

# SET FREE FROM SIN & LAW BY DEATH

## PART 4 – ENJOYING A GOOD CONSCIENCE ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE

Last Sunday we spoke about The New Way of Living which God has provided for us now, since we are no longer under the External Law of commandments and since we now have The Spirit of The Law written on our hearts.

We saw that we walk in The Newness of Life by following **the inner promptings of our conscience**. These promptings witness to our mind what is right at any given time.

One commentator said about how we should now walk ...  
*'Spontaneously ... not acting under the coercion of any external rule, but simply **by the promptings of our own conscience**...'* Ellicott

We also quoted an obscure scripture from Romans that gives us insight into how **the conscience** of 'Man' works internally ...

Romans 2:15 NLT

*They [Gentiles] demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts, **for their own conscience** and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right.*

### WHAT IS 'CONSCIENCE'?

- According to Walt Disney ... conscience is **our inner guide** that shows us what is right and wrong.

**SLIDE** *The Fairy in Walt Disney's Pinocchio* (written by Italian writer Carlo Collodi in 1881) almost quotes Romans 2 when she says to Pinocchio, **'Be a good boy and always let your conscience be your guide'**.

- THE GREEK WORD FOR CONSCIENCE IS **syneidēseōs**  
*means: a persisting notion of Moral consciousness.*
- THE OXFORD DICTIONARY calls it *'a person's moral sense of right and wrong, viewed as acting as a guide to one's behaviour'*

OUR CONSCIENCE IS **THE MORAL CENTRE** OF OUR INNER BEING  
THE **MORAL STANDARD** OF WHAT IS RIGHT

**BUT HOW DOES THE CONSCIENCE KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT?  
WHAT STANDARD DOES IT USE?**

**I believe it is a remnant left in man from the original creation**

**SLIDE Man was originally created with a good conscience**

**MAN WAS CREATED IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD, in a perfect environment.**

**So, man knew that GOD HIMSELF WAS THE TRUE STANDARD OF WHAT IS RIGHT & GOOD ...**

**GOD HIMSELF IS THE STANDARD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS UPON WHICH MAN'S CONSCIENCE WAS ORIGINALLY BASED.**

**MAN HAD A POSITIVE CONSCIENCE**

**IT WAS A POSITIVE CONSCIENCE BECAUSE THERE WAS NO WRONG ...**

**THE CONSCIENCE WAS NEVER MEANT TO KNOW WRONG ... ONLY RIGHT!**

**EVERY SECOND OF EVERY DAY MAN'S CONSCIENCE REJOICED & CONFIRMED THAT GOD WAS GOOD & WHAT HE DID WAS GOOD ... The way it was meant to be.**

**God had imparted 'Goodness' into all creation.  
Genesis 1:31 – God declared ... It was all good!**

**It's interesting to note ... WHEN WE KNOW WHAT IS RIGHT ... WE INSTINCTIVELY KNOW EVERYTHING ELSE THAT IS WRONG.  
We don't have to learn what is wrong when we know what is right.**

**SLIDE However, after The Fall ... THE CONSCIENCE OF MAN CRIED OUT AT ALL THE WRONG THAT HAD INVADED MAN & WITH WHICH IT WAS CONFRONTED.**

**EVER SINCE THAT TIME, THE CONSCIENCE OF MAN HAS SUFFERED ... TRYING TO ESTABLISH SOME MORAL STANDARD NOW AWAY FROM GOD'S MANIFEST PRESENCE.**

**SO SINCE THAT TIME ... WE FIND THAT PEOPLE'S MORAL STANDARDS ALL DIFFER FROM PERSON TO PERSON.**

**SLIDE** *The other evening, I watched a western movie which started with a statement ... 'Around 1846 in The USA, The Texas Rangers had their own code of law that they answered to.'*

*In The Southern States of America most white people believed that Black people were an inferior race and they made them slaves. The white children were brought up believing slavery was right, which became the standard from which their conscience operated.*

## THE NEW TESTAMENT TELLS US

### **SLIDE** THERE ARE THREE MAIN CATEGORIES OF CONSCIENCE

THERE IS A SEARED CONSCIENCE

- A WEAK CONSCIENCE AND
- A GOOD CONSCIENCE

The Good Conscience is what I want to get to ...  
But let's quickly look at the other two.

