

Clear Conscience

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Bible Text: 1 Timothy 4:1-2, 2 Timothy 3:16

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Alright, 1 Timothy, if you will, please. 1 Timothy continuing Christian conduct, something we can all use some instruction in. The Bible teaches you that we should reprove and I believe in that, and you should rebuke, and that's true, but you should also exhort, and the Bible teaches you clearly that the Bible is given to you as for instruction in righteousness.

Look, if you will, please, first of all, go right one book past 1 Timothy, come to 2 Timothy.

Father, bless your word this morning. Thank you for allowing us to be here. Thank you for the place to meet. Thank you for the beautiful weather. We pray now, Lord, that you might be with us throughout this day. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Notice verse 16. Everybody pretty much as Bible believers knows this verse, 2 Timothy 3:16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God," that means God's breathed on it, "and is profitable," that's good thing, that means it's in the red, I mean in the black, not in the red, it's profitable first and foremost, we're gonna talk about this later, "for doctrine," that's absolute truth. Remember how I showed you that truth is the important thing, that in the devil, the devil doesn't abide in truth and he is the father of all lies. Doctrine or truths that are not changed, they're unchangeable, they're immutable, they're permanent, they're fixed, they're solid. That's why doctrine is important. That's the first application of Scripture is not the practical or the spiritual application of it, but the doctrinal application. Where does it fit? Who's talking? Who are they talking to? How does it apply? If I do't apply it properly, then I can get everything all messed up because you know what you can do? You can find a verse of Scripture to justify anything you want to justify if you don't apply it properly. If you want to be a Seventh Day Adventist, and we just got an email about that the other day, a lady wrote a rather lengthy email about how much she enjoyed everything but that she had to dismiss it because we don't worship on the Sabbath day, and I sent her back the passages that show the Sabbath is for a sign and how it's eliminated from Romans 13 and all that. "I'm not interested in what the Scripture said, made up my mind, Sabbath day is the day I worship. I'm not a Jew. We worship on the first day of the week." Gave her all the things in the Pauline epistles. You say, "That's a silly thing." No, it's a serious thing because if not, then you get into tongues and you get into signs and wonders. So doctrine gives you the foundation whereupon you can build.

Without that, then everything becomes what you think or how you feel or how you were influenced as you were raised, and then you get into a real mess of things.

Alright, doctrine, and then he said, "for reproof." Reproof is to correct behaviors that are wrong, things that are wrong, you did wrong. What is reproof? To tell you that you did wrong. But telling somebody they did wrong doesn't do any good unless you have corrected, "I'm telling you that was wrong." Okay, good, now we need to correct it but how do I correct it? Look what he says, "instruction in righteousness." You know, one of the reasons that you send kids to school is to give them instruction, one of the things in Christians that we don't understand is we're pretty good because especially as you get older, come to 1 Timothy, as you get older you begin to get established. Sometimes they're in prejudices. Some of you are prejudiced about certain things because you were taught to be prejudiced. You were not raised, I mean you were not automatically born with your prejudices. Then the prejudices sometimes are based on preferences or political ideology or those kind of things. What do you have to have? You have to have a Bible to find out if your prejudices are in line with the Bible. There are certain prejudices that are in the Bible. One of the prejudices is an affinity for hating things that God hates and loving things that God loves, but you can't adjust that to what you hate. You say, "Why?" You'll generally hate those things that are beneficial to you but may not be beneficial to others. The Lord said love your enemies. I'd rather hate them, wouldn't you? Pray for them that despitefully use you. You know, when people slander you and talk about you and tell lies about you for their benefit. Most of the time the only reason other people believe that is because they wanted to believe it anyway and you're gonna chase your tail to try to convince them otherwise, but do you know what the Lord said? He said, "Vengeance is mine. I'll repay. You let me take care of it and you don't worry about it," Romans 12.

What I'm trying to show you here is that oftentimes if you don't have what the Bible says about something, you can be led off the trail and the next thing you know, you're reading what's-his-name? Mao Tse Tung's little red book and then you're into communism because you think communism revolves around you. Yeah well, it does for a while until you find out you're just part of the machine and when your cog's gone, they'll ship you to the concentration camp like everybody else.

