

LESSON 6 Your New Standards

In order to live together, people must follow certain rules or standards. Think about a family with several children. What would happen if the older ones were allowed to make noise all night? No one would get any rest. Therefore, standards are needed for everyday living.

Standards are also needed if a person wants to reach a special goal. Athletes, for example, follow the instructions of their coach. Their purpose is to develop skill and strength so they can win the prize. Now that you are a Christian, you have a new goal: to become all that your heavenly Father wants you to be. This is another reason why you need standards.

Your heavenly Father plans for you to be part of His family and reach the goals He has for your life. This lesson explains the new standards He has given to help you. Following them will bring you many benefits.

The Plan

- A. Who Sets the Standards?
- B. Where Can You Find the Standards?
- C. How Can You Meet the Standards?
- D. Standards for Success

The Goals

- 1. Describe the standards God has for you.
- 2. Explain how you can meet God's standards.
- 3. State the results that will come by meeting God's standards.
- 4. Describe successful living.

A. WHO SETS THE STANDARDS?

Goal 1. Describe the standards God has for you.

In a home, parents set the standards on how the children should behave. The children soon learn that they must live by these standards. When they break the rules, their parents correct them. If they stubbornly refuse to obey, the parents may have to discipline them. Though the children are still members of the family, their disobedience brings them problems and suffering.

Our heavenly Father sets the standards for what His children should do and should not do. Sometimes He, too, has to discipline His children.

Application

- 1** The standards in a well-ordered home are set by the
 - a)** children.
 - b)** neighbors.
 - c)** parents.

- 2 The right to say how we should behave as Christians belongs to
- a) our heavenly Father.
 - b) the culture in which we live.
 - c) us.



B. WHERE CAN YOU FIND THE STANDARDS?

Goal 2. Explain how you can meet God’s standards.

We discover a person’s standards by observing how he or she behaves. How do we find out the standards of a Christian? We discover the standards of a Christian by observing how Jesus Christ lived. The Bible gives us the record of His life. He is our perfect example and pattern for living.

We also discover Christian standards by studying what Jesus said about them. In the “Sermon on the Mount” (Matthew 5–7), Jesus described the standards of a Christian. These were His own standards. By His power working in us, they can become ours.

Jesus began His sermon by telling about the special blessings God gives to those who follow His standards. He continued with many other important teachings. Here are some of the things He said:

The Sermon on the Mount Matthew 5–7

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for
righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because
of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of
heaven.

“You are the light of the world...In the same way,
let your light shine before men, that they may see
your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye,
and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, Do not resist
an evil person.”

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your
neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you:
‘Love your enemies and pray for those who
persecute you, that you may be sons of your
Father in heaven.’”

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on
earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where
thieves break in and steal. But store up for
yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and
rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not
break in and steal. For where your treasure is,
there your heart will be also.”

“So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we
eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall
we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these
things, and your heavenly Father knows that you
need them. But seek first his kingdom and his
righteousness, and all these things will be given
to you as well.”

Application

- 3** The perfect pattern for your new life is found in
- a)** your pastor.
 - b)** the saints of the church.
 - c)** Jesus Christ.

4 Following are several opinions. Circle the letter in front of each one that matches the techniques Jesus gave in the verses you have read from the “Sermon on the Mount.”

- a)** If another Christian is in need, I should help him and not keep all of my money for myself.
- b)** If someone tells lies about me, I have a right to hate that person.
- c)** If someone tries to rob me, I have a right to hit that person and injure him.
- d)** If I lose my job because I have become a Christian, I can be happy because God still cares for me.



Jesus gave us a basic principle on how to treat others. Many people have called it the “Golden Rule.”

Matthew 7:12 “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.”

Certainly we would all agree that people should not act badly toward others. Many religious leaders have said this. But the Golden Rule goes much further! Jesus is saying that we should actively do good to others. We should be the first to treat them the way we ourselves would like to be treated.

We should not be proud, selfish, quarrelsome, or critical. We should not give place even in our thoughts to illicit love affairs or evil passions.

Our first interest should be to please God. We cannot make earthly riches our goal and serve God at the same time; but if we put Him first, He will see to it that all our needs are met. Besides, whatever we do for Him will be rewarded with eternal riches.

Application

- 5** Those who obey the Golden Rule most closely are those who
- a)** wait for others to do good to them, then do something good for them in return.
 - b)** look for ways to do good to others.
 - c)** find ways to get what they want for themselves.

6 Are there some ways of acting that do not match the teachings of Jesus? Underline each phrase that states a change you would like to make.

- a) Forgive people who have mistreated you.
 - b) Give generously to those in need.
 - c) Pray for those who reject you because you are a Christian.
 - d) Think of good things to do for others and do them.
 - e) Work for peace in your family and community.
-

C. HOW CAN YOU MEET THE STANDARDS?

Goal 3. State the results that will come by meeting God's standards.

Jesus knew that nobody would be able to follow these rules unless he or she had God's help. So He taught His disciples to pray to their heavenly Father and ask Him to help them. In Lesson 5, you learned about the model prayer: The Lord's Prayer. What kind of help does God give you?

You can be like your heavenly Father because you share His life. How? Your Father has sent His Holy Spirit to live in you. This is how He has shared His own life with you! Do not worry about trying to live up to what God expects of you. He will help you. You will study more about this in the next lesson.

Application

7 Review "The Lord's Prayer" in Lesson 5. In this model prayer, Jesus taught us to pray to

- a) the saints.
 - b) God, our heavenly Father.
 - c) our ancestors.
-

D. STANDARDS FOR SUCCESS

Goal 4. Describe successful living.

Jesus lets us know that His instructions are the pattern for a successful life. Our life is like a building. Our thoughts, words, and actions are bricks in this building. As we line them up on the foundation of His teaching, we will have a character that can stand the tests of life.

Whoever lives as he or she pleases, without following the standards Jesus has given, will be a failure and will not be able to withstand the storms.

If you want to be a successful Christian, build your life on Christ's teaching and follow His standards. The Holy Spirit will help you do it.

Application

- 8** Jesus teaches us that true success will come if we
- a)** build our lives on His teachings.
 - b)** know what He said about happiness.
 - c)** repeat many prayers every day.
-



Check Your Answers

4 Opinions **a** and **d** match Jesus' sermon.

1 c) parents.

5 b) look for ways to do good to others.

2 a) our heavenly Father.

7 b) God, our heavenly Father.

3 c) Jesus Christ.

8 a) build our lives on His teachings.