

# Our Use of Divine Guidance

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We ask for it - James 1:5; Col. 1:9-10

We accept it – 1 Thess. 2:13

We act upon it – Matt. 7:24-27

We make judgments and decisions based upon it – Ps. 119:97-100

We internalize it

# The Conscience

OUR INTERNAL MORAL COMPASS

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# 1 Samuel 24:5-6

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Now it happened afterward that **David's heart troubled him** because he had cut Saul's robe. And he said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is anointed of the Lord."

# The Conscience: Defined

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lit. a knowing with, i.e. a co-knowledge (with oneself); the witness borne to one's conduct by conscience; that faculty by which we apprehend the will of God, as that which is designed to govern our lives; hence

- a) the sense of guiltiness before God
- b) that process of thought which distinguishes what it considers morally good or bad, commending the good, condemning the bad, and so prompting to do the former and avoid the latter.

(Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words)

# The Conscience: Its Quality

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Can be good - Heb. 13:18

Can be weak - 1 Cor. 8:4,7

Can be defiled - Tit. 1:15-16

Can be seared - 1 Tim. 4:1,2

# Hebrews 13:18

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Pray for us, for we are sure that **we have a good conscience**, desiring to conduct ourselves honorably in all things.

# 1 Corinthians 8:4,7

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Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing, and that there is no other God but one. . . .

However not all men have this knowledge; but some, being accustomed to the idol until now, eat food as if it were sacrificed to an idol; and **their conscience being weak is defiled.**

# Titus 1:15-16

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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**. They profess to know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.

# 1 Timothy 4:1-2

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But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars **seared in their own conscience** as with a branding iron.

# The Conscience: Its Purpose

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Accuse or excuse us - Rom. 2:14-15

Prevent wrong and harmful behavior

Encourage correct and helpful behavior

## Romans 2:14-15

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For when the Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, **their conscience bearing witness** and their thoughts alternately **accusing or else defending them** on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus

# The Conscience: Its Natural State

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A basic level of moral law – Rom. 2:14-16

Incomplete, untrained

## Romans 2:14-15

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# The Conscience: Its Improvement

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Trained by God words - 1 Tim. 1:5

# 1 Timothy 1:5

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But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith

# The Conscience: Its Improvement

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Trained by God words - 1 Tim. 1:5

Adjusting behavior based on it – Heb. 5:14

# Hebrews 5:14

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But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

# The Conscience: Its Deterioration

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Suppressing it - Rom. 1:18

# Romans 1:18

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For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness.

# The Conscience: Its Deterioration

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Suppressing it - Rom. 1:18

Disobeying it - Titus 1:15-16

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# The Conscience: Its Deterioration

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Disobeying it - Titus 1:15-16

Giving it bad training - 1 Tim 4:1,2

Wounded by others - 1 Cor. 8:12-13

# 1 Corinthians 8:12-13

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But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. Therefore if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

# Results of a Defiled Conscience

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Guilt – 1 Cor. 8:7

Higher susceptibility to sin

Inability to stand in judgment – Romans 2:14-16

Loss of faith – 1 Tim 1:18-19

Disqualified for service in the kingdom – 1 Tim. 3:8-9

A hard heart - Eph 4:17-19

# 1 Corinthians 8:7

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# Romans 2:14-16

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For when the Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them **on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.**

# 1 Timothy 1:18-19

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This command I entrust to you, Timothy, my son, in accordance with the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you fight the good fight, keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and **suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.**

# 1 Timothy 3:8-9

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Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

# Ephesians 4:17-19

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So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, **because of the hardness of their heart; and they, having become callous,** have given them over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

# Results of a Good Conscience

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Ability to defend the faith - 1 Peter 3:15-16

Fellowship with the past faithful - 2 Tim. 1:3

Confidence before accusers - Acts 23:1

Resolve in compromising situations – 1 Sam. 24:5,6

Strength in submission and suffering – Rom. 13:5; 1 Peter 2:18,19

# 1 Peter 3:15-16

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but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; and **keep a good conscience** so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.

## 2 Timothy 1:3

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I thank my God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day

# Acts 23:1

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Paul, looking intently at the Council, said, “Brethren, I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day.”

# 1 Samuel 24:5-6

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Now it happened afterward that **David's heart troubled him** because he had cut Saul's robe. And he said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is anointed of the Lord."

# Romans 13:5

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Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience sake.

# 1 Peter 2:18-19

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Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.

# How to Get a Good Conscience

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Cleanse it – 1 Peter 3:21; Heb. 9:14; 10:22

# 1 Peter 3:21

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Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you – not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience – through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

# Hebrews 9:13-14

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For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14 how much more shall **the blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, **cleanses your conscience** from dead works to serve the living God?

# Hebrews 10:19-22

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Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, 21 and having a High Priest over the house of God, 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.**

# How to Get a Good Conscience

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# How to Get a Good Conscience

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Cleanse it – 1 Peter 3:21; Heb. 9:14; 10:22

Train it – 1 Tim. 1:5

Let your conscience be your guide

HOW GOOD IS YOUR  
INTERNAL MORAL COMPASS?

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