

A Good Conscience

I Pet. 3:16-21

What Is The Conscience?

- A person's moral sense of right and wrong, viewed as acting as a guide to one's behavior. (Oxford Dictionary)
- "the soul as distinguishing between what is morally good and bad, prompting to do the former and shun the latter, commending the one, condemning the other; conscience" (Thayer)
 - The sense of "ought" or "ought not", which is singularly a function found within human beings.

What Is The Function Of Conscience?

- Our conscience serves to judge our behavior:
 - in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing *them*); (Rom. 2:15 -- ASV)
 - Illustrations from the Bible:
 - Guilty: Gen. 42:21; Dan. 5:6; Ps. 32:3-5
 - Clean: Job 27:5-6; II Cor. 1:12
- Our conscience can encourage us to do what is right.
 - Rom. 13:5-6 → Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience' sake.

What Is The Function Of Conscience?

- In view of the function of conscience, it is important that we listen to it.
 - Acts 24:16 → So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man. (ESV)
 - James 4:17 → So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.
 - Rom. 14:14, 23 → I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean...But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.
- The conscience is not an infallible guide. It must be “set” correctly! Our conscience must be set correctly to lead us correctly.

Does Following My Conscience Mean That I Am Necessarily Right With God?

- No! Our conscience functions on the basis of its “setting” – what it believes to be right.
- Consider the conscience of Paul:
 - And looking intently at the council, Paul said, “Brothers, I have lived my life before God in all good conscience up to this day.” (Acts 23:1 – ESV)
 - “I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth. (Acts 26:9 – ESV)
 - The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. (I Tim. 1:15 – ESV)
- Our conscience can lead us to do wrong.
 - Jer. 10:23 → I know, O LORD, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps.
 - Prov. 14:12 → There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

What Is The Condition Of My Conscience?

- A good conscience. (I Tim. 1:5,19; Heb. 13:18)
- A pure conscience. (I Tim. 3:9; II Tim. 1:3)
- A conscience aware of God. (I Pet. 2:19)
- A defiled conscience. (Titus 1:15)
- A weak conscience. (I Cor. 8:7)
- A seared conscience. (I Tim. 4:2)
- An evil conscience. (Heb. 10:22)
- A convicted conscience. (Acts 2:37)

How To Have A Good Conscience

- “The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:” I Pet. 3:21, (cf. Heb. 9:14; 10:22)
- “Blessed *is he* whose transgression *is* forgiven, *whose* sin *is* covered. 2 Blessed *is* the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit *there is* no guile. (Ps. 32:1-2)

The Lament Of Jesus Over Jerusalem

Matt. 23:29-39

Introduction

- The double name – indicating intensity of feeling and emotion – the importance of what is being said.
 - 1 Kings 13:2 → **Altar**, Altar...
 - Lk. 10:41 → **Martha**, Martha
 - Luke 22:31 → **Simon**, Simon
 - Acts 9:4 → **Saul**, Saul
 - Matt. 23:37 → **Jerusalem**, Jerusalem
- Focus on 3 important things seen in these words:

“How Often I Have Longed...”

- The **willingness** of Jesus to save sinners.
 - The **focus** of His mission. (Lk. 19:10; Matt. 20:28)
 - We see that in His **conversations** with others. (Jn. 3,4)
 - In the ultimate manifestation of God’s **grace**, He gave His life to pay the price for our **sins**. (Heb. 2:9; II Cor. 5:21; Titus 2:11-12)
 - Even the **most** ungodly. (I Cor. 6:9-11; I Tim. 1:13-15; Lk. 23:34)
 - Those who are **lost** are not lost because God is not willing to save. (II Pet. 3:9)

“...As a hen gathers her chicks under her wings...”

- There is a **spiritual** realm, in which **salvation** is found. (Ps. 17:8-9; 91:4)
 - Salvation is in **Christ** alone. (Jn. 14:6; Eph. 1:3; Acts 4:12)
 - To be in Christ...
 - One has been **baptized** into Him. (Gal. 3:26-27)
 - Is to be in His spiritual body (I Cor. 12:13; Eph. 4:4), the church (Eph. 1:22-23), the **body** of the **saved**. (Eph. 5:23)
 - Is to be in His kingdom. (Col. 1:13; Rev. 1:9)
 - One must **continue** in His word. (Jn. 8:31-32; Acts 2:42; Js. 1:25)
 - Is to have the **hope** of eternal life. (Eph. 2:12; Col. 1:5)

“...But you would have none of it”

- No one is **saved** against their will.
 - Universalism is **false**. (Matt. 7:13-14; II Thess. 1:7-9)
 - **Unconditional** election is false. (Acts 10:34-35; II Pet. 3:9; Acts 7:51)
 - “Once saved, always saved is false. (I Cor. 10:12; Heb. 3:12)
- In order to be saved, the sinner must come to the Savior.
 - Matt. 11:28-30 → “Come unto me...”
 - Jn. 6:44-45 → Drawn through teaching, hearing and learning
 - Jn. 5:40 → ye will not **come** to me that ye might have **life**.
 - Lead astray by false teachers. (Matt. 15:13-14)
 - **Closed** minds. (Matt. 13:13-15)
 - Consumed by the material **things** of this life. (Lk. 12:15; I Tim. 6:10)