LESSON THREE

**The Conscientious Mind**

**Key Verses**

**Ecclesiastes 12:13-14** - The conclusion, when everything has been heard, *is*: ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ECCLESIASTES+12%3A13-14&version=NASB#cen-NASB-17537A))fear God and ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ECCLESIASTES+12%3A13-14&version=NASB#cen-NASB-17537B))keep His commandments, because this *applies to* ([C](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ECCLESIASTES+12%3A13-14&version=NASB#cen-NASB-17537C))every person. **14**For ([D](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ECCLESIASTES+12%3A13-14&version=NASB#cen-NASB-17538D))God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

**Lesson Summary**

This lesson teaches about the response of those on Mars' Hill to Paul's insistent and convicting plea-they didn't listen! Many people have seared consciences when it comes to hearing the truth of God's Word, and because of their deadened ears to God's plea, they mock, rebel, and turn from repentance. This lesson centers on the study of a seared conscience and the detrimental effects it can have.

**Lesson Aim**

To help students understand that we only have one life, and this life is the only chance we get to prepare to meet God.

**Lesson Goals**

At the conclusion of this lesson, students should:

1. Understand the biblical definition of a seared conscience.
2. Understand that we will one day give an account to God.
3. Acknowledge that what we have embraced as truth­ God's Word-is going to come under attack.
4. Search their conscience-asking the Holy Spirit to reveal if there is any sin they are holding on to that has become deadened over time.
5. Choose to live with the continual thought that one day they will meet God.

**Teaching Outline**

1. God's Word Declares an Inescapable Reckoning
   1. Our sure accountability
   2. Our soon appointment
2. God's Word Declares an Incredible Reality
   1. No one is exempt.
   2. No one can escape.
3. God's Word Declares an Impenitent Rebellion
   1. God has revealed clearly.
   2. Man has rejected consciously.
4. God's Word Declares an Impending Removal
   1. A revealing mercy
   2. A restricted moment

**Text  
Acts 17:31-33** - because He has set ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS+17%3A31-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27545A))a day on which ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS+17%3A31-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27545B))He will judge [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS+17%3A31-33&version=NASB#fen-NASB-27545a)]([C](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS+17%3A31-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27545C))the world in righteousness [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS+17%3A31-33&version=NASB#fen-NASB-27545b)]through a Man whom He has ([D](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS+17%3A31-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27545D))appointed, having furnished proof to all people [[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS+17%3A31-33&version=NASB#fen-NASB-27545c)]by ([E](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS+17%3A31-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27545E))raising Him from the dead.” **32**Now when they heard of ([F](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS+17%3A31-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27546F))the resurrection of the dead, some *began* to scoff, but others said, “We shall hear from you [[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=ACTS+17%3A31-33&version=NASB#fen-NASB-27546d)]again concerning this.” **33**So Paul went out from among them.

**Proverbs 29:1 -** *"*A person [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+29%3A1&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17226a)]often ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+29%3A1&version=NASB#cen-NASB-17226A))rebuked who [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+29%3A1&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17226b)]becomes obstinate Will ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+29%3A1&version=NASB#cen-NASB-17226B))suddenly be broken [[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Proverbs+29%3A1&version=NASB#fen-NASB-17226c)]beyond remedy.*"*

**Ephesians 4:19 -** and they, having ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4%3A19&version=NASB#cen-NASB-29279A))become callous, ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4%3A19&version=NASB#cen-NASB-29279B))have given themselves up to ([C](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4%3A19&version=NASB#cen-NASB-29279C))indecent behavior [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4%3A19&version=NASB#fen-NASB-29279a)]for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.*"*

**Hebrews 4:12 -** But there is hope, *"* For ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+4%3A12&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30014A))the word of God is ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+4%3A12&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30014B))living and ([C](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+4%3A12&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30014C))active, and sharper than any two-edged ([D](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+4%3A12&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30014D))sword, even penetrating as far as the division of ([E](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+4%3A12&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30014E))soul and ([F](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+4%3A12&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30014F))spirit, of both joints and marrow, and ([G](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+4%3A12&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30014G))able to [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+4%3A12&version=NASB#fen-NASB-30014a)]judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

**Jeremiah 23:28-29 -**  ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+23%3A28-29&version=NASB#cen-NASB-19513B))What does straw have *in common* with grain?” declares the Lord. **29**“Is My word not like ([C](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+23%3A28-29&version=NASB#cen-NASB-19514C))fire?” declares the Lord, “and like a ([D](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Jeremiah+23%3A28-29&version=NASB#cen-NASB-19514D))hammer *which* shatters a rock?"

