

The Conscience Struggle **1John 3:19-24**

Clear Conscience Is Ongoing Struggle

Constant struggle going on in every Christian as regards conscience - **Romans 14:22; Acts 24:16**

What Is The Conscience?

French etymology - knowledge within oneself.

Inner knowledge of right and wrong

The Greek word, *suneidesis* carries the same meaning

"The soul as distinguishing between what is morally good and bad, prompting to do the former, and shunning the latter, commending the one, condemning the other." Thayer - **Romans 2:15**

Though word "conscience" not used in OT, the idea is there. - **2Samuel 24:10**

The Conscience Is Not A Guide

The conscience within each of us works as a judge, not as the guide.

"Just let your conscience be your guide", "As long as one follows his conscience, he is safe", "As long as one is sincere, he is alright."

A good or sincere conscience doesn't make one right - **Acts 23:1**

Idolater may have good conscience, be sincere yet is not right - **1Corinthians 6:9-10**

Orthodox Jew denies Jesus is the Son of God with a good conscience - **John 8:24**

Our conscience tells right or wrong in relation to our standard.

Should act in harmony with conscience, with Word of God as standard

Training and environment might lead one to believe error

"Anyone can be honestly mistaken, but when he is confronted with the truth, he either ceases to be mistaken or ceases to be honest."

Not enough sincere w/good conscience need right standard, Word

Examine Standard To Show If Conscience Is Good

OT, not possible to obtain a good conscience through animal sacrifices - **Hebrews 9:9,14; 1Peter 3:21; Romans 6:3-4**

Though obedient baptism cleanses us, we must continue to refresh our conscience. - **1Peter 2:2; Psalms 1:2; 119:9-16**

The struggle to maintain a good conscience must continue to end - **1Corinthians 9:27**

The goal of our struggle - avoid condemnation and save our souls. - **Philippians 3:13-14**

Consequences Of Not Struggling

If hearts condemn us, God likewise condemn us - **1John 3:20**

Conscience can become defiled - **1Corinthians 15:33; 2Corinthians 6:14; Romans 1:28; Titus 1:15-16**

God requires a good clear conscience - **1Timothy 1:5; 3:8-9; 2Timothy 2:22; Hebrews 10:19-22**

Even so many **Acts 7:51; 1Thessalonians 5:19; 1Timothy 4:2; Ephesians 4:19; 2Peter 2:13; Jeremiah 6:15**

A Good Conscience Is A Struggle - 2Timothy 3:12

Some fear criticism for maintaining principles for conscience sake.

The strongest criticism often comes from family.

Brethren at times can be very hard to deal with.

A Christian refused to engage in social drinking and insisted that he be given a coke left in the bottle.

A butcher refused to tip his scales along with other butchers in the same super-market chain. He then had to explain why his profits were always consistently lower than the others.

God's righteousness/truth must occupy first place in heart & life - **Colossians 3:2; Philippians 4:8-9**

Win The Conscience Struggle - Acts 24:16

Conscience is destroyed by little every day, trifle matters at war against it. - **1Timothy 1:5**

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