

Conscience

Conscience – the word translated conscience .-

From Thayers Greek Concordance – it's the Spirit in man – it was given to all men from Adam

1 Timothy 1:5 Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith,

1 Timothy 4:2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

What happens when you tell a lie or gossip about someone? Is there an inner voice telling you what is right and what is wrong? With a healed conscience it will. What about people who commit horrible crimes against humanity? Do they have an inner voice crying out, disturbing their peace and sleep? We have all grown up hearing it said, "Let your conscience be your guide." Is that a good thing? What is our conscience? Is our conscience always a good guide for our thoughts and actions?

The Bible has much to say about our conscience. There is no word for "conscience" in the Old Testament Hebrew, but it is illustrated often. Joseph's brothers certainly felt the sting of their conscience, when they first came to Egypt to purchase corn. While Joseph's identity was concealed, he tested his brothers, accusing them of being spies and casting them into prison. We read their response in Genesis 42:21. They said to each other, "We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us." Joseph was not pointing a finger at his brothers, reminding them of their past cruelty. They didn't even know they were in the presence of their brother. Joseph wasn't dead, he was alive, and so was their conscience.

The word "conscience" is used thirty two times in the King James translation of the New Testament.

God as our Creator, has created us as moral beings. As such, God has equipped every human being with a "built in" moral conscience. We see evidence of this in Romans 2:14-15. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." The Law was given to the Jews, but the Gentiles had the work of the Law, written in their hearts. Their conscience bore witness to a higher law! Their conscience was like a judge and jury, presiding in the courtroom of their hearts. Conscience is the voice of God in us..

The fact that God has given us this internal spirit, reveals not only that we are moral agents, but that we are accountable to God for our lives. Guilt is a real thing. Our conscience is connected

with our sense of guilt. When we fail morally or sin, we can dismiss it, deny it, distort it, or deal with it. Our God given conscience, is designed to help us deal with our sin.

We read that God's Word speaks of a good conscience.

I Timothy 1:5. "Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." A good conscience is one that knows right and wrong and chooses right.."

God's Word speaks of a blameless conscience. To be "blameless" means to be without offense. Acts 24:16 says, "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." The function of a conscience is to warn us, invite us, convict us. Those brothers of Joseph did not have a blameless conscience. They were filled with guilt.

God's Word speaks of an evil conscience. Hebrews 10:22. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." An evil conscience is one that is so defiled, so corrupt, it turns our values upside down, confusing and blurring the distinction between right and wrong, moral and immoral. This is reflected in Isaiah 5:20. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!"

What can we do to keep our conscience good, clean, and pure.

How about: We must determine to make the written Word of God our constant guide and standard for our living. This is the changeless standard to which we must hold our conscience. Someone has said, "Conscience is a trustworthy compass when God's Word is your north." Our minds are like cups with holes in the bottom. The Word of God is like water poured into a cup with a hole in it. The water eventually drains out of the cups after each filling. In order to keep the cup filled, we must keep filling it with water. Likewise, we must keep filling our minds with the Word of God each day, so that God's commandments are in our hearts and constantly on our minds.

We must remain sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not to be confused with our conscience.

When our conscience is cleansed, we are able to live according to the ways shown by the Word of God with the help of the Holy Spirit.