

“The Testimony Of Our Conscience”
2 Corinthians 1:12-14

Introduction:

1. Please Turn In Your Bibles With Me:
 - To 2 Corinthians - As We Continue Our Way:
 - Through This Letter Of The Apostle Paul!
 - The First 11 Verses:
 - Which We Have Already Looked At:
 - Are Mostly Introduction - But They Remind Us Of The Great Deliverance & Comfort That Only The Lord Can Provide To His People!
 - Well - This Morning:
 - We Will Look At 1:12-14 - Where Paul:
 - Begins To Address Some Of The Specific Needs And Concerns:
 - Of The Corinthian Church!
 - And There Were Some In Corinth Who Were Questioning Paul’s Authority & Trustworthiness As An Apostle!
2. And So - Beginning In:
 - 1:12-14 - Paul Writes - “For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward. / For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge; and I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end; / As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus!”
 - What We Discover From These Verses Is That When False Accusations:
 - Were Brought Against The Apostle Paul:
 - Paul Had An Even Greater:
 - Witness To His Integrity:
 - It Was - 1:12 - “The Testimony Of Our Conscience!”
 - Every Person:
 - Has A Conscience!
 - Now - We Are Not Exactly Sure:
 - What The Conscience Is Or Where It Resides:
 - But We All Know - By Our Own Experience - What Our Conscience Does!
 - Your Conscience:
 - Was Created By God:
 - And Given To You - To Serve As A Judge:
 - Over Your Own Soul!
 - And - As Originally Designed - Your Conscience Is “God’s Deputy In The Soul!” (Matthew Henry)
 - It Provides A “Check” Over:
 - Your Actions / Your Thoughts / Even Your Motives!
 - Romans 2:15 Describes How We All Have:
 - “The work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness!”
 - And So - There Are Times When:
 - You Inherently Know:
 - That What You Said Or Thought Or Did:
 - Was Wrong!
 - But - For Most Of Our Lives - We Went Ahead And Did Those Things Anyways!
 - In Fact:
 - Your Conscience:
 - Can Be Desensitized:
 - To The Point That It No Longer Works:
 - As God Originally Designed!
 - How?
 - Your Conscience:
 - Can Be Ignored!
 - All Too Easily, I Might Add – Even For Christians!
 - James 4:17 - “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to

him it is sin!”

- Your Conscience:
 - Can Be Defiled!
 - Titus 1:15 - “Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled!”
 - “Defiled” Means To Pollute & To Stain!
 - In Other Words - Your Conscience Can Be Trained:
 - To Call That Which Is “Evil Good” - And That Which Is “Good Evil!”
 - Isaiah 5:20 - “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”
 - A Defiled Conscience Is A Serious Problem!
 - But Even Worse:
- Your Conscience:
 - Can Be Seared!
 - 1 Timothy 4:1-2 - “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; / Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron!”
 - “Seared” Means To Brand Or To Cauterize!
 - And When Something Is Burned To That Degree:
 - You Often Lose Any Feeling Whatsoever!
 - Ephesians 4:18 - “Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness!”
- Your Conscience:
 - Is Like A Sensitive Instrument!
 - **IE:** Switch In Furnace Not Working Properly - Not Calibrated To The Right Temperatures!
 - When Your Conscience Is Not Calibrated Correctly:
 - By God & His Word:
 - It Can Lead You To Unspeakable Sin & Its Consequences!
 - But - By God’s Grace:
- Your Conscience:
 - Can Also Be Purged!
 - Hebrews 9:14 - “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”
 - To “Purge” Means To Purify & Clean & To Consecrate - So That Your Conscience Can Be Used Once Again The Way God Originally Designed It To Be!
 - But The Only Way For This To Happen:
 - Is Through The “Blood Of Christ!”
 - Jesus Christ Alone Can Change Your Conscience:
 - To Function In A Way That Will:
 - Lead You To Glorify God In Your Life!

3. And So - When Paul Writes:

- In 2 Corinthians 1:12 - “The Testimony Of Our Conscience!”
 - He Is Describing A:
 - Changed Conscience!
 - A Purged Conscience!
 - A Sanctified Conscience!
- A Conscience That God:
 - Can Now Use - Through His Word & Through The Holy Spirit:
 - To Guide Us To Live For His Glory!
 - And This Is Why Paul Could Say:
 - 1:12 - “For Our Rejoicing / Our Boasting Is This, The Testimony Of Our Conscience!”
- Paul Could **Know**:
 - That He Was Serving & Pleasing God In His Life:
 - Because God Himself Was Bearing Witness To This:
 - Through His Own Conscience!

