

GETTING READY FOR HEAVEN

Introduction II Pet. 3: 11-14: "What manner of persons ought ye to be?"

If we were expecting to migrate permanently to another country, what changes would this prospect make in the pattern of our daily lives? Would we not begin to prepare seriously for life in that new land, so that when we arrived, we would not be complete strangers?

Our lives would be dominated and revolutionised by this new and exciting prospect. The language, laws, customs, dress, climate, diet, currency, sicknesses, standard of living, politics, religion and education of the citizens of our future homeland would immediately become our major preoccupation.

If we were in danger of carrying some sickness, or contracting one when we got there, would we not take thorough precautions before our departure?

Inasmuch as we are expecting to migrate soon from earth to heaven when Jesus comes, should we not have the same serious attitude towards preparation for life in the heavenly world?

To help us to get ready for the coming migration, God has given us the Bible. It is a faithful mirror of the standards that will govern our conduct in the world to come. In this lesson we will study these principles of Christian living, and our relationship to them.

Discussion 1.—THE RELEVANCE OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

The Bible standards of conduct have a two-fold relevance. Not only do they help to fit us for life in our future, heavenly home, but they help us to grapple more effectively with the practical realities of life in this present world!

Ps. 119: 9: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word."

There is a widespread notion abroad today that Christian standards of morality are arbitrary, repressive and obsolete. Advocates of this view are saying: "There are no absolute standards. Truth, beauty and decency are only relative. Every man must be permitted to create his own moral values, and to do his own thing, in his own way, in his own situation!"

Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick has written a hard-hitting reply to this irresponsible, twisted, pagan view of life:

"Go into a science laboratory and tell them there are no standards in their work, and they will throw you out! Standards are their central business . . . Standards of induction, of verification, of technique, and behind these, profound standards of veracity, integrity, and disinterested devotion to truth.

"Wherever you find great work being done in engineering, in architecture, in agriculture, in medicine, in music, in art, in literature or in science; amid the infinite variety of expressions, you will find at the core and centre of it all standards . . . concerning which men are persuaded that nowhere can their disregard be right, and nowhere can their observance be wrong!"

2.—THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

The ultimate foundation of Christian morality is not merely what God requires, but what God is.

I Pet. 1: 15, 16: "Be ye holy, for I am holy."

God's "holiness" is His moral excellence, His stainless, incorruptible goodness; His unquenchable enthusiasm for righteousness; His uncompromising and total recoil from evil.

Deut. 32: 4: "A God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is He."