

Conscience

What is the conscience?

John 8:9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

The conscience is a God-given faculty of the human spirit whose function is to tell us the difference between right and wrong.

As in this instance, in Jesus' dealings with the woman who was caught in adultery, the conscience convicts of sin.

Rom 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)

The conscience is an inbuilt facility that has God's law programmed into it.

Is the conscience always right?

1 Cor 8:7 However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

1 Cor 8:10 For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols?

1 Cor 8:12 But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.

A person can have a weak conscience which, by being overly sensitive can register that something is wrong even if it isn't.

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

A person's conscience can be seared and made numb through continual sin.

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.

A person's conscience can be defiled (contaminated) through the effects of a sinful life.

What happens if a person doesn't listen to their conscience?

1 Tim 1:19 having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck,

Ultimately, failure to accept the testimony of a Spirit-led, Word-shaped conscience will result in a shipwrecked faith.

Rom 2:14-16 for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, (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) (16) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

On the Day of Judgment, people will be judged according to how they listened to their conscience.

What about the conscience of a Christian?

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.”

2 Cor 1:12 For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you.

Acts 24:16 This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

1 Pet 3:16 having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

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

1 Pet 3:21 There is also an antitype which now saves us; baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

A Christian should strive to have a good conscience, one that is clear of wrongdoings both towards God and towards men, and assured of righteous behaviour; this is part of our testimony towards unbelievers.

1 Tim 3:9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

Christians should have a pure conscience.

Rom 9:1 I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,

A Christian’s conscience needs to be under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

1 Tim 1:5 Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith,

A Christian’s conscience should be shaped by love and the commandments of God’s Word.

Heb 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Heb 10:22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Since nobody is perfect and sinless, we need to have our consciences continually cleansed by the blood of Christ.

1 Cor 10:25 Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience’ sake;

1 Cor 10:27 If any of those who do not believe invites you to dinner, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience’ sake.

1 Cor 10:28-29 But if anyone says to you, “This was offered to idols,” do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience’ sake; for “the earth is the Lord’s, and all its fullness.” (29) “Conscience,” I say, not your own, but that of the other. For why is my liberty judged by another man’s conscience?

We should not allow our consciences to be affected by our past, our previous religion, or by other people’s beliefs.

However, we should be mindful of how our actions affect the consciences of others.