- And I Want Us To See This Morning - That Every Christian Can Have This Kind Of Assurance!

- Because Every Christian Can Have This Kind Of Conscience!

- If You Are A Christian:

- God Will Use Your Conscience:

- To Guide You To Live For His Glory!

4. And So - Like Paul:

- We Can & Ought To Strive For:

- A Clear Conscience!

- Acts 24:16 - "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men!"

- And In The Rest Of Our Text In 2 Corinthians, Paul Explains How!

* First - We Ought To Strive For A Clear Conscience:

1. ***In Our Walk!***

- In Our Daily Life!

- 1:12 - "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation [Lifestyle / Behavior] in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward!"

- Paul's Conscience Was Clear:

- Because He Sought To Live His Life:

- In Three Main Ways!

- He Sought To Live His Life:

- In A Simple Way!

- "In Simplicity!"

- "Simplicity" Here Describes Something That Is Not All Tangled Up!

- **IE:** Willow's Hair All Tangled & Matted Up Behind Her Ears - Had To Cut It Off!

- Instead - Paul Sought To Live:

- A Life For The Lord:

- Without Distraction!

- Without Deception!

- And With One Direction!

- Even As David Did In Psalm 27:4 - "**One thing** have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple!"

- Philippians 3:13-14 - "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this **one thing** I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, / I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus!"

- Are You Living Your Life:

- In This Way?

- What Is God Telling You:

- Through Your Conscience?

- He Also Sought To Live His Life:

- In A Sincere Way!

- "Godly Sincerity!"

- This Means That You Are Living Your Life:

- In An Open & Transparent Way!

- That You Are Living Your Life:

- In The Light Of God's Own Nature!

- And That You Have Nothing To Hide!

- **IE:** As If You Were Living In A Glass House - Not Just For Others To See - But Because God Himself Sees!

- It Means That You Are Striving To:

- "Walk in the light, as he is in the light!" (1 John 1:7)

- Are You Living Your Life:

- In This Way?

- What Is God Telling You:

- Through Your Conscience?
- He Also Sought To Live His Life:
 - In A Submissive Way!
 - “Not With Fleshly Wisdom, But By The Grace Of God!”
 - You Might Say - How **Can** I Live & Walk “In Simplicity & Godly Sincerity?”
 - You Can’t – Apart From:
 - God & His Grace!
 - Paul Understood This!
 - And So - He Rested In & Relied Upon:
 - God’s Grace:
 - And Not His Own Wisdom:
 - In Order To Live With A Clear Conscience!
 - Need To Remember:
 - When Striving To Live For The Lord:
 - “On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand; All other ground is sinking sand, All other ground is sinking sand!”
- If You Are A Christian:
 - And Your Conscience Has Been “Purged” & Changed By God:
 - He Will Use Your Conscience To Guide You In Your Daily Walk:
 - Through Life!
 - Don’t Ignore Him When He Does!
 - Instead - Listen To Him & Follow Him!
 - And Walk - “In simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God!”

* Second - We Ought To Strive For A Clear Conscience:

2. In Our Words!

- Even As Paul Did In:
 - 1:13a - “For we write none other things unto you, than what ye read or acknowledge!”
 - Now - Paul Was Inspired To Write:
 - More To The Corinthian Church Than Any Other Church In The New Testament!
 - And Paul’s Conscience Was Clear:
 - That His Words Were Consistent!
- Consistent With His Character!
 - He Always Sought To Have His Words:
 - To Conform To His Character!
 - That Is - The Way He Lived Was The Way He Wrote!
 - “For We Write Non Other Things Unto You!”
 - He Wanted Them To Know:
 - That He Was Completely:
 - Honest & Forth-Right:
 - With Them!
 - He Was Hiding Nothing From Them!
- And Isn’t This:
 - What Our Words Should Be Like?
 - The Words We Write:
 - And The Words We Speak?
 - Ephesians 4:15 - “Speaking The Truth In Love!”
 - Colossians 4:6 - “Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man!”
 - This Should Apply To All Of Our Communications!
 - Are You Using Your Words:
 - In This Way?
 - What Is God Telling You:
 - Through Your Conscience?
 - They Also Need To Be:
- Consistent With God’s Counsel!
 - Everything Paul Wrote & Said:

