



# Holding the Coats of Sinners

Acts 22:20 - “And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.”

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- “The greatest evil is not now done in those sordid ‘dens of crime’ that Dickens loved to paint. It is not done even in concentration camps and labor camps. In those we see its final result. But it is conceived and ordered (moved, seconded, carried, and minuted) in clean, carpeted, warmed, and well-lighted offices, by quiet men with white collars and cut fingernails and smooth-shaven cheeks who do not need to raise their voice.”  
(C.S. Lewis)

# We Do Not Need To Engage In The Sin To Be Responsible For The Sin

- If we approve of either the sin or the sinner, we become accountable.
  - Prov. 18:5 - “It is not good to show partiality to the wicked, Or to overthrow the righteous in judgment.”
  - Psalm 82:2 - “How long will you judge unjustly, And show partiality to the wicked?”
  - Deut. 1:17 - “You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid in any man's presence, for the judgment is God's”

## We Do Not Need To Engage In The Sin To Be Responsible For The Sin

- Acts 7:58 - “They cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.”
- Acts 22:20 - “And when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by consenting to his death, and guarding the clothes of those who were killing him.”

# We Do Not Need To Engage In The Sin To Be Responsible For The Sin

- We don't have to engage in a sin to become accountable for that sin. Direct involvement is not necessary.
- By expressing approval of those who are sinning
  - Rom. 1:29-32 - “being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them”

# We Do Not Need To Engage In The Sin To Be Responsible For The Sin

- By minimizing sin or its effects
  - Isa. 5:20-21 - “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! 21 Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight!”

# We Do Not Need To Engage In The Sin To Be Responsible For The Sin

- By praising the wicked
  - Prov. 28:4 - “Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, But such as keep the law contend with them.”
  - Prov. 17:15 - “He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the just, Both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD.”
  - Psalm 10:3 - “For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire; He blesses the greedy and renounces the LORD”

# We Do Not Need To Engage In The Sin To Be Responsible For The Sin

- By declaring sinners acceptable to the Lord
  - Mal. 2:17 - “You have wearied the LORD with your words; Yet you say, In what way have we wearied Him? In that you say, Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, And He delights in them”
  - Prov. 24:24 - “He who says to the wicked, You are righteous, Him the people will curse; Nations will abhor him.”



## We Do Not Need To Commit The Sin To Be Accountable For Teaching Others To Sin

- 2Sam. 13:1-20 - In the account of Amnon's assault on Tamar, most overlook Jonadab who suggested the scheme to Amnon.
- Num. 22-24 - In the account of Balaam and Balak, Balaam recommended a means of getting God to condemn the Israelites by leading them into sin.
  - Num. 31:16 - "Look, these women caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the incident of Peor, and there was a plague among the congregation of the LORD"
  - 2Peter 2:15 - "They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness"

## We Do Not Need To Commit The Sin To Be Accountable For Teaching Others To Sin

- Jesus addressed this problem
  - Causing the innocent to sin
    - Matt. 18:6 - “But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”
  - Pharisees making proselytes
    - Matt. 23:15 - “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.”

# We Can Partake In Another's Sin By Keeping Silent About The Sin

- 2Kings 7:3-9 - “Now there were four leprous men at the entrance of the gate; and they said to one another, Why are we sitting here until we die? 4 If we say, 'We will enter the city,' the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit here, we die also. Now therefore, come, let us surrender to the army of the Syrians. If they keep us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall only die. 5 And they rose at twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians; and when they had come to the outskirts of the Syrian camp, to their surprise no one was there. 6 For the Lord had caused the army of the Syrians to hear the noise of chariots and the noise of horses-the noise of a great army; so they said to one another, Look, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to attack us! 7 Therefore they arose and fled at twilight, and left the camp intact-their tents, their horses, and their donkeys-and they fled for their lives. 8 And when these lepers came to the outskirts of the camp, they went into one tent and ate and drank, and carried from it silver and gold and clothing, and went and hid them; then they came back and entered another tent, and carried some from there also, and went and hid it. 9 Then they said to one another, We are not doing right. This day is a day of good news, and we remain silent. If we wait until morning light, some punishment will come upon us. Now therefore, come, let us go and tell the king's household.

## We Can Partake In Another's Sin By Keeping Silent About The Sin

- “If I were to remain silent, I'd be guilty of complicity.”  
(Albert Einstein)
- Silence is not a substitute for soundness
- We cannot be silent around a false teacher.
  - 2John 9-11 - “Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; 11 for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.”

## We Can Partake In Another's Sin By Keeping Silent About The Sin

- We cannot quietly coexist with the works of darkness
  - Eph. 5:11 - “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.”

## We Can Partake In Another's Sin By Keeping Silent About The Sin

- We cannot compromise with another's sin
  - Eph. 5:6-7 - “Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them.”
  - 1Tim. 5:22 - “Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure”

## We Can Partake In Another's Sin By Keeping Silent About The Sin

- “Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act.” (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)
- “It may well be that we will have to repent in this generation. Not merely for the vitriolic words and the violent actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence and indifference of the good people who sit around and say, ‘Wait for a time.’” (Martin Luther King, Jr.)