

Rules for Just Living

Key Verse: *“Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment.”*
—Exodus 23:2

Selected Scripture:
Exodus 22:1-23:9

WE HAVE RECORDED IN these chapters of Exodus God's giving of the Law Covenant to Israel, his chosen people. In particular, the way to keep or to follow God's instructions in matters pertaining to daily life activities was explained in detail in these accounts. These laws contained provisions to protect the weak, the stranger, and the servant. The difficulty then and now is that the world

has been going on the downward road to destruction. This downward walk is based on selfishness, which is opposite to the teachings of the Law given to Israel, as well as to the law of love that the footstep followers of the Lord should be living in accord with. As has always been the case, some in the world live on a little higher plane, and with others the plane of character is lower. By this we mean that some are able to limit their selfishness. They make an attempt to look to the lines of justice and exercise some self-restraint. Others fall totally into injustice and dishonesty. In either case, however, the general tendency is downward. “Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.”—Matt. 7:13

“New Creatures” in Christ Jesus must follow a higher standard. They should never go below justice and honesty, and must seek as much as possible to rise above even the

highest worldly standard, toward perfect love. The true child of God should daily strive to live up to Jesus' words in the next verse, "Because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (vs. 14) Few "find" the narrow way due to the fact that all of mankind are born under more or less adverse conditions and in unfavorable environments. As a result, the majority of mankind daily lose more and more of their power of resistance to wrongdoing, and continue to fall further away from knowing the true and living God. The Lord's footstep followers, however, are admonished, "Rather seek ye the kingdom of God."—Luke 12:31

It is the fault of the present system, in which people feel the constant pressure of competition against one another, and which exists under the influence of Satan, that so many of mankind become "followers" who go along with the crowd, and as a result make wrong decisions. Such is the flawed thinking of today's society. Throughout man's history it seems that people have most often tried to take the so-called "easy way out" of their problems, in turn, falling deeper into sin and moral decline. Truly, the Apostle Paul said, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."—Rom. 3:23

No power can correct, control, or alter all of the difficulties that exist in the world today except the solution which God has promised—the coming kingdom of his dear Son. The words of exhortation directed to the church class at the present time from Ephesians 5:1 will then also be true for the world: "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." This will be a reality in Christ's Millennial kingdom, in which mankind will be liberated from the bondage and curse of Adamic condemnation. "In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge." (Jer. 31:29) Man will be out from under the control of the great Adversary, Satan, and the law of that day, which will be taught and enforced, will be the rule of love. ■