So doctrine is what gives you a fence, believe it or not, to operate in. That gives you some security. That way when I read the Bible and I find out there's certain things like we'll cover here in a minute, dietary laws, and I realize, "Well, man, if that's the case, then there's certain things I can't eat and I'd better be careful about it and watch it." Then the Lord gives me a verse like this, then I realize, "Oh, okay, I got the liberty to eat it if I can stand it." You may not be able to stand it. Some of you have been standing it longer than others.

But notice what he says here. Let me just say this, instruction's important. Make sure that what you believe before you call it a biblical principle, make sure it's not your preference or your prejudice that causes you to come to that thought because there's a lot of things being taught nowadays as traditions of men that are not biblical at all. It's just, "Well, we

just always believed it like that." Because you like how it made you feel, then you used the authority of the Bible to continue to purvey that so-called truth. It's not a truth at all, it's just a preference.

Alright, 1 Timothy 4, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith," we've covered that. How do they depart? Why do they depart? "Giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." We've covered that and I showed you some of those things along the way. "Speaking lies in hypocrisy," in other words, they say one thing and do another. We talked a little bit about walk not matching the talk. I'm not for what they call lifestyle evangelism but I have to clarify because too often people spend too much time talking about the verbal witness instead of a walk that matches the talk. I don't think your verbal witness is any better than the walk they see that matches the talk. Now you can tell somebody the Romans' road, you can give somebody a tract, you can talk about it, unless they see it walked out in your life, they don't believe that you believe what you're saying. This idea of 1, 2, 3, repeat after me and then come back in and I witnessed to 10 people this week because that's what I'm called to do, you witness in whatever you do. Whether you're working, whether you're dealing with your kids, whether you have a job out in the regular public work or at home, whatever it might be, your testimony is speaking volumes even though not always with lips. It's not always having a voice behind it but it has a voice on two feet. One preacher said one time or one hypocrite said one time, he said this about Christians, he says, "Your walk speaks so loud I can't hear what you're saying." So if you don't show what it is you're trying to say, then what you say has no value at all, and that's not just for preachers, that's for everybody. A Christian should walk what they talk and that way when you talk, it has a little bit more of a benefit.

Alright, then he says, "Speaking lies in hypocrisy," now here I want to deal with this, "having their conscience seared with a hot iron." Seared, that means sealed off. That means not having the ability. Come, if you will, please, to 1 Peter 3. 1 Peter 3, that means nothing new can get in. Now I'm only gonna cover a few of these and the kids are gonna get some of this in youth camp coming up because they need to understand the proper way to think. You say, "You're gonna try to brainwash them." Sure, I am but not with my brain, I'm gonna show them what the Bible says. But sometimes we expect kids to know how to act but a lot of the kids nowadays weren't raised like you were raised.

Now I know and I've heard some people say and I guess maybe it sounds good to say it, but it's not true, you can't honestly say that if you're over 40 years of age, you cannot say that what the kids are going through today and the temptation kids have today are the same thing you and I went through. They might at its basis of things under, but there's no way. I didn't have a phone and an internet and the cable thing, and I don't know, 150 channels or whatever to flip through to find whatever I wanted. I never had a computer at my hand and touch a button and to be able to go anywhere I wanted and see. There's no way it's the same thing. There is no way the parents of the generation that's growing up now, do you know what they do? They don't think anything of letting kids drink and smoke dope at home. I didn't grow up with that. I grew up in a generation where my mom and dad didn't let me go play with other people unless it was athletics at school. They

didn't let me go down the street and play with somebody when I was in elementary school until they met their parents. Now I know you think that's weird but if you knew about people what I know about people now, you'd be thinking, "Yeah, I ain't letting my daughter go down there. I don't know that pervert might be living in the house down there and the next thing you know, you've got an Epstein on your hands." What you have to understand is we didn't grow up in a time period like that and guess what? Parents didn't get upset if you asked them or called them on the phone and wanted to know a little bit about them. They didn't get upset about that, they expected it. As a matter of fact, if you didn't call, it was kind of like, "Oh, you must be one of those kids."

I didn't grow up in a generation of latch-key kids. I didn't grow up in that. I didn't grow up where kids came home to a house all by themselves. I didn't grow up in a home where kids were just allowed to roam. We didn't have the truancy problem that you have today. Look, I'm not throwing off on them, I'm just saying I didn't have the things they have today so for me to try to relate to a generation of people, let alone kids, that grew up in those days, the time and period, they have to learn how to think differently because they haven't been instructed at home because their parents didn't, and it isn't just the flower child generation, the micro minibuses and, you know, peace, love and Woodstock kind of thing.