**Acts 17:31 -** *"* because He has set ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17%3A31&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27545A))a day on which ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17%3A31&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27545B))He will judge [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17%3A31&version=NASB#fen-NASB-27545a)]([C](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17%3A31&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27545C))the world in righteousness [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17%3A31&version=NASB#fen-NASB-27545b)]through a Man whom He has ([D](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17%3A31&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27545D))appointed, having furnished proof to all people [[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17%3A31&version=NASB#fen-NASB-27545c)]by ([E](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17%3A31&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27545E))raising Him from the dead.”

**Hebrews 9:27**"… just as ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+9%3A27&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30120A))it is destined for people to die once, and after this ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+9%3A27&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30120B))*comes* judgment,*"*

**Amos 4:12 -** *"Prepare to meet your God"*

**Acts 17:31 -** "... having furnished proof to all people [[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17%3A31&version=NASB#fen-NASB-27545c)]by ([E](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17%3A31&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27545E))raising Him from the dead."

**Ezekiel 7:3-4 -** *"* Now the end is upon you, for I will send My anger against you; I will judge you according to your ways and [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ezekiel+7%3A3-4&version=NASB#fen-NASB-20581a)]bring all your abominations upon you. **4**And My eye will have no pity on you, nor will I spare *you*, but I will [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ezekiel+7%3A3-4&version=NASB#fen-NASB-20582b)]([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ezekiel+7%3A3-4&version=NASB#cen-NASB-20582A))bring your ways upon you, and your abominations will be among you; then you will ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ezekiel+7%3A3-4&version=NASB#cen-NASB-20582B))know that I am the Lord!’"

**Ezekiel 7:19 -** their ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ezekiel+7%3A19&version=NASB#cen-NASB-20597B))silver and their gold will not be able to save them on the day of the wrath of the Lord. They cannot satisfy their [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ezekiel+7%3A19&version=NASB#fen-NASB-20597a)]appetite, nor can they fill their stomachs, because their wrongdoing has become a cause of stumbling.*"*

**2 Corinthians 5:10 -** *"***10**For we must all appear before ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+5%3A10&version=NASB#cen-NASB-28875A))the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive compensation for [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Corinthians+5%3A10&version=NASB#fen-NASB-28875a)]his deeds *done* through the body, in accordance with what he has done, whether good or bad.*"*

**Revelation 20:12 -** *"I saw the dead, small and great, stand before the throne of God"*

**Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 -** *"* **13**The conclusion, when everything has been heard, *is*: ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ecclesiastes+12%3A13-14&version=NASB#cen-NASB-17537A))fear God and ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ecclesiastes+12%3A13-14&version=NASB#cen-NASB-17537B))keep His commandments, because this *applies to* ([C](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ecclesiastes+12%3A13-14&version=NASB#cen-NASB-17537C))every person. **14**For ([D](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ecclesiastes+12%3A13-14&version=NASB#cen-NASB-17538D))God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.*"*

**1 John 2:28 -** *"***28**Now, ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+2%3A28&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30566A))little children, remain in Him, so that when He ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+2%3A28&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30566B))appears, we may have ([C](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+2%3A28&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30566C))confidence and ([D](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+2%3A28&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30566D))not [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+2%3A28&version=NASB#fen-NASB-30566a)]draw back from Him in shame [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+2%3A28&version=NASB#fen-NASB-30566b)]at His ([E](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+John+2%3A28&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30566E))coming.*"*

**Romans 1:20 -** *"* **20**For ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+1%3A20&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27939A))since the creation of the world His invisible *attributes, that is*, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+1%3A20&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27939B))being understood by what has been made, so that they are without excuse.*"*

**Romans 2:15 -** *"* **15**in that they show ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Romans+2%3A15&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27966A))the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience testifying and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them*"*

**Acts 17:32 -** *''* **32**Now when they heard of ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17%3A32&version=NASB#cen-NASB-27546A))the resurrection of the dead, some *began* to scoff, but others said, “We shall hear from you [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts+17%3A32&version=NASB#fen-NASB-27546a)]again concerning this.”

