

# DESPAIR AND PRESUMPTION

When I was thinking about some of the things the Sisters of Mercy taught us at St. Joseph's junior school in West Melton, South Yorkshire, the words DESPAIR and PRESUMPTION came to mind. I knew they were sins, but in those days, I could never understand why.

Why does the Catholic Church classify Despair and Presumption as being grave sins?

During my long lifetime, I've listened to some people who have learned these two words, and my conclusions about them are below. There are more in-depth ones on the Internet if the reader wants a more theological explanation, but to start with, I'm sure that we all sometimes experience despair and presumption in our lives.

## DESPAIR

If our favourite football team loses one match after another, we despair that they will be relegated at the end of the season. As a lifetime supporter of Barnsley Football Team, I've had one or two sublime moments but lots of despair.

If we lose our job, we despair of not being able to pay bills, losing our homes and many other financial possibilities

These are all normal feelings of despair.

## PRESUMPTION

If we book a holiday, we presume we'll have a great time and arrive safely at our destination when we walk down the road.

These are normal presumptions.

The emotions of despair and presumption are not sins in themselves. It's only when they are used by people in their relationship with God's unending love and forgiveness that they become grievous sins.

**The unrelenting forgiveness of God provides us all with eternal hope that our souls will live with God in heaven for all eternity when we die. Therefore, despair and presumption are 'Sins against Hope'.**

Simple examples of why they are grave sins are as follows:

## DESPAIR

When people despair about being forgiven by God and believe there's no hope for their souls after they die, they are saying they don't believe God will forgive them. This is when despair is a great sin. In the Bible, there are many examples of God's willingness to forgive even the gravest of sins. We should never forget that God is LOVE, forever ready to forgive the most grievous sinners if they are truly repentant.

Remember King David being forgiven for organizing the death of one of his generals, Uriah, so that he could then take that man's widow as his wife? What about St. Peter being forgiven for denying Christ three times, even after being told he'd do so?

What about the people who had whipped and crucified Our Lord Jesus Christ, who, while dying on the cross because of what they had done to him, said "Father forgive them for they know not what they do",

The Bible provides many other examples of God's forgiveness. We should never despair but be truly repentant when we have sinned, no matter how grave our sins.

## **PRESUMPTION**

Some people believe that there is no God, so they tend to sin, as and when they want to.

Others believe that they don't have to do anything to receive God's forgiveness and that he will always forgive them.

Such people will sin without any care about what they are doing. Either presuming that there is no God, so why bother, or presuming God will forgive or do anything that people request, another way of saying that there's no need for the Ten Commandments. The people who do these things are taking God for granted; how sinful these beliefs are.

We should all watch out for these **two sins against hope** because they are grievous.

**NEVER GIVE UP HOPE IN GOD'S LOVE AND FORGIVENESS.**