

A Conscience Void of Offence

Read Acts 24:16

And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

"Pray for a strong and lively sense of sin; the greater the sense of sin, the less sin."

-- Samuel Rutherford, Scot. Clergy (1600-61)

"Man is a free moral agent, able to follow his conscience, or ignore it. The more you ignore your conscience, the easier it is to ignore, until it becomes callous. It no longer checks you when you are about to do something wrong."

-- Kenneth Walter, AM. Clergy (1997)

"Here is where some weaken, they let their fear of man, or their desire for human applause weaken and nullify the voice of conscience. Instead of being consecrated to God, they let other people control their consciences and mark out their duty and then wonder why they have so little religious joy and comfort." -- G. A. McLaughlin, clergy and author

"Conscience is the eye of the soul; and how troublesome is the least mite of dust falling in the eye; and how quickly does it weep and water upon the least grievance that affects it." -- South

"Conscience appears to have a threefold office: First, it is a witness, testifying what we have done; second, a judge, passing sentence upon what we have done; third, it in some sort executes the sentence by complacency in the well-doer, and uneasiness in the evil-doer." -- Wesley

A scrupulous conscience is a sore evil; but a hardened one yet a thousand times more dangerous. -- Wesley.

Like a Wheelbarrow

The trouble with the advice, "Follow your conscience" is that most people follow it like someone following a wheelbarrow—they direct it wherever they want it to go, and then follow behind.

Source unknown

A Conscience....

I. Should be void of offence

Acts 24

14 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:

15 And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

16 And herein do I exercise myself, **to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.**

....void of offence

1 John 3:21 Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.

Myself

I have to live with myself, and so
I want to be fit for myself to know,
I want to be able, as days go by,
Always to look myself straight in the eye;

I don't want to stand, with the setting sun,
And hate myself for the things I've done.
I don't want to keep on the closet shelf
A lot of secrets about myself,

And fool myself, as I come and go,
Into thinking that nobody else will know
The kind of a man I really am;
I don't want to dress up myself in sham.

I want to go out with my head erect,
I want to deserve all men's respect;
But here in the struggle for fame and pelf
I want to be able to like myself.

I don't want to look at myself and know
That I'm bluster and bluff and empty show.
I can never hide myself from me;
I see what others may never see;

I know what others may never know,
I never can fool myself, and so,
Whatever happens, I want to be
Self-respecting and conscience free.

Edgar Guest

A Conscience....

II. Needs be Pure

2 Tim 1

1 ¶ Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,
according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,
2 To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and
peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.
3 I thank God, **whom I serve from my forefathers with
pure conscience**, that without ceasing I have remembrance
of thee in my prayers night and day;

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.

For a Good Conscience....

III. You May Suffer

1 Peter 2

19 For this is thankworthy, **if a man for conscience
toward God endure grief**, suffering wrongfully.
20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your
faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well,
and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with
God.
21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also
suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should
follow his steps:

1 Peter 3

16 **Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak
evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that
falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.**
17 For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer
for well doing, than for evil doing.

A Conscience...

IV. Can Be Wounded

7 ¶ Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols;

11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and **wound their weak conscience**, ye sin against Christ.

13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

"The Wound of conscience cannot be healed without probing, nor probed with out pain. If the, like Herod, you have some particular sin, (mark 6:17) for which you cannot bear reproof, you are deceiving yourself by supposing your joys are a proof of your conversion."

-- J. Thornton

Illustration:

Dumping hot bacon grease into a glass coffee mug and it shattered and burned my leg.

Healing of the wound...

Illustration:

*Finger caught in Fairest wheel, how it left a welt
Visit to Knobbles Amusement Park, how I was convicted*

Christ is the only one who can repair a damaged Conscience! Seek him for a healing.....

A Conscience...

V. Can be seared.

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

Seared = kauteriazō kow-tay-ree-ad'-zo; to brand ("cauterize"), i.e. (by implication) to **render insensitive**

Christ is the only one who can repair a damaged Conscience! Seek him for a healing.....

A Seared Conscience

If we look at the sin of David with Bathsheba was because of a seared conscience. 2 Samuel 11:1-17

Take warning, ONCE SIN sets in our mind n spiritual Reasoning are mared, distorted. Who here will stand in the Day of Judgment?

Psalms 24.3-4

3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? 4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

1. How does it happen?

Repeated failure and shrugging off the conviction

First it is Wounded..

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Then when it is not healed it can become Seared!

How can a conscience be revived to life again

2. It must be awoken?

Must be shocked alive

Defibrillator

When the heart stops on a patient the medical staff may use a defibrillator to restart the heart. So it is with our conscience, it must be shocked alive again!

2 Samuel 12:

1 ¶ And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.

2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:

3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.

4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him.

5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:

6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity.

7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.

9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

After its been shocked into life again, now it can be Healed
VI. Can be healed.

How can it be healed?

Through calling out to God in Repentance

Psalm 51

<<To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.>>

1 Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

7 ¶ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

14 ¶ Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

Good Quotes

- “A good conscience is able to bear very much and is very cheerful in adversities. An evil conscience is always fearful and unquiet. Never rejoice except when you have done well. You shall rest sweetly if your heart does not accuse you.
- “Sinners never have true joy or feel inward peace, because ‘there is no peace for the wicked,’ says the Lord (Isaiah 57:21).
- The glory of the good is in their consciences, and not in the tongues of others, The gladness of the just is of God, and in God; and their joy is of the truth.
- “A person will easily be content and pacified whose conscience is pure. If you consider what you are within, you will not care what others say concerning you. People consider the deeds, but God weighs the intentions.
- “To be always doing well and to esteem little of one’s self is the sign of a humble soul.
- “For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends,” says Paul (2 Corinthians 10:18). To walk inwardly with God, and not to be kept abroad by any outward affection, is the state of a spiritual person.”
- “Conscience is that faculty in me which attaches itself to the highest that I know, and tells me what the highest I know demands that I do.
- “It is the eye of the soul which looks out either toward God or toward what it regards as the highest authority.
- “If I am in the habit of steadily facing toward God, my conscience will always introduce God’s perfect law and indicate what I should do.

- “The point is, will I obey? I have to make an effort to keep my conscience so sensitive that I walk without offense. I should be living in such perfect sympathy with God’s Son that in every circumstance the spirit of my mind is renewed.
- “The one thing that keeps the conscience sensitive to Him is the habit of being open to God on the inside.
- “When there is any debate, quit. There is no debate possible when conscience speaks.” Christian Personal Ethics, C.F.H. Henry, Eerdmans, 1957, p. 509ff

Conclusion

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II. Needs be Pure

For a Good Conscience....

III. You May Suffer

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IV. Can Be Wounded

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V. Can be seared.

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VI. Can be healed.