

BOLD Course: Making Wise Decisions // Class 3: Considering the Conscience

- 1. Introduction: “Here I Stand” – The Conscientious Decision that Sparked a Worldwide Reformation**
- 2. The Need for a Biblical Understanding of the Conscience**
 - a. The lack of teaching on the subject**
 - b. Misunderstandings about the conscience**
 - c. The ability to make wise decisions with a clear conscience**
- 3. Defining the Conscience**
 - a. Key scriptures**

Afterward, David was conscience-stricken for having cut off a corner of his robe (1 Samuel 24:5 NIV)

my lord shall have no cause of grief or pangs of conscience for having shed blood without cause or for my lord working salvation himself. And when the Lord has dealt well with my lord, then remember your servant.” (1 Samuel 25:31)

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (Psalm 51:10)

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life. (Proverbs 4:23)

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God; and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him (1 John 3:21–22)

18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. 19 For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. (Romans 1:18–20)

And looking intently at the council, Paul said, “Brothers, I have lived my life before God in all good conscience up to this day.” (Acts 23:1)

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit (Romans 9:1)

Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience.(Romans 13:5)

But we have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways. We refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God. (2 Corinthians 4:2)

holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith (1 Timothy 1:19)

According to this arrangement, gifts and sacrifices are offered that cannot perfect the conscience of the worshiper . . . how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to serve the living God. (Hebrews 9:9, 14)

b. Helpful quotes

c. Definition

“The conscience is your consciousness of what you believe is right and wrong.” (Naselli and Crowley)

4. Describing the Conscience

- a. The functions and purpose of the conscience**
- b. Types of conscience in scripture**
 - i. Clean/clear conscience**

Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things. (Hebrews 13:18)

ii. Evil conscience

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

iii. Defiled conscience

To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled. (Titus 1:15)

iv. Seared conscience

through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared (1 Timothy 4:2)

v. Weak conscience

However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. (1 Corinthians 8:7)

5. Interacting with Your Conscience

a. Responding properly to your conscience in union with the Spirit of God

b. Abusing or neglecting your conscience

c. Training and maturing your conscience

When God tells you to change your conscience, change!

9 The next day, as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the housetop about the sixth hour to pray. 10 And he became hungry and wanted something to eat, but while they were preparing it, he fell into a trance 11 and saw the heavens opened and something like a great sheet descending, being let down by its four corners upon the earth. 12 In it were all kinds of animals and reptiles and birds of the air. 13 And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." 14 But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." 15 And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common." 16 This happened three times, and the thing was taken up at once to heaven. (Acts 10:9-10)

d. Dealing with different consciences

25 Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience. 26 For "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." 27 If one of the unbelievers invites you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. 28 But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience— 29 I do not mean your conscience, but his. For why should my liberty be determined by someone else's conscience? (1 Corinthians 10:25-29)

Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, 2 through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, 3 who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. 4 For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, 5 for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer. (1 Timothy 4:1-4)

e. Making wise decisions with a clear conscience

The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. (Romans 14:22)

Bibliography

Conscience: What It Is, How To Train It, and Loving Those Who Differ by Andrew D. Naselli and J.D. Crowley
The Art of Turning from Sin to Christ for a Joyfully Clear Conscience by Kevin DeYoung
Discovering the Joy of a Clear Conscience by Christopher Ash