

What Should We Do With Our Conscience?

Introduction

1. **Our aim as Christians ought to be to “serve [God] with a pure conscience.”**

2 Timothy 1:3 I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did.....

2. **The question is not whether we have a conscience, but what we choose to do with it!**

Listen to it

1. **Conscience is “that still, small voice within.” Most of us have some trouble “hearing” our conscience when it is trying to speak to us.**
2. **Our conscience can be a very valuable “advisor” in regard to the course of our conduct, but we don’t get the full benefit of our conscience because we don’t consult it as we should.**
3. **Conscience will usually tell us what we should do — if we go “deep” enough.**

Romans 1:32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

Romans 2:15 who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them.

4. **We must ask with the true intent to hear — and then listen without excuse.**

Obey it

1. It is not enough to **ask** with intent and listen without excuse — we must **act** with courage! We must obey our conscience.
2. If we **know** what is right, we must **do it**. Not to do so is sin.

James 4:17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

- A. The person who **knew** God's will but **did not do it** will incur a stricter judgment than the one who did not know.

Luke 12:47-48 And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

Romans 14:23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; **for whatever is not from faith is sin.**

3. If we repeatedly fail to heed our conscience, we will damage it.

1 Timothy 4:2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

Ephesians 4:19 who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

4. Every time we go against our conscience, we make a “withdrawal” from our personal “trust account.”
 - 1) One of the most important things in life is to have a secure trust in our own integrity. The real basis of “self-worth” is knowing that **we will do what we believe is right.** When we violate our conscience we reduce the confidence we have in our own trustworthiness.

Educate it

1. **How helpful our conscience is depends on how well “educated” it is.**
2. **If it is misinformed as to God’s will, our conscience will approve that which is wrong.**

Acts 23:1 Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, "Men and brethren, **I have lived in all good conscience** before God until this day."

3. **In regard to a specific action, our conscience may be either too sensitive (Rom. 14:1-23) or not sensitive enough (1 Cor. 5:1-8).**
4. **We should constantly be studying God’s word in order to “fine-tune” our conscience.**

Protect it

1. **We should avoid that which would “de-sensitize” our conscience.**
2. **When we are constantly exposed to perversity, the “shocking” effect of sin wears off.**
3. **Our conscience can become “defiled.”**

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

4. **We can’t go “out of the world” (1 Cor. 5:9-10), but we can minimize our exposure to defilement. We can “flee” from sin.**
1 Timothy 6:11
Matthew 6:13
1 Corinthians 6:18
1 Corinthians 10:14
2 Timothy 2:22
5. **“Evil company corrupts good habits” (1 Cor. 15:33).**

Share it

1. **We can and should **speak up** for what our conscience tells us is right.**

Exodus 23:1-2 "You shall not circulate a false report. Do not put your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. You shall not follow a crowd to do evil; nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after many to pervert justice.

2. **The world needs people of honesty and integrity who will step forward and say: This is **not right!****

3. **It is sometimes **costly** to voice our conscience. It does take **courage.****

Revelation 2:13 "I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.

Revelation 6:9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

4. **But the **example** of a courageous conscience often has a very powerful effect on **others.****

1 Peter 2:19 For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.

Conclusion

1. **The materialist has no satisfactory explanation for the human conscience.**
2. **Conscience is one of the most valuable endowments God has given us.**
3. **What condition is our conscience in? What are we doing with it?**
4. **When we obey the gospel in the act of baptism, we are appealing to God for “a good conscience”**

1 Peter 3:21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: (KJV)

5. **The love that comes from “a good conscience” is one of the primary goals of the gospel**

1 Timothy 1:5 The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. (ESV)

