

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

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Conscience

"Never do anything against conscience even if the state demands it." – Albert Einstein

"A guilty conscience needs no accuser." – Anonymous

"I am more afraid of my own heart, than of the Pope and all his cardinals. – I have within me the great Pope, self." – Martin Luther

"Conscience is God present in man." – Victor Hugo

"There is no witness so terrible and no accuser so powerful as conscience which dwells within us." – Sophocles

Conscience is defined, "The part of the mind that makes you aware of your actions as being either morally right or wrong." (Webster) Of the many wonderful gifts of God, certainly the conscience must be seen in that light. John Cook referred to it as our "magnetic compass," but may better be regarded as our "moral compass."

Your conscience is indeed amazing. If trained properly, in accordance with God's Word, it can be a powerful tool to keep you from doing that which is contrary to the will of God.

In John chapter 8, we read a most interesting story in how that a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery was brought before our Lord by the scribes and Pharisees. They used the occasion as an opportunity to test Jesus. They told the Lord that Moses, in the law, commanded that such a woman be stoned. But Jesus acted as though He did not hear. And with persistence the Lord finally said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first" (John 8:7). But something remarkable happened. "Then those who heard it, being convicted by their *conscience*, went out one by one..." (John 8:9).

The conscience can indeed be a powerful force upon us. When we know we have done wrong, it can indeed be a convicting power. And the apostle John makes us aware, that when those men were convicted by their conscience, they went out "beginning with the oldest even to the last." This shows that it was the internal guilt that caused the exodus.

Peter tell us, that when we do what God asks of us, and are baptized, that it is "the answer of a good conscience" (1 Pet. 3:21). The conscience works both ways. It makes us keenly aware when we have done wrong, and makes us feel good when we know we have done right.

We must treasure this gift of God and learn not to go against it. Paul warns of those who consciences are "seared with a hot iron" (1 Tim. 4:2). If we violate it repeatedly, it will lose its value – and we don't ever want that to happen!