



## Unwitting Accomplices

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I have sometimes pondered the question, “Is it possible for a society to commit the sin against the Holy Spirit?” Obviously, Jesus, in Matthew 12, spoke about individuals who had turned the moral code upside down—good was evil, and evil was good. Isaiah too described that state of moral depravity: “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil” (Isa. 5:20). This is what the sin against the Holy Spirit means. John Milton summed it up well in Satan’s apostrophe, “Evil be thou my Good.”

Yet I don’t think believers can commit this sin. They belong to God, and Jesus assured us, “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand” (John 10:28). Then why should believers be concerned about this warning at all? Perhaps the answer is that we can become accomplices in the process of moral decline. We can, by our own indifference to the issue of right and wrong, abet our society in its trek toward moral inversion. In the debate over our current attorney general’s confirmation, one opposing senator

referred to abortion and homosexual rights and called them “fundamental values.” “Rights” have become “values.” The moral battle is being waged in the church too. Despite the mounds of exegesis that favor moral clarity, the claim is that we should be neutral on certain moral issues. If Satan can first get us to become neutral or indifferent on morality, then he has made us accomplices in progress toward the reversal of moral standards.

Jesus warned the religious leaders of His day that, if they continued to see the work of God and persisted on calling it evil, their hearts would fossilize in that state of thinking. They would see evil and think it good, and good, and think it evil. Their moral code would turn upside down, and they would become incapable of repentance and thus of forgiveness.

The final goal of our moral journey is not neutrality about right and wrong. Even when we insist that one has the right to determine one’s own moral standards, we become a catalyst in the movement toward moral inversion. Then there are no standards of the whole, no absolutes by which our actions and attitudes can be reckoned right or wrong.

Everyone has become a law to oneself. This is happening with homosexuality, and there are signs that some are determined to put pedophilia in the same category.

As Christians, in our attitude toward sin we are either accomplices or members of the opposition. There is no neutrality. Some of us need not only to repent of the sins we have committed, but we need to repent of our neutrality to sin. We need God to renew in us a sense of righteous indignation as well as compassion about the sinful world we live in. C. S. Lewis said that an absence of righteous indignation might be one of the alarming symptoms of a society that is losing its moral moorings. Can a society commit the sin against the Holy Spirit? Broadly speaking, I believe it can. That’s what happened to Canaanite society whose sexual perversion rendered it irredeemable. God help us not to be an accomplice in the progress of our cultural journey toward moral inversion, where good is evil and evil is good.

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