Alright, so they have to learn how to talk. So it requires some instruction. What does God give you? God gives you a thing called a conscience before you're saved and then dwells with that conscience and will use that conscience when you are saved to try to give you direction, but you can ruin the conscience, you can't ruin the Holy Spirit. If you don't have a good conscience toward God and toward men, then guess what can happen? That conscience can be dirtied, it can be defiled, eventually it can become evil. I'll show you the steps in a minute. And then once it's seared, man, you are headed for some bad trouble. You say, "Why?" You say, "Well, that keeps anything from coming in." Yeah, but it also seals the filth that's in there and it keeps it in there. One of the worst things you can do if you have a boil, if you've ever had the privilege of having one of those, is when that thing gets a core on it, try to seal that thing up and let it go in instead of coming out, and you'll wind up with a big old thing the size of a baseball on there. You say, "Why?" That junk has to come out. Pimples don't heal until you pop them and let the pus come out and then they begin to heal.

Well, the mind is the same way. If you have things in your mind that shouldn't be there, I'll show you the Bible says that your conscience, in Hebrews 9, can be purged from dead works. Dead works are things that are of no benefit, they don't do you any good. But you have to get the stuff out. How do I do it? It's not I go get the stuff out, it's you purge it out. That means you put the good stuff in and it forces the bad stuff out. Now when the bad stuff starts coming out, you can't decide, "I think I want to keep that and I think I want to keep that." Some of you get ready to have a, what do they call them? A garage sale, you know, and you get ready and you say, "Man, I'm gonna set out all these tables," and it's kinda what, keep, you've had it for years, you know, "But I'm gonna keep that. I might need that. Well, I think I'm gonna keep that." And by the time you get out there, you've got one little box full of bolts and nuts, you know, and it's kind of like, "I'm

keeping everything else." And it stays in there for another six years. You're not gonna wear it, you're not gonna use it. "One day when I slim back down." Okay, one day Jesus is coming too, you know? I'm just saying. I'm just saying, you know? And then when you finally do slim back down, all the clothes are out of style anyway. It's kind of like, "Well, why didn't I get rid of them?" And now all you've done is provide moth food. Now it's got holes in it and you throw it in the trash. "Well, you know, I coulda sold that thing at one time." Now nobody will even give you a quarter.

Well, some of you are like that with your mind. You know how you know? You come to church and God tries to replace the old nature with the new nature and tries to get you to put off the old man and put on the new man, and sometimes that new man don't fit over that old man. That old man has to be put off so that new man can put on. And you say, "Why?" They don't fit. It'd be lumpy and bumpy under there and things won't look the way they're supposed to look.

Look, if you will, please, in 1 Peter 3 and pick it up in verse 16. This is the Apostle Peter and he's talking here and he says, "Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation," where? "In Christ." Do you know what he said? You outta have a good conscience knowing you're not doing anything wrong because when people talk bad about you and falsely accuse you, that if they know it's not true, then you've got it okay. But if you don't have a good conscience, do you know what'll happen? You'll be worried about it because you'll say, "Well, you know, they're not lying about me, they're telling the truth." If your conscience is good and they're lying about you, then the Bible says, "Well, okay, don't worry about it. God will deal with them."

Some people make a living all running other people down. That's social media, just make a living out of promoting yourself and putting everybody else down. You do it, you want to do it. Find. Help yourself. It's your business. Free country. I've gotten all the instruction I need to understand it. You know, I've been told a multitude of times, "I ain't gonna quit doing it." You know, "Okay, well, have a good time." But still doesn't negate the fact that there are people that use that stuff for trash. You're all like, "Who is he talking to? It can't be me. I don't..."

Look in verse 21, notice he says this, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience," where? "Toward God,)."

Look in Acts 23. Why do I need a good conscience? How would I know what a good conscience is? Well, if it's toward God, then you're in good shape. The Apostle Paul is gonna show you in a minute, "My conscience is void of offense not just toward God but toward others." In other words, if somebody comes in and says something about you, it's like, I've got things square. Me and Brother Pagan are square. Now you try to make something going on between me and Brother Pagan that's not true, I'm square with him. You want to try to make it what it isn't, I can't prevent that. I can't make you think different but my conscience toward him is clear. Why? Even if he hadn't forgiven me and

I've gone to him, Matthew 18, and said, "You have offended me," and I'm trying to get the thing fixed and straightened up and he isn't gonna do it, I've done everything I can to try to restore the relationship and if he doesn't do it, my conscience is clear toward man and toward God. I did what God told me to do. If he decides to walk away, smack me in the face, or say, "I don't want have nothing to do with you and you're ugly, your momma dresses you funny," and you know, now you've got to make it personal and that kind of thing, but that's all I can do.