#### **SLIDE** A SEARED CONSCIENCE

1 Timothy 4:1-2 BSB **SLIDE**

*Now the Spirit expressly states that in later times some will abandon the faith to follow deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons, <sup>2</sup> influenced by the hypocrisy of liars, **whose consciences are seared with a hot iron.***

*Seared = To cauterize - to render desensitised*

**THIS IS A CONSCIENCE THAT DOESN'T WORK AT ALL ...  
AS OPPOSED TO A WEAK CONSCIENCE WHICH IS A  
CONSCIENCE THAT WORKS TOO MUCH ...**

#### **SLIDE** A WEAK CONSCIENCE

1 Corinthians 8:7 BSB **SLIDE**

*But not everyone has this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that they eat such food as if it were sacrificed to an idol. And since **their conscience is weak**, it is defiled.*

It is over sensitive, over active.

**Romans 14:20** BSB

Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to let his eating be a stumbling block.

**NB: Many people in Corinth especially, had come from extreme idol worship. And now they were sensitive to where the meat came from. And for them to eat it because you ate, contravened their conscience.**

*When I was born-again, I smashed all my worldly records ...  
Bands like Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin and many others ...  
I could not stand being around anyone playing such music.*

**TO ME, IT WAS LIKE WORSHIP TO OTHER GODS ...  
AND IT OFFENDED MY WEAK CONSCIENCE.**

Paul says in –

Romans 14:14 NIV **SLIDE**

*I am convinced, being fully persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself. **But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for that person it is unclean.***

**TO ME THIS MUSIC WAS UNCLEAN.**

*My conscience was oversensitive to this music because it had been my idol before I was a believer reason ...*

**THIS WAS MY WEAK CONSCIENCE ...  
OVER ACTIVE ... OVER SENSITIVE ...**

*I knew others like me that called this music, 'The Devils Music'.*

**NB: WE SEE IN 1 Corinthians 8:7 THAT THIS WEAK CONSCIENCE IS DUE TO A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE ...**

1 Corinthians 8:7 BSB **SLIDE**

***But not everyone has this knowledge.** Some people are still so accustomed to idols that they eat such food as if it were sacrificed to an idol. And since **their conscience is weak**, it is defiled.*

**SOME OF US ARE RESTRICTED BY THE LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF NEW TESTAMENT TRUTH and have been for too long.**

*It's not like these people have just been converted and just come out of something bad ...*

*These people have been stuck in a weak conscience for years ...*  
**RESTRICTED FROM GROWING IN GOD.**

Some are bound up in church law ... or religious customs ...

Some of us still feel like God is waiting with a big club to bash us  
for doing the slightest thing wrong ...

Some of us are bound up in fear of offending our weak conscience.

### **IT'S TIME WE DEVELOPED A 'GOOD CONSCIENCE'**

*Slowly, by the Grace of God, I grew in Grace and Knowledge of Our  
Lord Jesus ...*

*These things were No Longer an issue.*

**WHY?**

*Not because I had ignored or hardened my conscience ...*

*But because **MY CONSCIENCE HAD BEEN ADJUSTED TO BE  
ALIGNED TO NEW TESTAMENT TRUTH.***

***IT CAME INTO THE 3<sup>RD</sup> CATEGORY ...***

***IT BECAME 'A GOOD CONSCIENCE'.***

*NB: I now have a couple of secular CDs which I can appreciate for  
their musical value ...*

*Not that I listen to them much at all – Not because my conscience is  
offended ... but because I enjoy other things more ... more godly  
things*

### **SLIDE A GOOD CONSCIENCE**

1 Timothy 1:5 Berean Literal Bible **SLIDE**

*Now the goal of our instruction is love out of a pure heart and a  
**good conscience** and a sincere faith.*

Acts 23:1 Berean Literal Bible

*And having looked intently at the Council, Paul said, "Men,  
brothers, I have lived as a citizen **in all good conscience to God**  
unto this day."*

### **WHAT IS A 'GOOD CONSCIENCE'?**

**NB: THIS IS NOT A CLEAR CONSCIENCE AS SOME  
TRANSLATIONS CALL IT.**

**IT IS A GOOD CONSCIENCE**

Every time This Word (*agathēs*) is used it is interpreted 'GOOD'