**2 Peter 3:3 -** *"***3**([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Peter+3%3A3&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30513A))Know this first *of all*, that ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Peter+3%3A3&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30513B))in the last days ([C](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Peter+3%3A3&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30513C))mockers will come with *their* mocking*"* What you have embraced as truth is going to come under attack. There will be those who scoff, ridicule, laugh at and reject this truth. Why? Because they don't believe in God or that His Word is true? No! Read the rest-", ([D](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Peter+3%3A3&version=NASB#cen-NASB-30513D))following after their own lusts*"*

**John 3:19-20 -** *''* **19**And this is the judgment, that ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+3%3A19-20&version=NASB#cen-NASB-26133A))the Light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the Light; for ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+3%3A19-20&version=NASB#cen-NASB-26133B))their deeds were evil. **20**([C](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+3%3A19-20&version=NASB#cen-NASB-26134C))For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his deeds will not be exposed.*"*

**Psalm 103:8- 9** - *"* The Lord is ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+103%3A8-+9+&version=NASB#cen-NASB-15558A))compassionate and gracious, ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+103%3A8-+9+&version=NASB#cen-NASB-15558B))Slow to anger and abounding in mercy. **9**He ([C](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+103%3A8-+9+&version=NASB#cen-NASB-15559C))will not always contend *with us*, Nor will He ([D](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Psalm+103%3A8-+9+&version=NASB#cen-NASB-15559D))keep *His anger* forever.*"*

**Genesis 6:3 -** *"* **3**Then the Lord said, “([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+6%3A3&version=NASB#cen-NASB-141A))My Spirit will not [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+6%3A3&version=NASB#fen-NASB-141a)]remain with man forever, [[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+6%3A3&version=NASB#fen-NASB-141b)]([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+6%3A3&version=NASB#cen-NASB-141B))because he is also flesh; [[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Genesis+6%3A3&version=NASB#fen-NASB-141c)]nevertheless his days shall be 120 years.”

**PROVERBS 1:22-33**

“How long, you ([A](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16423A))naive ones, will you love simplistic thinking? -And *how long will* ([B](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16423B))scoffers delight themselves in scoffing and fools ([C](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16423C))hate knowledge? - **23**Turn to my rebuke,  
Behold, I will ([D](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16424D))pour out my spirit on you; - I will make my words known to you.  
**24**Because ([E](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16425E))I called and you ([F](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16425F))refused, - I ([G](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16425G))stretched out my hand and no one paid attention;  
**25**And you ([H](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16426H))neglected all my advice - And did not ([I](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16426I))want my rebuke;  
**26**I will also ([J](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16427J))laugh at your ([K](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16427K))disaster; - I will mock when your ([L](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16427L))dread comes,  
**27**When your dread comes like a storm - And your disaster comes like a ([M](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16428M))whirlwind,  
When distress and anguish come upon you. - **28**Then they will ([N](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16429N))call on me, but I will not answer;  
They will ([O](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16429O))seek me diligently but will not find me, - **29**Because they ([P](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16430P))hated knowledge  
And did not choose the fear of the Lord. - **30**They ([Q](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16431Q))did not accept my advice,  
They disdainfully rejected every rebuke from me. - **31**So they shall ([R](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16432R))eat of the fruit of their own way,  
And be ([S](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16432S))filled with their own schemes. - **32**For the ([T](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16433T))faithlessness of the naive will kill them,  
And the complacency of fools will destroy them. - **33**But ([U](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=PROVERBS+1%3A22-33&version=NASB#cen-NASB-16434U))whoever listens to me will live securely  
And will be at ease from the dread of evil.”

**Study Questions**

1. When a hot iron is placed on the flank of an animal, it hurts! But once the flesh has been "seared" with the hot iron, it is deadened to all feeling. Consider this illustration when you read 1 Timothy 4:1-2. What did Paul mean when he said, "... *having their conscience seared with a hot iron"?*

2. How does the Bible describe someone with a seared conscience? See Proverbs 29:1 and Ephesians 4:19.

3. Many times, the problem with someone who has a seared conscience is that he does not want to give up his sin. John 3:19 says, "... *men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."* God's Word has the ability to transform you, renew you, and change a seared conscience. Do you have any sin that you are holding onto right now to which your conscience has become deadened over time?

4. Conviction from the Holy Spirit can be uncomfortable, but when God's Word speaks, listen. The worst thing that can happen to you is when that still, small voice goes silent. Be honest with yourself and write briefly what the Holy Spirit has been convicting you about recently. If you can't think of anything, spend time in prayer asking God's Spirit to convict you of your sins.

5. Daniel Webster once said, "The greatest thought that can occupy a man's mind is his accountability to *God:'* Write out the following verses that correspond with Daniel Webster's statement: Acts 17:31, Hebrews 9:27, and Amos 4:12.

6. As Paul pleads with those on Mars' Hill to change their minds and turn to Christ, how do they respond? (See Acts 17:32)

7. No matter who you are or what you have done, whether saved or lost, you will meet God. Referencing 1 John 2:28, describe in your own words what instruction is given to you before this meeting will take place. "

8. What point was the most convicting to you in this study and why?

**Memory Verses**

**13**The conclusion, when everything has been heard, *is*: fear God and keep His commandments,

because this *applies to* every person.

**14**For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

(Ecclesiastes 12:13-14)