If you can understand that, that's all you can do. When your conscience is good toward your fellow man, it means you've done what you can do but you can't control how they think about you. You're never gonna fix all the people that stay stuff about you. You can't do it. You say, "Well, I've gone to them. I've tried to fix it. I tried to straighten it out. They just keep on and they just keep on and they just keep on." You did what you were supposed to do and that's all you can do, and do you know what happens? The devil just keeps grinding on you and grinding on you and grinding on you. Let yourself off the mat. "I did what I could do." If they won't forgive, they won't forgive you.

I told you this story, it's an illustration but they say it's true. I find a lot of fact in it. There were two old ladies that had had problems with each other for years and years and years and one of them was dying and she was in a bedroom back there and her friend came over there to see her. She'd been asking to see her, "Can I see her? Can I see you? Can I please see you? Can I please see you?" So she decided to go over there out of the good graces of her heart, and she goes into that room and she gets down there and pulls up a chair beside the bed, and the little old lady is weak there and all that. And she said, "I'm so sorry, Myrtle, for what I did. I'm just so sorry. I pray that you forgive me for it. I just, I don't even know how, I've been asking you for years to forgive me but I don't want to die knowing this and that." And the lady said, "Okay, Myrtle, well, I'll forgive you." And they prayed, you know, and everything was fine and dandy. And then the lady got up to leave and started toward the door, she got her hand on the door and she said, "Now I want you to know I forgave you but if you recover, I take it back." That's about the same as saying, "Well, I forgave you but I ain't forgetting."

That root of bitterness right there, man, will destroy you from inside. It'll eat, the Bible says it'll eat at you like a canker. It's like having an ulcer on the inside just eating, just eating, just gnawing, just gnawing, just gnawing. Do you know what happens? It kills you. Wanting that revenge on somebody is you wanting somebody to get it so bad. It's like you drinking the poison and expecting them to die because it'll kill you before it'll kill them. Do you know what you have to learn to do? You have to learn to say, "I've done what I can do. I've got to leave it with the Lord. Nothing else I can do."

They're gonna talk about you. Let me just say this. The only people that will believe it about you are people that wanted to believe it in the first place. So do you care so much about the person believing it that you're willing to die trying to convince them it's not true? Why don't you just spend time loving the people who love you? Pretty good preaching even though I'm just kinda getting warmed up this morning, kinda getting my feet under me.

Acts 23, and this is the Apostle Paul. Paul says, "And Paul," verse 1, "earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Paul said, "Between me and God, my conscience is clear." That's an indicator that the Apostle Paul after Calvary is [unintelligible]. Now in the Old Testament the conscience is said to be the heart, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." That's not the muscle, that's the engine in your car. You keep thinking on something long enough, it won't be long before you'll be what you think. Now that doesn't mean you can turn yourself into a Maserati or Arnold Schwarzenegger or whoever else out there if you just think it. If you don't go to the gym, you ain't gonna get nothing done. But you understand what I'm trying to say. Some of you dwell on bitterness so long that that's what you become. You've just become a bitter old biddy or, let's see, how could I make that for a man? Bitter biddy has two "b's." Bitter old codger. That's good. You don't call a woman a codger, you call a man the old codger. That's good. That'll work. Bitter old codger. Thank you, I appreciate that, Holy Spirit. Thank you.

Look in Acts 24. Acts 24. That had to be inspired. I think God breathed on it right after it came out and I just, poof, there you go.

