

ADVANTAGES OF UPHOLDING PRECEPTS

The merit of upholding the precepts depends on the degree of purity of our practice. The Buddha enumerated five advantages of precepts:(6)

(i) Conservation of Wealth

A man who does not uphold precepts would very likely squander away his wealth through frequenting night-clubs and brothels, gambling, drinking, etc., which a moral man would not indulge in.

(ii) Good Reputation

A moral man who does not kill, steal, commit adultery, lie or drink would obviously be highly regarded by others.

(iii) Dare to Face Assemblies

A moral man has no cause for shame or guilt and would have no fear when called upon to face or address assemblies.

(iv) Dies Clear-minded

As death approaches, a moral man is unafraid because the thought of his purity gives him great confidence and joy.

Many people, however, die with great fear and terror for having lived an immoral life, especially those who broke any of the precepts in severe degree, e.g. a butcher.

(v) Good Rebirth

A person who has upheld the precepts would have lived a harmless life and would be destined for a good rebirth.

The Buddha said that a man who has unwavering faith in the Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha, is virtuous, controlled in the precepts, may declare with certainty that he has won to the Stream, bound for enlightenment. He will never fall into the woeful planes of rebirth again, i.e. the ghost, animal and hell realms.⁷

6 Anguttara Nikaya 5.213.

7 Samyutta Nikaya 55.2.