

A GOOD CONSCIENCE

1 Peter 3:18-22

INTRODUCTION: Our conscience is one of the most wonderful things that our God has placed into the hearts of man. Conscience is our wisest counselor and teacher or our worst enemy depending upon how we respond to it. Proverbs 20:27: Our conscience is God's lamp in our hearts.

I. THE GUIDANCE AND WARNING OF CONSCIENCE!

Conscience is given to us by our God to call the thoughts, the words, or the deeds as right or wrong. Although a man may not obey his conscience, still conscience does its job. Our conscience was given to us by our God to instruct, guide and warn us. The very first temptation of mankind displayed conscience at work: Genesis 3:1-3. This part of the Bible, the very first part is not outmoded. It is the most modern page in the Bible because this is still happening today, everyday and everywhere on this earth. With every temptation our conscience speaks to our hearts; it can be obeyed or disobeyed, the choice is ours. Joseph is a good example of proper response to conscience: Genesis 39:6-10. Pilate is an example of not obeying conscience: Matthew 27:19; John 19:4-5; John 19:12; that ended the battle of conscience for Pilate. We must learn the blessing and the curse of not listening to our conscience.

II. WE MUST KEEP OUR CONSCIENCE SENSITIVE!

When we ignore our conscience we harm ourselves and others needlessly. No bribe or threat or tears can suspend the results of a neglected conscience: Galatians 6:7-8. When we disobey our conscience we lose our joy. The sense of guilt and the reproach of an ignored conscience takes all satisfaction away from our greatest achievements in this life. When we ignore our conscience we become filled with fear. Genesis 3:8-12.

III. THE REWARDS OF CONSCIENCE!

In our times of tribulation or persecution or even of slander there is no friend like a good conscience. A good conscience although costly pays large dividends. Joseph had to pay a high price to obey his conscience: Genesis 39:19-22. Daniel's three friends were greatly rewarded for obeying their conscience: Daniel 3:24-25; Psalm 23:4. At every trial and temptation we need to look to our conscience and trust it to take us over and through our trials: 1 Corinthians 10:11-13. Our conscience can instruct us, guide us, and warn us and punish us or bless us but there is one thing conscience cannot do. It cannot revoke its sentence or suspend its judgment. It cannot heal what it inflicts. It cannot cleanse our soul from its sin. Conscience was given to us to warn us, to instruct us, to guide us, and to punish us but only our God can cleanse a sinner and give us a pure conscience once again. We must turn to our God for His mercy and His blood will cleanse us from all sin. 1 John 1:5-10. Our God alone can say to our conscience "Peace be still." Isaiah 1:18. With a cleansed conscience we can once again walk in the joy of the Lord. Psalm 51:10-14.

Dave all verses are from the NIV.

Songs

414 Have Thine Own Way Lord

410 Cleanse Me Dave check this out to be sure it is the right one. Page 398 is the same title.

368 Whiter Than Snow

Thanks again for all your labor in the Lord Dave!