

Doesn't the claim that no sin is too big for God's mercy contradict Mark 3:29?

Our Lord said, "Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter; but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin."

We're constantly taught about how God is greater than our sins, that His mercy is beyond all human understanding. So how do we square that fundamental truth with talk of an "unforgivable sin." What is this blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?

The following answer is taken primarily from the Ignatius Catholic Study Bible, [The Gospel of Mark](#).

The scribes here have just uttered blasphemy by attributing to Satan what is actually the work of the Holy Spirit (Mk. 3:22, 30). Their sin is not unforgivable in principle since as I've noted no sin can place us beyond the reach of God's mercy. However, blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is a form of rebellion that is particularly serious because it blinds people to their own need for forgiveness. In other words, we deny ourselves access to the very place we need to go to obtain forgiveness.

Or to put it even more bluntly, the one sin that would "unpardonable" is one that denies the mercy of God, that denies the work of the Holy Spirit. If we get ourselves to the Lord and seek assistance, Our Lord, the divine Physician, will perform "heart surgery" on us, giving us new, natural hearts and in the process forgiving our sins. But if we deny the possibility of God's saving action, then we're cutting ourselves off from the one and only font of divine mercy. Pretty serious stuff. See CCC 1864.

Also, the sin against the Holy Spirit was prefigured in the Old Testament when the Israelites fashioned the Golden Calf, as recounted in Exodus 32. Instead of giving worship and thanks to the Lord for their deliverance, they honored as their true redeemer an idol of their own making-- alas, an idol that cannot save.