

# American Decency Association

PO Box 202, Fremont MI 49412 231-924-4050 [www.americandecency.org](http://www.americandecency.org)  
Encouraging Christians to guard their heart October 2024

## By What Standard

By Steve Huston



By what standard do you live? Sadly, most people don't really consider this question; they just do life. Even in the church there are many who live by a "squishy" standard that is called "Christian." It may be comprised of varying percentages of the following standards: cultural, government, church, societal, family, work, our own passions, etc. The problem with all the above standards is that they are ever-changing, some more slowly than others, but they change nonetheless.

There is only one standard which will not change; it is the Word of God – both written and incarnate (Jesus). It is eternal, immutable, inerrant, completely trustworthy for every person in every age. When we

whole-heartedly commit ourselves to the Biblical standard, by God's grace, we have a sure foundation that we can completely rest upon. "All other ground is sinking sand." The assurance it brings gives peace, strength, and will see us through life and through death. For it is a truth: What standard we live by we will die by.

Yet, that doesn't mean we won't have times of hardship; Paul assures us that "*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*" (2 Tim. 3:12-13) But the Biblical standard does bring with it discernment to keep us from deception; it strengthens us for the day of trouble and persecution.

Even so, we need the strength and exhortation that other believers bearing us up bring. May the following examples encourage the reader, teaching what it is to live and die by a Biblical standard.

In the 1500s, Felix Manz and a group of men in Zurich, Switzerland studied the Bible and came to the conclusion that the Scriptures and not the state requirements should govern their lives. Felix and several others were baptized on their confession of faith – January 21, 1525. Such a public confession of godliness brought serious consequences. Paul's above warning was manifested in their lives.

Felix was soon arrested and strongly urged to recant. On January 5, 1527, Felix was brought to the Limmat River to be drowned and many were the voices pleading that he give up his faith. Can you hear their impassioned cries, "Save yourself! Recant!"

But there were other cries which encouraged Felix to stay true. From a nearby bridge his mother and brother Heinrich exhorted him to **be steadfast in Jesus**. Can you hear a mother's cry, "Stay true! Keep looking unto Jesus!" Felix's last words were: "Into Thy hands,

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Father, I commit my spirit.”

There were two Scottish women, Covenanters, one elder and the other younger, but both full of faith. They were tied to stakes so that the incoming tide would drown them if they wouldn't recant of their faith in Jesus Christ, the Word incarnate. Staying faithful and exhorting each other, the water came to take the elder first. Those who had tied these women to their stakes thought that the younger might recant at seeing the death of the elder, but they were wrong. Listen to the way this young woman left this world, stepping into eternity. *“They asked the girl what she thought of her companion now. ‘What do I see,’ she answered, ‘but Christ wrestling there? Think ye that we are the sufferers? No, it is Christ in us; for He sends none a warfare on their own charges.’ Then, opening her New Testament, she read aloud the eighth chapter of the*

*Epistle to the Romans – the great chapter which tells how the condemnation of sin is cancelled by the Saviour; and how the spirit of adoption delivers from bondage and fear; and how nothing, neither death nor life, can separate from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. The chapter finished, she sang her farewell psalm – the 25<sup>th</sup> Psalm, from the seventh verse – My sins and faults of youth/ Do thou, O Lord, forget/ After Thy mercy think on me/ And for Thy goodness great.”* The rest of this amazing account can be read in Alexander Smellie's [Men of the Covenant](#), pg. 419.

Dear Reader, what if all men forsake you? What if you have no exhorter in persecution, no companion in death? Fear not, the Apostle Paul exhorts us with these precious words: *“At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered*

*out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”* (2 Timothy 4:16-18)

Even today, around the world, there are those who stand firmly for Christ, standing alone on the Word of God. Daily I receive reports of Christians being highly persecuted in Nigeria, areas of China, Pakistan, and other countries throughout the Middle East.

The Biblical standard brings varying degrees of persecution to all who will stand. Therefore, we are called to “exhort one another, daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” If such a standard is ours, we are called to exhort others to this same standard of Christ. We're called to comfort one another with words of hope, that Jesus is coming back for His own. (1 Thes. 4:13-18)

By what standard do you live? By what standard will you die?



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