

Bible "holiness", therefore, has nothing to do with haloes, or stained-glass-window "saints", or sanctimonious words and attitudes. It is positive, active, and virile, not negative, passive, and supine. It means "total commitment to goodness, and total separation from evil".

Rom. 12 : 9: "Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good."

II Tim. 2 : 19: "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

Furthermore, God's character does not change. The constant ebb and flow of human opinions and values does not alter His character by a hair's breadth.

Mal. 3 : 6: "I am the Lord, I change not."

It is out of this fundamental fact of God's unchanging holiness that His authority, His claims, and His commands arise. His standards are the faithful and unalterable reflection of His character!

3.—THE SCOPE OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

God's claims are so broad and far-reaching that they take in every department of our lives.

Luke 10 : 27: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind."

I Cor. 10 : 31: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Col. 3 : 17: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."

Phil. 4 : 8: "Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely—think on these things."

Though God's standards cover every area of human conduct, He does not regiment our lives down to the last microscopic detail. Instead of long, complicated lists of rules and regulations, He gives us great, unchanging principles, illustrated in the Bible by scores of practical examples. He then leaves us free to apply these principles in our individual circumstances, under the guidance of His Spirit.

(See outline, entitled "A Summary of Christian Standards", at the end of this lesson)

4.—THE REWARDS OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

Think first of the present rewards:

Prov. 3 : 2: "Length of days, and long life and peace shall they add to thee."

Prov. 6 : 22: "They are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh."

The impression is sometimes given that in this present world, the Christian life is all hardship and sacrifice, but no gain. Nothing could be further from the truth. Even if there were no hereafter, God's standards would still be the best guarantees of present liberty, peace, health, prosperity, security and happiness—the blessings that we all covet most!

God's commandments proved to be a sound insurance policy for Daniel and his companions (Dan. 1 : 15, 19, 20, 21). So will they be to us.

Now consider the eternal rewards:

Gal. 6 : 8: "He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

5.—THE LIVING OF CHRISTIAN STANDARDS

At this point, many will say: "I respect and applaud these standards, but I cannot live them. It's like asking a helpless paralytic to climb to the top of Mount Everest, or jump to the moon! It just can't be done!"

II Cor. 2 : 16: "Who is sufficient for these things?"

If we try to live these standards in our own strength, we are doomed to dismal failure, but in the strength of the Spirit of God, all things are possible.

Ezek. 36 : 27: "I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My Statutes."

Phil. 4 : 13: "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me."