

Christian Ethics

Ethics

- The principles or morals that govern a people or society
- Every person and culture has them
- The word derives from a Greek word meaning habit, or custom
- For the Christian, the Bible is the source of ethics, and Biblically defined righteousness is the hallmark of ethics

Psalm 15—a synopsis of Christian ethics

- It's a Psalm of David
- David also wrote Psalms 11-14—all of which emphasize the evil that is in the world
- The Psalm asks and answers the question: Who will live with God?

15.1

- Who shall live in the Tabernacle of God?
- Who shall dwell in God's Holy Hill (Zion)
- In light of all that Leviticus says about the requirements for living safely in the presence of God, what is required?

15.3-5 answer the question, and they do it without providing a list of rituals and offerings

15.2: there are 3 “positive” precepts

- Walk uprightly. “Uprightly” means complete, or whole. Walks with integrity. The NT would call this “simplicity.”
- Works righteousness. His deeds and actions are right. His righteousness (Biblically, righteousness is conformity to God’s Word) is external.
- Speaks truth in his heart. His outward righteousness is no formality

15.3: there are 3 “negative” precepts

- He does not backbite. He doesn't slander. His tongue is restrained, especially when talking to someone else.
- He does no evil to his neighbor. He isn't saying evil things, he isn't trying to do or find out evil things
- He doesn't taunt or revile his neighbor.

15.4-5: there are 3 contrasting precepts

- He honors the righteous and disdains the vile (those rejected by God.) His response is exactly the same as God's response
- He keeps his word, and doesn't try to get out of his promises, even if they are damaging to him
- He doesn't elevate money over people: he doesn't charge usury, and he doesn't take bribes

15.5

- This person will never be moved
- This person will always be welcome in the presence of the Lord