

and do nothing and simply allow their culture to become more and more corrupt and immoral, and more and more of an evil influence on their neighbors, their children, and themselves?

In one sense, is doing nothing to slow down immorality actually helping it along? For example, if we do nothing to try to slow down or stop a fire or an epidemic or a crime or corruption in a limb, are we in some sense accessories to the damage or destruction accomplished by these things? If we can do something to preserve life or limb or property from destruction and do nothing, are we in some sense blameworthy in a contributory sense?

5. But should Christians attempt to do what God predicts Christ is going to do in the end-time?

Some Christians object to doing anything to stop or slow down the spread of evil because of their understanding of God's prophetic program. They say something like, "But doesn't the Bible teach that evil men will grow worse and worse, and that the world will get worse and worse until the Lord returns to make all things right? If we struggle against the development of evil in the world, will we not seem to be fighting against God and His Word and delay the Coming of the Lord?"

If we feel that we should not struggle against evil in the world on this basis, then we need to realize two great truths.

First, it is not our Father's will that we simply turn over His world to Satan, to do with it as he pleases. God hates sin, does not delight in its growth, and wants His children to hate all forms of moral evil, whether found in themselves or in others. If Christians are to be salt and light in the world, they need to attempt to hold back corruption not only by the example of their holy lives, but also by their words as well.

Second, although the Lord has indeed predicted tghat the world will grow increasingly wicked, this is not directed to us as the rule of our obedience. This is what will be, not what should be. The rule of our obedience is not the Plan of God, but the Law of God. The Plan of God includes what has been, what is, and what will be. The rule of our obedience is not God's revelation of what is going to happen (descriptive), but rather God's revelation of what He wants us to be and to do, as expressed in His Law (prescriptive).

As an example of this distinction between the Plan of God and the Law of God, let us note Matthew 26:11, where Jesus told His disciples, "The poor you will always have with you." Some Christians have taken this to mean that any attempt to alleviate or eliminate poverty is contrary to God's will. Hypothetically, it could be argued that if all wealth on earth were redistributed, poverty would be completely eliminated (and Jesus' words would be proven false). But notice that Jesus did not say that we should have the poor always with us, but that we would have the poor always with us. Jesus told His disciples, not what should be, but what would be. But suppose that Christians were to become very concerned and very dedicated and very busy about relieving the poor. Could they not by God's grace totally wipe out poverty? And would this not contradict Jesus' prediction? But Jesus knew that poverty would not be completely