against Him. If one day however something happens and that person opens himself to the warnings of the Spirit and sees his sin, then obviously, he will be forgiven.

Sometimes when we think about someone hardening against the Spirit, we think of someone living an explicitly sinful life, of someone that doesn’t even come close to a church, but it is not always in that way. Here we see Jesus talking to the Pharisees that were apparently religious and had a zeal for God, but still hardened to His voice and warnings. So, we can see people being maybe members of a church actually hardened in their hearts toward the Spirit of God telling them to repent. That could be for many reasons and because someone might think that he already pleases God, but in his own way and pays little attention when His **voice is** speaking to him. We need to **hear** God calling us to Himself, we need to **hear** Himconvicting us in sin through His Spirit. That’s why Jesus said that we need to be careful how we hear. He said, “Therefore take heed how you hear…”  Luke 8:18

He also told the parable of the sower (Mathew 13:3-9) in which he explains how important is for the seed, which is the word of God, to fall in a good ground. That’s the heart that hears the word and understands it.

There are different kinds of sin that the Bible speaks about. (1 John 5:16,17) We are not saying a situation on Fridays you know that you are having a prayer meeting in your local church, and you decide to watch some football instead of going there. And you do it a couple of times. God surely won’t be happy, and there might be consequences in your spiritual life, but this doesn’t even come closer to what unforgivable sin might be. But what if you decide (I’m giving random examples) not to pray at all. Never again. Can God forgive you if you persist with that attitude? I don’t think so. Or you decide willingly to neglect certain things and topics of the Bible. I’m speaking about the very basics of Christianity. Let’s say someone commits adultery as much as he wants. I’m not saying about someone falling into it and thenrepenting, but about someone that just carries on thinking this is something normal. We can see from the scripture how king David committed adultery and then repented, but there were anyway still huge consequences, and we see also how other kings persevered in sinning and idol worshipping, and they ended up badly. The unforgivable sin has to do with our perseverance in sinning and in not listening and accepting His truth. There is a certain condition in which God cannot work in us. He just can’t continue until we don’t change our ways. I am speaking about a certain attitude here, not for the miracle of the new birth and a new life. That’s something that God needs to do as we cannot by ourselves. But if while in that attitude of sinning, we recognize our condition and surrender by faith (I mean to stop fighting and hardening ourselves), then maybe yes, but while we persevere in it with no acknowledgement, then not. This means someone willingly neglects what His word says. Even if Jesus forgives us, He aspects from us to turn away from our sin. As He said to many persons after forgiving them.

“When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?” She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; **go and sin no more**.” John 8:11

This is what He expects from us after forgiving us – not to sin anymore. I mean that, obviously, we will still continue sinning as the sin dwells in us and in our members, but we mustn’t go over and over repeating the same sin. We might even go back to the same one, I mean it could happen, but what is our attitude toward it? Did we really try to keep ourselves from it and then we slipped, or we went willingly toward it? Did we really try to repent sincerely afterwards, or we took it as everything is all right again? Because when a believer sins and especially over something that he knew was wrong, he feels the consequence of that sin, he feels the correction of God, and he learns out of it. He doesn’t want to be in the same condition again, to hurt God’s heart and to feel the pain and the consequence of sin.

When a child burns itself by touching something really hot, it doesn’t do it again. We also need to learn from the lessons we’ve received after sinning. I am not saying that to sin continuously is necessary, a factor concerning the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. I am just giving an example of how a heart is being hardened. We need to see that when this was said to the Pharisees, they were in a condition of not believing at all in His words and rejecting them, I mean not only rejecting them but also believing all heartedly that what they were hearing was wrong. This is an important factor to know.

They couldn’t be forgiven if they continued and persevered in this condition. If I don’t believe in the Spirit of Jesus and if I don’t believe even when He warns me for something, then there is not much that can be done. If today you see yourself sinning continuously and you’ve lost all your hope, and you believe you’ve lost your chances, don’t worry; just lift your head and look toward God, ask Him for forgiveness with trust and faith in your heart. There is still hope if you feel this way. The problem is when you don’t feel any remorse after sinning, or you fight this feeling and try to numb it and you continue going on the same way. We also need to know that the hardening of the heart applies to people that somehow already know the truth or have heard about it, and they still persevered with the same attitude and go back to sin as much as they want.

Can God go over that and forgive us while we have this kind of an attitude – to continue sinning? He might do it for some time, but as He sees that we still carry on, then He will eventually stop, and we will harden ourselves. The Bible speaks a lot about not to harden our hearts and necks. (Nehemiah 9:16,17 2 Kings 17:14 Psalm 95:8)

When I speak about this, I’m referring to the verses found in chapter 6 of Hebrews.

**4**For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, **5**and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, **6**if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.

**7**For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; **8**but if it bears thorns and briers, *it is* rejected and near to being cursed, whose end *is* to be burned. Hebrews 6:4-8

There is also another passage speaking more seriously about sin.