Acts 24. Look in verse 16, the Apostle Paul speaking and he says, "And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence," look at there, "toward God, and toward men." Now Paul had enemies. Paul's conscience was clear. "I have enemies. I haven't done anything other than live for the Lord that would cause that. So I'm sorry they're upset with me but my conscience is clear. I haven't done anything wrong." Now when we get down to it in a little while and a dirty and defiled conscience, you can get that thing going to the point you can be like Ted Bundy, and Ted Bundy had no conscience. I mean, it wasn't just seared, it was dead. No conscience at all. None. And I wouldn't suggest you study it too much but we did a week's long study of that guy, and you can see the gradual progression of that guy where he gets to the point nothing is steering him but his own drive and the devil himself. He has no brakes at all. You could beg and plead with him and try to make sense of stuff, he's completely blinded to it. He didn't care anything about anybody. I know people like that. Their conscience is dead and you keep practicing those wrong things, eventually you can defile and then dirty your conscience to the point that you don't have any conscience, even a Christian can get to the point of that. It doesn't mean the Holy Spirit won't still talk to you, but he can't use the conscience to do it.

Look in 2 Corinthians 1. Let's make it Romans, Romans 9. Romans 9. We're talking about a seared conscience. Now here's the thing you want to understand, having their conscience seared with a hot iron. One of the reasons for Bible preaching...[sneeze], bless you, one of the reasons for Bible preaching, twice, is that it'll tend to rough up your conscience. It'll tend to scratch the surface. It'll tend to irritate it. It'll agitate it a little bit. Well, what happens is you're making it pervious, you're making it porous, you're making it where things can get in there. That's one of the reasons that you want to expose yourself to hard preaching. You say, "Why?" Because it irritates that conscience and allows stuff in there that you wouldn't normally do so, that kind of jackhammer gets in

there and dat, dat, dat, dat, it just keeps hammering away, and then a little crack opens up and now you're able to put in some of the good stuff. But it's not natural to expose yourself to that.

That's like, you know, asking to be chewed out by the DI or something like that for not doing anything wrong. You say, "What does it do?" It keeps you on edge. It makes you pay attention, makes you realize if I can get chewed out just because I have a button sewed on and it doesn't look like but it's got a little tiny or a little, I was told it was a repelling rope that a SWAT team could jump off the rope off of my button and let themselves off of a tower after I told them that I liked the button. And then he said, "Well, if you like it so much," he pulled it off and he said, "it better be sewed back on by the morning." Then he got onto me because it wasn't on my uniform. And I'm not like y'all, I wasn't trying to be the voice of reason. I was like, "Yes, sir." You know, "Why is that off?" "I'm out of uniform, sir." But in my mind I wanted to say, "You just tore it off. It's your fault." But that wasn't....anyway.

Romans 9, the Bible says this verse 1, "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not," why? How can I tell I'm not lying? "My conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost." I have a little note, one of the check systems that God gave you against lying is a conscience. Do you know what? If your conscience gets to the point that when you lie, some of you do like a Persian rug, 2 Corinthians 1, amen, good preaching, but some of you, some of you lie. When you lie, don't you tell me that the Holy Spirit doesn't use your conscience and say to you, "What are you saying?" But you know what you do? Some of you have gotten so accustomed to lying, you just lie. You just lie. You know how I know you lie? You always tell everybody you're telling the truth. "I'm telling you the truth. I always tell the truth. I'm telling the truth. I don't never lie." Well, why do you have to tell me that? I would know that. You trying to convince me or yourself?

I get this or used to get this, this is years ago, you know? It was funny, especially if you had a partner sitting there with you in the box, the interview room, they're sitting in their with you, "I swear on my mother's eyes I'm telling the truth." You'd immediately look at each other and go, "He's fitting to lie now." You know? "I swear on my daddy's grave." You know, "Okay, here we go. You liar, liar, liar, liar, liar." Do you know what that Bible said? That Bible says at least at that moment your mind, your conscience, your tongue has been given over to the devil because the devil is the father of lies. You say, "Well, it's just a little white lie." The devil's the father of lies. [unintelligible] lying.

Sometimes you have lying by omission. You don't give the whole truth. You know, "I promise to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth." They leave out that "whole" and "nothing." The whole truth and nothing but the truth. I get wore out with people. Sometimes preachers are bad about that, "I'll never lie. I don't ever lie." You're thinking, "Okay, there's two right there. One more strike and you're out, man." Come on, you never lie? Your wife comes out and says to you, gentlemen, "Honey, does this make me look fat?" Well now, why did you have to get practical like that, preacher, you know?

