CHRISTIAN ETHICS

This study *Christian Ethics* is virtually an Addendum to the author's previous study, *Righteousness Defined*. They are inextricably linked. The moral laws and precepts of Christianity are based on Righteousness which is the pervading element in all relations Christians have with both God and man. *Christian Ethics* is a code of conduct laid down in Scripture for Christians to live out in their everyday lives. It means they only do that which is good and refrain from doing anything evil. The highest code of *Christian Ethics* are all included in the teachings of Jesus and represent Christianity on its practical side as carried out in Christians' private, social, and communal life (CP Mt 5:1-7:29; Lu 6:20-49). Mt 5-7 is known among Christians as the *Sermon on the Mount* while Lu 6:20-49 is known as the *Sermon on the Plain*. These are Christ's moral and ethical instructions for New Testament Christians on how to live Godly lives in this present evil world. *Christians Ethics* are the outward manifestation of the inward work of Grace by which Christians are saved, and which empowers them to walk in the way Christ has prescribed they should – in accordance with God's will (CP Ro 12:1-2).

This is a clear and unmistakable directive to New Testament Christians how they are to observe Christian Ethics in their everyday lifestyles and conform to God's will for them. They are no longer to be conformed to a world system without God, but are to be transformed by a renewed mind committed to the ideals of the Kingdom of God. Their thoughts, affections, purposes and desires must be centred on Heavenly and Eternal things, not the ungodly things of this evil, temporal and transient age, as Scriptures plainly teach (CP Ro 6:11-13; 13:9-14; Ga 1:3-4; Php 4:8-9; Col 3:1-10; 1Jn 2:15-17). *Christian Ethics* do not refer to human theories or opinions about what is right or what is wrong, but to God's revealed truth about these matters in Scripture. God's command for Christians to live ethically is summed up by Jesus in Matthew's Gospel (CP Mt 5:48), by Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians (CP Eph 1:3-8), and by Peter in both of his Epistles (CP 1Pe 1:13-25; 2Pe 3:10-18).

The ethical teachings of Scripture as followed by Christians will have an impact on the world, but in spite of this **S**criptures do not advocate a social program to be imposed on the world. In fact, Scriptures clearly teach against this (CP Mt 7:6). To live ethically in accordance with Scripture are directives to Christians alone. As Christians follow these directives, the world will be affected for good by them (CP Mt 5:13-16; Ro 12:17-21; Eph 4:17-5:18; Col 4:6). *Ethics* are the ultimate end to which the whole life of Christians should be directed. They represent the science of the ideal in conduct and character and although one does not have to be a Christian to be ethical, only ethical Christians will inherit the Kingdom of Heaven (CP Mt 5:13-20).

Scriptures used in this study are not exhaustive, but merely representative of the many scattered throughout both the Old and the New Testaments covering the whole spectrum of Christians' private and social life. As Christians believe, so must they behave-their conduct reflects their belief. Virtues must be acquired (CP Ga 5:22-26; Col 3:12-17; Tit 2:11-12; 2Pe 1:1-11). Vices must be shunned (CP Ga 5:16-21; Eph 4:20-32; Col 3:1-25). Love, as the basis on which Christianity is built, must be fostered (CP Jn 13:34-35; Ro 5:1-11; 1Cor 13:1-13; 1Jn 4:7-11). In every aspect of their everyday life, Christians must reflect Christ's image – after whom they are named (CP Ro 8:28-39; Php 3:8-16). Having accepted Christ, Christians must ***live*** Christ, not be a mere fleshy imitation of Him. Their life must be an outworking of His life within (see also author's comments on Mt 5:1-12, 5:13-16, 5:23-24, 5:29, 5:31-32, 5:38-42, 6:1-4, 6:24, 7:1-5, 7:6, 7:13-14, 7:21, Lu 6:24-26, 6:36-38. Jn 13:34-35, Ro 5:3-5, 6:6-11, 6:12-14, 8:28-30, 12:1, 12:2, 12:18, 12:20, 13:8, 13:11-14, 1Cor 12:31, Ga 5:16, 5:17, 5:19-21, 5:22-23, 5:24-26, 6:14, Eph 4:25, 4:28, 5:3-4, 5:5-13, 5:16, 5:18-20, 6:11-12, Php 3:7-11, 4:8-9, Col 2:16-23, 3:1-3, 4:5-6, 1Th 3:12, Tit 3: 5, Jas 5:12, 1Pe 1:17, 2:11, 2Pe 3:15, 4:1-4, 1Jn 2:7, 2:15-17, 4:7-21, and all cross-reference Scriptures and studies referred to therein, in his book **A Question and Answer Study of the New Testament**, and his studies *The Beatitudes – the Principles of the Kingdom of God* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 1)** and *The Sermon on the Mount* in his book **Advanced Studies in the Christian Faith (Volume 2)**).