

Should Christians Oppose Evil?

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Many have come dangerously close to adopting a fatal attitude toward evil practices. I am speaking of the attitude that reasons, "It will do no good to oppose evil; people are going to practice it anyway." As true as it is that there will be the practice of sin in the world as long as time continues, this gives the people of God absolutely no excuse for retreating from the battle against it. When we cease to cry out against sin, whether within or without the church, we withhold the very power that God has placed in this world to turn people from sin.

When a member of the church becomes involved in sin and the need to admonish such a one to repent is mentioned, often it will be met with the pessimistic statement, "It won't do any good." When there is evil abroad in the community or when the legalization of liquor is being championed, are God's people to roll over and play dead?

I think of old John who could have ignored Herod's marriage on grounds that interference would do no good and might get him in trouble. Instead, he told the king he had no right to live with the woman he was married to. He paid with his head for opposing evil. I think of Jesus who cried out against the hypocrisies and errors of the Jewish leaders constantly, eventually paying with His life for opposing all evil as the perfect Son of God. I think of Stephen who forcefully confuted the Jews and reproved their rebellion against God, becoming the first Christian martyr in the process. They knew the hazards but spoke anyway.

People who are faithful to God must and will always oppose evil. It is not even our place to predict the outcome, whether we might be able to change things or whether we might have to suffer for our efforts. Whether our efforts accomplish any immediate change or not, at least some good will be done; we will have done what the Lord commands us to do and will have spared ourselves the guilt of silence before the Lord.

Paul's command to us is plain: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them" (Eph. 5:11). There are two duties enjoined here:

1. God's people must not be associated with or participate in matters of darkness (including false doctrines and evil deeds)
2. God's people are not to remain mute in the presence of evil but are to oppose and reprove.

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