

Moral relativism and the sovereignty of God

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(First published: December 30, 2023)

When Christians learn about my theology as it pertains to issues of morality (especially when it comes to matters regarding sexuality), they often accuse me of moral relativism. While the reason they make this accusation is generally due to not having actually dug into why I believe what I do (since they assume I'm ignoring what the Bible teaches, when in reality I believe what I do about morality 100% *because* of what I believe the Bible really teaches), they are right about one thing: I am indeed a moral relativist. And if they truly recognized God as God,¹ they would be moral relativists themselves.

Of course, just as with nearly everything I've written, this probably sounds strange to most people who read this assertion for the first time. But as always, if you think it over carefully you should realize that it's the truth. I mean, think about it: If morality is absolute rather than relative, it means that there are certain actions which are *always* inherently wrong to do, no matter who the person is, and that would have to include God if the action is inherently wrong in-and-of-itself (this would apply to avoiding actions which are always wrong to abstain from as well, I should add). In fact, if any actions were *always* wrong from an absolute perspective (which would be the case if morality wasn't relative), it would mean there's a "moral law" (for lack of a better term) which is greater than God Himself, a law which God would be obligated to follow in order to remain good. And if there is something greater than God (even a "law"), then God would not truly be sovereign because He'd be obligated to follow said "moral law."

It's only when morality is relative to what God decides it is that He maintains His sovereignty. Ironically, most Christians who protest moral relativism actually already believe that God is the basis for morality, not realizing that

¹ Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. — Romans 1:21

they're actually teaching moral relativism when they say this. If this still doesn't sound right, though, let's take a look at an example to really demonstrate the fact that most Christians are already moral relativists (even without realizing that they are).

Perhaps the best example of the moral relativism that pretty much all Christians hold to is the topic of killing other human beings. Is killing always morally wrong, in-and-of-itself, or is it relative to the situation one finds themselves in? Well, if killing humans is always wrong, with no exceptions, then killing people in war, or in the defence of others, or even in self defence, would, by definition, be immoral. And not only that, it would be wrong for God to ever kill anyone as well, if killing humans is always wrong, with no exceptions, which means that all the times God is said to have killed people in the Bible, not to mention all the times He commanded the Israelites to do so, would have been examples of God sinning (or commanding others to sin). So I trust it's now clear that killing is only "wrong" under the specific circumstances that God tells us it's wrong to do so, which means that the morality of killing humans is relative to God's desire and commands rather than being absolutely wrong (and that the Bible actually does support situational ethics). And if you agree with me on that, welcome to the world of moral relativism.