But then some of you, you use truth when it's to your benefit to hurt people. He said speaking the truth in love. You're not supposed to use that to try to hurt people. I'm not talking about in a court of law. I don't care if they get hurt in a court of law. You say, "Why?" They're getting where they're doing. That's truth. He did so-and-so and he did so-and-so and he did so-and-so and getting up there and watching them go, "That's not true. I didn't do that. I didn't do that. I didn't do that." Here's a picture of you. "You photoshopped it." Here's a video of you. "Well, you just went to somebody in Hollywood and had that movie made." Here's you in the car with the people and 10 eyewitnesses. "Well, they're all lying." At some point in time, you know what'll happen? You know what's on trial? You because you're lying. You say, "Why?" Dangerous for you as a Christian because it's showing the condition of your conscience. You've gotten so accustomed to it. You say, "Why?" Oftentimes you'll lie for comfort sake. You want to keep things the way they are so you'll lie. Well, God will have you to lie? Okay, lie, lie like a rug. You know, "Well, Rahab lied." Okay, you gonna put yourself in the condition where you're protecting God's witnesses? Are you really that spiritual? Okay, good, I'll give you a pass. How often does that happen? That's an exception. That's not the rule.

Well, I got two amens there, so we're off and running to a great start.

2 Corinthians 1. I was gonna pass on over this stuff but y'all are having such a good time enjoying it, we're gonna stay with it for a while. Here the Apostle Paul, pick it up in verse 11, "Ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf. 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." What happened? His testimony is talking, his conscience is talking to him. His motives for doing what he was doing and the reason why he was doing it come to chapter 4, same book, 2 Corinthians 4, he's saying that, "My conscience is saying you did it with the right reason, right motive."

Philippians 2 teaches this is worth knowing and worth writing down, especially if you're looking for the will of God. In Philippians 2 he talks about [unintelligible] what a man has, not what he hath not. Oftentimes what'll happen is that you're so interested in finding the will of God, you're doing it with the right motive but with the wrong way of doing it. Now it's hard for you to admit that I'm doing it for the right reasons but my method is a soup sandwich. That passage teaches you that if your motive is right, God'll fix your method if you're willing to be trained. God'll not just say, "Well, you messed up the way you're doing it," God'll say, "I appreciate you trying but let me show you another way to do it." Just because you found the will of God in your life, you still have to be instructable. Who was Moses? Moses was the meekest man in all the earth. Is that right, you Bible students? What is meekness? People equate meekness with weakness. No, meekness is one of the strongest individuals throughout the Bible. Why? They remain teachable until the time they die. You should be trying to learn something new. You're gonna throw up in your mouth sure as I'm standing here. You should be trying to learn something new every day of your life. One new thing that you didn't know and you don't get it off of YouTube either. Did you see the latest cat video? No. It's a swimming cat.

Well, it's all in how you look at it. It looked like the cat was drowning to me. You never know. You say it was swimming, I say it was drowning. How do you know? Well, if you've got the end result, that's how you know. See? See? Depends on how you look at it, isn't it?

And some of you, you see it through tainted eyes and you only see what you want to see because at heart you're a liar. And do you know why you suspect people all the time of lying to you? Because you know in your heart you lie to others. You know why you think people steal from you all the time? Because you're a thief. That's why it's on your mind all the time. "Better put a lock on that." Why? "Because if I was around, I'd steal it. They've gotta be lying to me." Why? "Well, because if I was around, I'd be lying about it."

2 Corinthians 4, it's just a biblical truth. 2 Corinthians 4, God gave you a brain, use it. Pick it up in verse 1, "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." Paul's not only holding himself accountable to God, he's holding himself accountable to others by his testimony. Look at it. "They can see I've renounced the hidden things of dishonesty. I'm not walking in craftiness. I'm not handling the word of God deceitfully." How do they know? "I manifest truth, commending everyone to every man's conscience." He shows them the truth. That's how he manifests it. That way your conscience knows, bears witness, "That guy's telling the truth." Can't you tell when somebody's lying to you? You say, "Preacher, you know, didn't you go to school to learn how to read body language?" You don't have to read body language when it comes to that stuff. It doesn't require you to have some special instruction.

Come over, if you will, please, to 1 John. 1 John. Do you know what it requires? If you have the Holy Spirit in you, you can tell when somebody's lying to you. You ought to be able to tell when somebody's lying. A lady said to me recently, she said, "I ran into this fellow over at so-and-so," and I said, "Yes, ma'am." And she said, "Well, he said he really liked you but I'm not sure he was telling the truth." I said, "Oh, I'm sure he's telling the truth." What are you gonna say? I'm not gonna say whether I do or don't like the person because she's gonna wind up saying, "Oh, well, that may be true." I'm just, "Oh, I'm sure he's telling the truth." Do you know what you can do? You can tell if somebody's telling you the truth or not.

