

CONSCIENCE

Holiness is at the very heart of our nature as created in God's image; our holiness is intended to mirror God's holiness. If we are in God's image and thus are holy, then there is something in us that by nature acknowledges the reality of rightness and wrongness. This is what we call the conscience. It functions because our Creator is holy, and because He has made us in His image.

GENERAL REFERENCES TO THE CONSCIENCE

Ac 23:1 ¶ And Paul, looking intently at the council, said, "Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience up to this day."

Ro 2:15 They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them

Ro 13:5 Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.

1Co 8:7 ¶ However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through being hitherto accustomed to idols, eat food as really offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

1Co 10:25 Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience.

2Co 5:11 Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men; but what we are is known to God, and I hope it is known also to your conscience.

Heb 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Heb 10:22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

A BAD CONSCIENCE

FIRST, REMEMBER, THE **CONSCIENCE** CANNOT BE COMPLETELY TRUSTED:

- ❖ **Weak** - **1 Corinthians 8:7** ...their conscience being weak is defiled.
- ❖ **Defiled** - **Titus 1:15** ... but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.
- ❖ **Seared** - **1 Timothy 4:2** by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron,
- ❖ **Evil** - **Hebrews 10:22** let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.
- ❖ **Ignorant** - **Ephesians 4:18** being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

Conscience: The Human awareness that evaluates an action, thought or word as right or wrong in relation to an objective standard. This is the very reason why our point of reference must be the Bible. The conscience is simply a reservoir which stores information, good or bad.

A GOOD CONSCIENCE

Ac 24:16 So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward God and toward men.

Ro 9:1 ¶ I am speaking the truth in Christ, I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit,

2Co 1:12 ¶ For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience that we have behaved in the world, and still more toward you, with holiness and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God.

1Ti 1:15 The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I am the foremost of sinners;

1Ti 1:19 holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting conscience, certain persons have made shipwreck of their faith,

1Ti 3:9 they must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

Heb 13:18 ¶ Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things.

1Pe 2:19 For one is approved if, mindful of God, he endures pain while suffering unjustly.

1Pe 3:16 ¶ and keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are abused, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.

GUILTY CONSCIENCE

Joseph's Brethren

Genesis 42:21 Then they said to one another, "Truly we are guilty concerning our brother, because we saw the distress of his soul when he pleaded with us, yet we would not listen; therefore this distress has come upon us." (NASB)

Pharaoh

Exodus 9:27 Then Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "I have sinned this time; the LORD is the righteous one, and I and my people are the wicked ones. (NASB)

Ezra

Ezra 9:6 and I said, "O my God, I am ashamed and embarrassed to lift up my face to Thee, my God, for our iniquities have risen above our heads, and our guilt has grown even to the heavens. (NASB)

Job 15:21 "Sounds of terror are in his ears, While at peace the destroyer comes upon him. (NASB)

The Psalmist

Psalm 40:12 For evils beyond number have surrounded me; My iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to see; They are more numerous than the hairs of my head; And my heart has failed me. (NASB)

Belshazzar

Daniel 5:6 Then the king's face grew pale, and his thoughts alarmed him; and his hip joints went slack, and his knees began knocking together. (NASB)

The Scribes and the Pharisees

John 8:9 And when they heard it, they [began] to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the midst. (NASB)

FACTS ABOUT THE CONSCIENCE

1) Witnesses in man

Pr 20:27 ¶ The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all his innermost parts.

Ro 2:15 They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness and their conflicting thoughts accuse or perhaps excuse them

2) Accuses of sin

Ge 42:21 ¶ Then they said to one another, "In truth we are guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he besought us and we would not listen; therefore is this distress come upon us."

2Sa 24:10 ¶ But David's heart smote him after he had numbered the people. And David said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly in what I have done. But now, O LORD, I pray thee, take away the iniquity of thy servant; for I have done very foolishly."

Mt 27:3 When Judas, his betrayer, saw that he was condemned, he repented and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders,

Ac 2:37 ¶ Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

3) We should have the approval of

Job 27:6 I hold fast my righteousness, and will not let it go; my heart does not reproach me for any of my days.

Ac 24:16 So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward God and toward men.

Ro 9:1 ¶ I am speaking the truth in Christ, I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit,

Ro 14:22 The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God; happy is he who has no reason to judge himself for what he approves.

4) The blood of Christ alone can purify

Heb 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.

Heb 10:2 Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered? If the worshipers had once been cleansed, they would no longer have any consciousness of sin.

Heb 10:3 But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sin year after year.

Heb 10:4 For it is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins.

Heb 10:5 Consequently, when Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings thou hast not desired, but a body hast thou prepared for me;
Heb 10:6 in burnt offerings and sin offerings thou hast taken no pleasure.
Heb 10:7 ¶ Then I said, 'Lo, I have come to do thy will, O God,' as it is written of me in the roll of the book."
Heb 10:8 When he said above, "Thou hast neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law),
Heb 10:9 then he added, "Lo, I have come to do thy will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second.
Heb 10:10 And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.
Heb 10:22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

5) Keep the faith in purity of

1Ti 1:19 holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting conscience, certain persons have made shipwreck of their faith,
1Ti 3:9 they must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

6) Of saints, pure and good

Heb 13:18 ¶ Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things.
1Pe 3:16 ¶ and keep your conscience clear, so that, when you are abused, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame.
1Pe 3:21 ¶ Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

7) Submit to authority for

Ro 13:5 Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.

8) Suffer patiently for

1Pe 2:19 For one is approved if, mindful of God, he endures pain while suffering unjustly.

9) Testimony of, a source of joy

2Co 1:12 ¶ For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience that we have behaved in the world, and still more toward you, with holiness and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God.
1Jo 3:21 Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God;

10) Of others, not to be offended

Ro 14:21 it is right not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that makes your brother stumble.
1Co 10:28 (But if some one says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then out of consideration for the man who informed you, and for conscience' sake--
1Co 10:29 I mean his conscience, not yours-- do not eat it.) For why should my liberty be determined by another man's scruples?
1Co 10:30 If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks?
1Co 10:31 So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
1Co 10:32 Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God,

11) Preachers should commend themselves to the conscience of every person

2 Corinthians 4:2 but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. (NASB)

12) Of the wicked, seared

1 Timothy 4:2 by means of the hypocrisy of liars **seared** in their own conscience as with a branding iron, (NASB)

13) Of the wicked, defiled

Titus 1:15 To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are **defiled**. (NASB)

14) Of the wicked, evil

Hebrews 10:22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled [clean] from an **evil** conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. (NASB)

15) Of the wicked, weak

1 Corinthians 8:7 However not all men have this knowledge; but some, being accustomed to the idol until now, eat [food] as if it were sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being **weak** is defiled. (NASB)

16) A false guide to the lost

Ac 23:1 ¶ And Paul, looking intently at the council, said, "Brethren, I have lived before God in all good conscience up to this day."

Ac 26:9 "I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth.