

IS YOUR CONSCIENCE YOUR GUIDE?

Whether we realize it or not, our conscience is a very powerful force in our lives. Many of the decisions we make are dictated by our conscience. Therefore, it is important that we shape our conscience correctly so that our decisions will be good ones.

Some have said, "your conscience be your guide." If we acted solely on this basis, our lives would soon become miserable. The reason for this is that because all of us are different; our consciences have been molded by different forces, environments, and standards. The culture in which we have been raised has a tremendous bearing on what we deem to be right or wrong. In some countries of the world, sex without marriage is not condemned as it is in other parts of the world. One who has grown up in an environment which allows sexual freedom will develop a conscience which will not condemn these actions. On the other hand, an individual with an upbringing of chastity and strict moral teachings will have a conscience that will condemn him if he practices sexual immorality. Therefore, to say, "Let your conscience be your guide" is a very subjective standard which will allow a particular action to be both right and wrong at the same time.

Not only does this subjectivism relate to sexual activity but can spread to other actions as well. One may justify lying, stealing, hating, murder, while condemning hospitality, gentleness, benevolence, and honesty. What is needed is a guide, a perfect one, by which an individual might shape his conscience so that he will be able to distinguish between what is intrinsically wrong and intrinsically right.

The Bible gives the highest moral standard ever known to man. Even the atheist who has no regard for the God of the Scriptures will agree to that (maybe that is why he is an atheist!). The Bible tells mankind where he came from, who he is, and where he is going. The Bible teaches us how to conduct ourselves with other people, how to control our own emotions, develop our personality, shape our conscience, and above all how to be saved from sin.

We can allow our conscience to be our guide only when it has been shaped by the Bible. Any other standard applied will lead to confusion or morals, destiny, and self-peace. Many people can't live with themselves because they can't live with their own conscience. If our conscience condemns us, we can do one of two things, change our life to please our conscience, or change our conscience.

The interesting thing is that sometimes both are necessary! First, we must change our conscience to be sure that its value judgments are the same as the Scriptures. In this way our standard of measurement of right and wrong will be based on truth, not non-truth. Then, we change our life to please our conscience. By doing this, two things will happen; first we can better live with ourselves because our sense of guilt will be removed (our conscience will no longer condemn us) and secondly, we will be conforming our lives to the pattern of the Bible and be more like Christ.

All the self-help books ever written aren't worth a dime, as compared to the immense value of the Scriptures. Some other book may help in temporarily solving some problems, but the long lasting happiness of a conscience-directed life is found in adhering to the teachings of Christ. This is also another key in developing your Positive Spiritual Attitude (PSA). Living with self, eternal happiness and a PSA; as the Bible speaks, let your conscience be your guide!