Do you know what, you liars? You liars don't realize that when you're lying people know you're lying to them, and you lie and you walk away thinking, do you know what you think? You think they believed you. You say, "How do you know something like that?" I've walked out of many an interview room, walk out of there and go, "He's lying. She's lying." How do you know? "Their mouth's moving." They're writing it in a statement now. They're swearing to it. Signing it. Bringing in the people and bring in the court reporter and the state attorney, "I swear. I swear. I swear." And they walk out of there and they go, "Oh, they believed me." Then we wind up in court and say, "Here's where they

lied. Here's where they lied." And use their lies against them in court to convict them. Some of your lies are gonna be used against you in court.

I'm gonna cut to the chase: your conscience is gonna stand against you in the day of judgment because it's gonna side with God and all the stuff you do now, God's gonna haul your self up there to the judgment seat of Christ and he's gonna say, "Conscience, come here." Lord, I tried to speak up and put a rag in my mouth and a gag on me. I tried to tell them no, he wouldn't listen to me. Tried to warn them. "Testify." And you know what they're gonna do? That conscience is gonna side with God against you. God will say, "Your conscience bearing witness," and the Holy Ghost, you saved people, Holy Ghost right there work done in the body whether it be good or bad, a lot of bad work done with the tongue. Lying. Lying. Lying.

Who's the father of lies? [The devil.] I believe it is who abode not in the truth. God don't like lying. I don't know if you know that or not. Ain't that one of the Top 10? Thou shalt not bear false witness. I think that's in there, isn't it?

God bless your heart. Liars are the funniest people in the world. In their own mind they honestly believe they're so good at their lie that people actually believe them. Like they think they can lie to the Lord and the Lord doesn't see right through it. He's absolute truth.

I'll give you something to think about. Over in 1 John, do you know what he says? He says in verse 7, 1 John 1:7, he said, "if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." Then he comes down into verse 8 and talks about, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." He just called us a liar. Do you know what he said? If I want to walk in the light, if I want to stay in fellowship with the Lord, I've got to keep myself constantly exposed to the light of God's word. I've got to stay. I'm just open. Everything open and honest in front of the Lord if I'm claiming to be in fellowship with him.

Listen, people go to hell, you know what happens? One of the places he calls it, cast into outer darkness. When you go to heaven, you know what he says about the new Jerusalem? He said there's no need of the sun nor the moon for the Lord is the light, the lamp and the light thereof. You don't need the sun and you say, why? He's all light. No shadows up there. And you gonna get up to the judgment seat of Christ, one of the things you're gonna shed is all that lying skin, boy. It'll come off of you like a snake. Why wait until then? Why not square off now, man? Let's get it out, man. Remember Jake last week? What's your name? Jacob. Liar. Conniver. Poacher. Thief. Money-grubber. Okay, good, now we're getting somewhere. I think I'll change your name to Israel so everybody doesn't know, but you're gonna walk with a limp from now on. Why not fix it now? Might be a time to preach a good message on lying.

Look, if you will, please...by the way, that's one of the things that happens in 1 Timothy 4. That's one of the signs of the last days.

Alright, 1 John 3, if you will, please. I said 4, make it verse 21. Verse 20, "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." 21, "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God." How can you expect to have confidence toward God if your heart condemns you? You say, "Everything's right between me and God," and God goes, "Did you want to ask me about that?" I mean, I appreciate what you're saying. Jacob spent about 21 years over there thinking him and God were good after Bethel saying, "Hey, yeah, man, me and him are good. Yeah, oh yeah. Yeah, we're good. Yeah, yeah, man, we're good. We're good to go. Me and the Lord? Yeah, just like that. Yes, sir, man. I mean, me and the man upstairs, boy, we're tight. Yeah, you know, me and the Lord, he's my buddy, he's my pal. Yeah, talk to him all the time. Yeah, we're good, man. We're all good." And he gets ready to head back over there and the Lord stops him short of Jabbok, that river there, that place of emptying out and he sends everybody over ahead of him, like you heard last week, and the Lord said, "Hey, you need to come back here just a minute. We need to talk, you liar, you." What do you mean, lying? Lord, I mean, we're good. "What are you afraid of Esau for? You're afraid he's gonna expose you? You afraid he's gonna tell everybody? You afraid when you see him face to face he's gonna take your head off like he has a right to? You stole from him, you thief." O God, I guess maybe, maybe, ah, maybe we should, ah, maybe I should ah, maybe, ah, maybe, maybe.... "Why are you stuttering?" Well, I want you to bless me. "I ain't blessing you." You say, why? "I'm not condoning your unrighteousness, your unwillingness to see things as they really are. I want to know who you really are."

