

The Power of a Good Conscience

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Introduction: God is able to make a sinful man a new creation!

- A. The power of God's word is seen in the change within a sinful man to become a child of God. **(2 Cor 5:17)**
 - 1. The word of God changes the motives and the thinking of the one who lets God's word be implanted in his heart. **(1 Pt 1:22; James 1:21)**
 - 2. Consider the change in the apostle Paul at his conversion.
- B. God has given us a powerful tool for good in our conscience.
 - 1. The essence of conversion is honesty towards God and self and a desire to yield to God's way. **(1 Pt 3:21)**
 - 2. A good conscience will bless you and the loss of a good conscience will curse you.
 - 3. We need to understand the commitment and wisdom necessary to keep the conscience clean. **(Acts 24:16)**

I. Honesty and a good conscience

- A. Without honesty you cannot have a relationship with God. **(Lk 8:15 KJV)**
 - 1. God has chosen to reach our hearts through truth! **(Jn 8:32)**
 - 2. Satan tries to blind the heart to receive the truth.
(2 Cor 4:3-4; Jn 8:44-45)
 - 3. Pilate was so caught up in personal ambition that all he could say is "what is truth?" **(Jn 18:37-38)**
 - 4. If a person cannot look and reason at hard truths, they cannot know God.
 - 5. How are you and I building our lives? Is our emphasis truth or relationships? Can we be honest with ourselves?
- B. In order to see clearly we must have a pure heart!
 - 1. We must have a commitment to that which is true **(Phil 4:8)**
 - 2. We must have pure motives **(Titus 1:5, James 3:17)**
- C. The world has no hope of understanding.
 - 1. How many get angry over gossip or lies and stop thinking! **(Prov 18:19)**
 - 2. The Romans had a good law but perverted justice. Laws do not replace morals!
"But when religion loses its voice and the media worship success, when right and wrong become relativised and morality is condemned as "judgmental", when people lose all sense of honour and shame and there is nothing they won't do if they can get away with it, no regulation will save us. People will outwit the regulators, as they did by the securitisation of risk so no one knew who owed what to whom." - **Morals: the one thing markets don't make** - No amount of regulation will restore our sense of honour and shame. Economics needs ethics – by Jonathan Sacks

II. The power of a good conscience – the example of Daniel

- A. Imagine being in Daniel's shoes in a conquering country with no rights.

1. What God expected of His people did not change. (**Psa 119:10-11**)
 2. Daniel could discern and know the truth. He also could stand for it. (**Dan 1:8**)
 3. Imagine the many “reasons” he could have found a “new non-traditional perspective!” Circumstances do not change what is true.
- B. People learned this about Daniel.
1. Those who trust in God develop a way of thinking! (**2 Tim 1:7, 13**)
 2. Daniel did not hesitate to stand and speak up! Some fear this kind of faith.
 3. This consistency brought favor with the chief of the eunuchs (**Dan 1:10-15**)
- C. Are you known for a good conscience?
1. You will be tested and lose “friendships” over this. (**1 Pt 3:16**)
 2. You have an alternative from playing the game of “hide and seek” with men.
 3. Do not be ashamed of brethren that stand up and speak out.
 4. Most of all, are you honest with yourself? (**Gal 6:3**)

III. A good conscience and morals

- A. Without a good conscience men can justify anything. (**1 Cor 6:9-10; Eph 5:5-7**)
1. Have you ever tried to stand in the way of someone who is determined to do something wrong? (**Prov 17:12**)
 2. Here is where there can be “peer groups” within the church.
 3. How far will you stand against these things? (**Eph 5:3-4; 1 Pt 3:10-11**)
 4. How sad to see Christians practice deception. Those who love you will confront and test you. (Ex. Parents and children)
- B. Sin will take you further than you will want to go. (**Gal 6:7**)
1. The loss of a good conscience will affect all of you relationships.
 2. How many thought that they could “handle it” or that it would be different for them?
 3. There are many who are living a life that they never dreamed they would live. (**1 Tim 1:19-20**)
 4. The first steps to destroy a conscience are falsely considered as “small.”

III. A good conscience and friends

- A. Why do some seek friendship with those who seek to tear their conscience down? (**1 Cor 15:33**)
1. You will find both moral and “doctrinal” compromises to follow the same path.
 2. Do you have friends that love the truth? Will they speak out? Worldly friends will speak out too and wonder why you are different. (**1 Jn 4:5-6**)
 3. Who are you ashamed of? (**Lk 9:26; 2 Tim 1:8, 16**)
- B. You will never regret building and keeping a good conscience!
1. One of the best things that can happen to you is to “crash and burn” and then repent. You can build again a good conscience!
 2. There is great power in a pure heart and a clear conscience. (**Psa 51:10-13**)

Conclusion: What does the mirror of God’s word say to you and I? (**James 1:23-25**)