“If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that.” 1 John 5:16

Notice that in the verses in Hebrews 6, the Holy Spirit is mentioned in v.4. He is the way He has chosen to speak and minister to us, and the Holy Spirit is not a being apart from Him, but it is God Himself. It has to do a lot and entirely with His words because Jesus is the word, and the Spirit, Jesus and the Father are one. His words are inspired by Him. The Spirit is everything God is. Nothing more and nothing less. So, if we harden ourselves against it, He cannot just forget about this sin and attitude because how is He going to show us something if not through His Spirit and how is He going to forgive our sins if not through His power that comes from His Spirit. Yes, He forgives, but the Spirit convicts us in our sin and helps us to repent. It is His work. And how can it be accomplished if we reject it?

This is my opinion, but I think the unforgivable sin is having to do with our persistence in not believing and hardening ourselves. I think that **while** in that condition, we cannot just be forgiven. Someone must always be careful because if He continues in a certain sin, then He can be so hardened that it will not come to His heart at all to believe or to repent. He can have a different attitude then.

Generally, to this topic, we can add the sin of Judas as well, when he betrayed Jesus. What he did was premeditated and we can see from the scripture he had already ongoing issues within his heart. He betrayed his master. This was something greater than denying Jesus, even if that can be severe sometimes, but here we speak about betraying Jesus to dead, meaning He would not be any longer with them and Judas knew what the outcome of his actions would be. And it was premeditated, while in Peter’s situation, who denied Jesus, it was reacted upon the moment. As Christians we can deny Jesus sometimes and be like Peter. I’m not saying this is a small issue. We can see how Peter cried afterwards and had to repent. Surely, we will be corrected by God if this happens in our life and if someone is a Christian, I’m sure that he has already experienced that in some situation and has learned something out of it. And watch out – we can be as Judas as well. This is to exchange God with something else. In Judas’ case that was the money. He was paid to betray His master. In other case, it might be something different. We are speaking about a permanent decision that will carry on and of a style of life here, not just about not being careful sometimes and reacting upon the moment. Judas and Esau have exchanged God for something else. It wasn’t an exchange of something small or something for the mean while, but a great and huge exchange. Judas sent his master to death and Esau sold his birthright, the one granting him the blessings.

“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; lest there be fornicate or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.” Hebrews 12:16,17

There should be a reason the act of Esau here is given as an example, that we mustn’t do and is spoken so harsh of. It is said that he sought for repentance, but he couldn’t find it. Why? Because his condition and attitude were incorrect. It is like someone looking for repentance, but then still going willingly in the opposite direction of God and hardening himself. This is what it means by when someone hardens himself. He still doesn’t listen. Obviously, there is a case when God hardens someone, but we are speaking now for when a person hardens himself. It is different. Otherwise, God wouldn’t warn us not to harden ourselves. It is something that He asks from us. We cannot accomplish His work or believe at hundred percent, but at least we mustn’t harden ourselves and reject his word.

Esau left the blessings for something so insignificant like a plate of stew with lentils. Anything we chose instead of Jesus is insignificant. Here it is not the importance of what we exchange Jesus for, but the importance of Jesus. People like Judas and Esau didn’t just fall in something but have taken fundamental decisions that would have changed their direction. We are speaking about the “birthright” here. Is it something wrong in a plate of stew? No. Was he going to have stew afterwards even if he didn’t take it at that exact moment? Yes! As much as he wanted. But we see that what he did at that exact moment and the attitude of despising his birthright was wrong.

With all of this I am not taking the importance of when we fall into any other sin. Of course, it is wrong and if we keep on doing it, there also might be hardening of our heart, but I’m just focusing on the kind of sin or attitude that might be really dangerous. I don’t want to be harsh with my words or to condemn, but these things might happen. There is a difference between doing a mistake and taking a drastic decision that is against God, which can change the course of our life. Why then in the Bible is given the example of persons like Judas or Esau who sold his birthright? They are not just there like historical figures, but also to give us an example not to be like them.

Speaking about Hebrews chapter 6, we see verse 6, we see the phrase “if they fall away”. It says that it is impossible for them to find the repentance. It is a verse that always got me to be aware and to understand how serious God is with His authority and word. And this happens if people permanently don’t listen to His Spirit.

It is easy for us to accept the mercy and the grace, but the one that has accepted truly His mercy, knows His authority and severity as well. And many times, I thought twice, before committing a certain sin, and many times this scripture in Hebrews 6 stopped me from doing it. Perhaps not everyone would agree with what I am saying, but I am trying to follow what the scriptures are saying and to live accordingly. And I know that I lack things too. We cannot survive without His grace. But we need to know that many people have understood the grace after seeing how guilty they are.