Boy, you talk about a come to Jesus meeting, man. Do you know what that's a picture of? That's a picture of you meeting Jesus Christ at the judgment seat of Christ, not the Great White Throne but the judgment seat of Christ and going eyeball to eyeball with him and saying, "Confess it." Not to get into heaven but to be able to get the blessing. You've gotta get it square. Part of the terror of the Lord is maybe him bringing up all that unconfessed stuff up there and you've gotta give an account for it. I'd rather put it under the blood now. I want to have a short list when I get there. One of the hardest things about Christians is to help them to realize if you think you've arrived, you ain't. If you're ripe, you're rotten, you're stale, you're stagnant. You've gotten accustomed to the stench of death around you so much, you don't even recognize you stink. You're just accustomed to it. You get around certain individuals and they live in squalor and things like that, and they're able and you walk in there and, man, and one breath of that stuff will make you nauseated, make you want to run out back and throw up. But they've gotten accustomed to the smell. It doesn't bother them. Do you know what happens with Christians? You just get accustomed to carrying around a dead body all the time, get accustomed to the smell, and it's a stench in the nostrils of God. Lackadaisical Christian life and then you blame the church, blame the preacher, blame the pastor. I understand that. I get it, but the fact that you're always wanting to blame somebody else is indicative, if the Bible's right, that you're the one with the problem.

I guess we'd better stop there. I hope you'll come for the morning worship hour.

Your soul gets callused, ladies and gentlemen. Let me give you this as an illustration. You know what a callus is, right? Well, I used to say, "Yeah, right." I don't know that

folks know what calluses are anymore. Calluses are from working hard. They're created by friction, grabbing a rake or a hoe or a shovel or something like that, and I don't mean the one from downtown. And that means that you've gotta clarify nowadays. I said something the other day about down there in Miami, down in the lower part they've got the dykes and stuff and the cane fields. I said, "Well, let me qualify that. I mean the things that hold water back." You've gotta clarify nowadays. They use words differently than we use words.

But calluses come on your hands, they can come on your feet from you wearing them back and forth and the friction eventually creates calluses. Well, in the sense of your heart, if you were to use your fingertips, they're very sensitive. As a matter of fact, you can feel things and touch things. You keep working on the ends of those things, what happens is you lose your sense of touch until it gets callused and then you can touch stuff and you don't even feel it at all, and that's what happens to your heart. It gets callused, repeating the same behaviors that are wrong over and over and it's contrary toward what God wants you to do, and contrary, and contrary. You get the picture. And it keeps rubbing back and forth, and rubbing back and forth, and the blister comes and it hurts, and you think, "Man, I should get that fixed," and maybe you even get under conviction about it and go and put a Band-Aid on it, and then as soon as that Band-Aid's off, you go right back to the same thing again and you repeat the same behavior and do you know what happens? You just keep going around and around and around in a circle and then before long, it doesn't even bother you anymore and you say, "I must be right with God. It doesn't convict me anymore." No, you're not right with God, you're callused. The Bible says your heart has become as an adamant stone. That's like a diamond. That means it is so hard you can't break through it.

God wants to speak to your heart. Do you hear me? It's you that prevents him from speaking. You get something between you and him, eventually it creates a callus even for the believer. Sear here, I'm in Pauline epistles, conscience seared with a hot iron, that's emphasizing that the sear is from repeated calluses. So it's calluses on calluses on calluses and that hot iron has been on there long enough that that sear winds up being so thick, it's taken over the heart. So if the heart's like a piece of meat and you keep searing it from here and searing it from here, that sear winds up being down here and there's nothing soft much anymore. Eventually that sear runs all the way through until that goose is cooked and you can't get anything in there with a hammer.

Alright, we'll take a short break there and see you for the morning service.