*meaning something approved by God Himself ... Something God calls 'GOOD'.*

***We use the term 'a clear conscience' meaning we have lived right or done right ...***

**BUT THAT IS NOT WHAT THE SCRIPTURE MEANS ABOUT A GOOD CONSCIENCE.**

**A 'Good Conscience' is not something we get because we do good!**

- A GOOD CONSCIENCE IS **NOT FROM DOING RIGHT**
- A GOOD CONSCIENCE IS **FROM BELIEVING RIGHT**

**A GOOD CONSCIENCE IS A CONSCIENCE ESTABLISHED IN FAITH IN EVERYTHING CHRIST HAS DONE.**

**A GOOD CONSCIENCE IS A CONSCIENCE ALIGNED TO NEW TESTAMENT TRUTH ...**

***THIS NEW TESTAMENT CONSCIENCE IS GOOD  
BEFORE WE DO ANY WORK,  
NOT BECAUSE WE DO THE WORK***

**A CONSCIENCE THAT KNOWS –**

***BEFORE I DO ANYTHING ... I AM ALREADY THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST (2 Corinthians 5:21)***

***THAT BEFORE I DO ANYTHING I AM ALREADY 100% JUSTIFIED AND AT PEACE WITH GOD (Romans 5:1)***

***THAT BEFORE I DO ANYTHING I AM NOW ALREADY 100% ACCEPTED IN THE SON OF THE FATHER'S LOVE***

***(Colossians 1:12)***

***THAT I AM ALREADY HIS SON (Ephesians 1:5)***

**WE HAVE A REDEEMED CONSCIENCE**

- A JUSTIFIED CONSCIENCE
- A NEW TESTAMENT CONSCIENCE

***THIS GOOD CONSCIENCE DIRECTS US TO DO GOOD ...  
DOING GOOD or BAD DOES NOT AFFECT THIS CONSCIENCE ...  
THIS CONSCIENCE EFFECTS DOING GOOD***

**THIS NEW TESTAMENT CONSCIENCE ONLY LOOKS AT GOOD –**

**Love rejoices in truth ... It does not rejoice in Iniquity  
(1 Corinthians 13:6)**

**THE NEW TESTAMENT CONSCIENCE WILL NEVER CONDEMN  
YOU**

When Romans tells us that 'There is NOW therefore NO condemnation (Romans 8:1)

**THIS MEANS THERE IS ALSO NO TYPE OF CONDEMNATION FROM ANY SOURCE.**

***NO SMALL CONDEMNATION ... NO LARGE CONDEMNATION ... NOT CONDEMNATION FROM SATAN ... FROM FAMILY ... FROM YOUR ENEMY ...***

***BUT NEITHER FROM YOUR CONSCIENCE ...***

**FOR YOUR CONSCIENCE TO NOW CONDEMN YOU IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IS FOR IT TO VIOLATE ALL THAT CHRIST HAS DONE IN SETTING YOU FREE FROM ALL CONDEMNATION.**

**HOWEVER ... I STILL ENCOUNTER MY INNER LEGALISM**

**EVEN WHEN WE HAVE HAD A WHOLE NEW BELIEF REVEALED ... A NEW TESTAMENT BELIEF ... A NEW CREATION BELIEF ...**

***WE ARE STILL TROUBLED BY THE FLESH ... OUR REACTIONS ... OUR WORDS ... OUR FEELINGS OF ANGER, JEALOUSLY ...***

***WE ARE STILL CONDEMNED ...***

***WE HAVE AN INNER LEGALISM***

***There needs to be a constant reshaping and realigning of our inner conscience ...***

**OUR CONSCIENCE NEEDS TO BE CONTINUALLY BROUGHT BACK TO GOD WHO JUSTIFIES**

**JOHN ANSWERS THIS ANOMOLY**

1 John 3:20 NLT **SLIDE**

***Even if we feel guilty, God is greater than our feelings, and he knows everything.***

Hebrews 10:22 BSB **SLIDE**

***Let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.***

(See also Hebrews 9:14)

*Sprinkled = Asperse = to attack the reputation or integrity of something*

*Ellicot says, 'And of a good conscience – This "charity" must also spring from **a conscience unburdened of its load of guilt**, from a conscience sprinkled with the precious blood and so reconciled to God.*

**Reckoning ourselves dead to sin and alive to God is not just a one off task ... It is a constant task that now takes care of our inner legalism**

Isaiah 54:4 NLT **SLIDE**

*Fear not; you will no longer live in shame. Don't be afraid; there is no more disgrace for you. You will no longer remember the shame of your youth and the sorrows of widowhood.*

Romans 8:33-34 BSB

*Who will bring any charge against God's elect? **It is God who justifies.***

*<sup>34</sup>Who is there to condemn us? For Christ Jesus, who died, and more than that was raised to life, is at the right hand of God—and **He is interceding for us.** <sup>35</sup>Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?*