- To The Corinthians Were In Accordance With:
 - “What [They Already] Read [&] Acknowledged!”
 - In Other Words - He Wasn’t Telling Them Things:
 - They Didn’t Already Know Or Already Believe!
- Again - Nothing Hidden!
 - No Hidden Meanings!
 - No Hidden Motives!
 - Just Speaking God’s Truth In Order For Them To Know It & Grow From It!
- 1 Peter 4:11 - “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God!”
- If You Are A Christian:
 - And Your Conscience Has Been “Purged” & Changed By God:
 - He Will Use Your Conscience To Guide You In Your Words!
 - Don’t Ignore Him When He Does!
 - Instead - Listen To Him & Follow Him!

* Third - We Ought To Strive For A Clear Conscience:

3. ***In Our Will!***

- Even As Paul Did In:
 - The Rest Of 1:13b-14 - “And I trust ye shall acknowledge even to the end; / As also ye have acknowledged us in part, that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours in the day of the Lord Jesus!”
 - Paul’s Desire & Hope:
 - Was That The Corinthian Christians:
 - Would Know Him Completely!
 - For Greater Truth – Not Less!
 - “Acknowledge!”
 - Again - Paul Sought To Keep His Life:
 - As An Open Book:
 - For Them To See!
 - Nothing Hidden!
 - Nothing Held Back!
 - They Knew Him “In Part” - But:
 - He Wanted Them To Know Him:
 - “To The End!”
 - To See The Whole Picture Of His Life!
 - Can This Be Said Of You?
 - For Many Of Us:
 - There Are Things We Would Rather Hide:
 - And Keep From Everyone!
 - But Why?
 - Instead - Our Desire Should Be:
 - Greater Truth – Not Less! And:
 - For Greater Transparency – Not Less!
 - So That There Can Be:
 - A Greater Tie:
 - And Fellowship With Each Other As Christians!
 - Why Paul Writes - 1:14 - “I Trust – My Desire – Is That – “We Are Your Rejoicing / Boasting, Even As Ye Also Are Ours In The Day Of The Lord Jesus!”
 - Paul Wanted Them To Know:
 - That Everything He Said & Did:
 - Was For Them & For Their Benefit:
 - And Growth!
 - And Even Though - When Jesus Returns:
 - Everything Will Be Made Clear:
 - Can’t We Know Each Other In An Open & Transparent Way Even Today?
 - This Should Be Our Desire!
 - Is This Your Desire & Will?
 - For There To Be A Greater Transparency:
 - And Openness:

- Before God & With Each Other?
- If You Are A Christian:
 - He Will Use Your Conscience To Guide Your Will & Desires!
 - Don't Ignore Him When He Does!

Conclusion:

1. A Clear Conscience:
 - In Your Walk, In Your Words, And In Your Will:
 - Will Lead To Greater Transparency:
 - Before God & Others!
 - And What Is The Result Of This Kind Of Conscience?
2. Look Back At:
 - 1:12 - "For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience!"
 - Paul Could Rejoice:
 - And Even Boast:
 - That His Conscience Was Clear!
 - There Was Nothing In His Life:
 - To Hide!
 - There Was Nothing In His Life:
 - That Was Held Back!
 - One Of The Greatest Things:
 - For A Person To Enjoy:
 - Is A Clear Conscience:
 - When That Conscience Has Been Changed & Is Being Guided By The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - 3. What Is The Lord Telling You:
 - Through Your Conscience This Morning?
 - Are You Seeking To Glorify The Lord:
 - In Your Walk?
 - Single! Sincere! Submissive! God's Grace!
 - With Your Words?
 - Clear! Consistent!
 - In Your Will?
 - Truth! Transparency! Fellowship!
 - 4. If So - Give God The Glory!
 - Because It Is His Own Grace:
 - That Is Enabling You To Live In This Way!
 - If Not - Don't Just:
 - "Let Your Conscience Be Your Guide!"
 - Jiminy Cricket!
 - Because Your Conscience By Itself Can Be:
 - Ignored / Defiled / Even Seared!
 - But Instead:
 - "Let God Be The Guide Of Your Conscience!"
 - Through Jesus Christ!
 - Through His Word & Through His Spirit!
 - "Let God Be The Guide Of Your Conscience!"
 - Because Then:
 - God Can Use Your Conscience To Guide You:
 - For The Ultimate Purpose In Your Life - Which Is To Glorify Him!

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