And here in this chapter we see something similar to what Jesus said about the unforgivable sin in Matthew 12:30. We see the same meaning here. And when it says, “if they fall away”, it doesn’t just speak about committing a certain mistake, but more like remaining there, or taking some decision that goes opposite to what the Spirit is saying. A decision that will take you to constantly reject what the Spirit is saying. I think that it speaks about something very basic someone can neglect from the Cristian life. Not about a common sin (if I can call it in this way as also this sin is something to be aware of), but about something very fundamental, that is important in the Christian life. Something that if we stop doing, we won’t be able to survive. It is so important. It is what the Spirit is telling us constantly to do. Like the example I gave before with the prayer. We can stop doing it for some time and we will feel the consequences same as when we do some other mistake. But if we stop doing it at all, then we cannot survive. I can go to cinema instead of one Sunday meeting (I am using a random example). It can happen. But if I go always there, all the days and exactly when my devotional time with God and the church service is, then it is something different. I turned in the wrong direction. Completely. This is like to reconvert myself, as a conversion means to change the direction, now I’m changing it, but choosing the wrong direction and walking on that way. The consequence here can be fatal, and it will result in hardening my heart.

That’s why God never approved when people hardened their necks. It means they persisted. I think this is concerning the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The other more common sin (as we called it), can bring us consequences and they can be harsh too, and we need to be careful, but it is different. And with this I’m not inviting anyone on sinning, we are trying to see the difference here and we mustn’t take lightly any sin because this is how it actually starts, when we take sin lightly and we slowly change our direction. There are certain decisions in the Cristian life and ways of living, which can be compared to this “common sin”. Certain people would still pray, would still dedicate themselves to the others to preach the gospel, but less and without giving so much interest and effort into it. I’m speaking about those who are born again because those who are not, cannot do these things because they are not in them. Those people doing those things less, will be just less blessed and will suffer consequences. And this can be painful sometimes, but here we are not speaking at all about unforgivable sin. This is the difference.

We can also add to this argument, the verse found in Mathew 12:31,32 when Jesus was speaking about the sin against the Holy Spirit and against the Son of Man.

“Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy *against* the Spirit will not be forgiven men. Anyone who speaks a **word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven** him; but whoever **speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him**, either in this age or in the *age* to come.” Matthew 12:31,32 (emphasis added)

The sin against the Son of Man is having to do probably with something that we haven’t looked for, something that we did because of ignorance. Is God holding us accountable for the sins done in ignorance? Yes, He is, but He definitely judges them from different perspective, and we can say that for one to be forgiven from these sins is much easier. It is not always the action that defines how sinful is certain sin, but the attitude with which is done. Every time when I fell in something that I really knew it was wrong, I felt horrible. For falling in things we don’t know of, we also need forgiveness because the sin by itself cannot be accepted by God. He doesn’t like it, neither accepts it. Darkness and light have nothing in common. They cannot stay together. This is the nature of God. This is the sin for which He will judge the people one day. That’s why it must be cleansed and not to be part of us anymore. So, the sin against the Spirit is the one going completely against His voice and direction, and the sin against the Son of Man is more about something done in ignorance, something that He actually paid for already.

Sometimes even Christians commit the same sins, until they don’t fully understand their consequence. Then they need to stop doing that because they already know. This is also something for which we can say is done in ignorance. We still need to ask for forgiveness for this kind of sin and to believe, so we can be part of Him. I am not diminishing any sin. I am giving it importance. Remember that it was said in Hebrews as well that those people crucified the Son again. That’s bad. We were speaking before about something that He paid for already, but this one here is crucifying Him again and it is different.

It is important to see the attitude we have when we sin, so we can define this difference. Remember that we said those who have sinned against the Spirit wouldn’t even know it or care about it. They will be so hardened. But those who have not will feel guilty because they care because the Spirit is working in them. What we need to do when we feel guilty is to pray and ask God for a solution. We cannot remain in condemnation and just feel guilty. We need to ask Him: “God, please show me. Is it something that I really have done wrong or no. And if I’ve done wrong, please show me what to do. Give me a solution.” In this way, we exercise our faith.

Important for us is not to lose hope. And I know that the devil has attacked many Christians, telling them that they have sinned against the Holy Spirit, and they will not make it. This is a lie. I think that if we have really sinned in this way, then we will not even think about it or consider the matter. The devil is trying to steal our hope. We have to pray and have faith and hope. As it is said in 1 John 2:1

“My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”

Important for us is not to go in the opposite direction and stop listening to the voice of God, and the most important – not to remain and persist there. While we persist there in not paying attention to what is He is telling us through His Spirit, we also cannot find forgiveness. An example – I cannot just be forgiven if I decide not to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit on something fundamental to the Christian life. The Holy Spirit doesn’t always come with great visions in our life, but it also reminds us daily of basic things of the Christian life and feels satisfied with us when we obey. “He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much.” Luke 16:10

A true believer rejoices together with the Spirit and mourns together with Him. A true believer has the heart and the Spirit of Christ in his life. God cannot cohabit with certain things and go over them. He can forgive them, but then He will tell us: “Do not sin anymore”. And if we sin, we mustn’t over-condemn ourselves, but we need to examine the attitude with which we committed that sin, and we need to go boldly but humbly to Him and ask Him for forgiveness.

With this topic, I didn’t want to let anyone feel condemned but on contrary to release, if I can say so, the condemnation which lies on some persons if they feel in this way, so that they can understand that their sins could be forgiven if they turn to God and trust in Him. On the other side, I would like to call others to awake and react upon the word of God. We all need Him in our lives.