



# Life Principles Notes™

## A Good Conscience

### Part 2: Dealing With Its Warnings

#### Summary:

**What do the following situations have in common?** You go off your diet because chocolate is just too tempting. You find yourself looking at someone lustfully. You gossip about your friend. You lie to someone.

Your conscience is going to bother you when you do these things—and you must deal with what your conscience is telling you.

How do you deal with your conscience?

Remember, it's a gift from God, given to protect you from doing things that will destroy you. Your conscience must be cared for because it is the moral capacity that enables you to distinguish what's right and wrong—between good and best in your life.

**Key Passage:** [1 Peter 3:13-16](#)

**Supporting Scripture:** *Acts 23:1; 24:14-16; 1 Corinthians 8:4-12; 1 Timothy 1:12-13; 4:1-2; 2 Timothy 1:1-3; Titus 1:13-15; Hebrews 10:19-22.*

#### Scriptural Principles:

##### 1 If you live a godly life, you're going to face opposition.

When your desire is to live a life that honors God, people will be critical of you. They'll recognize that there's something right about you—that there's something good in you. They will realize that there's something different about your relationships and attitude—the way you respond to things. However, what happens to the conscience when it's ignored or when we respond wrongly to its warnings? The Bible gives us seven words that relate to the condition of our conscience in each of its possible stages.

##### 2 A good conscience.

In Acts 23:1, Paul says, "I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day." That may be difficult to believe considering that Paul persecuted the church before he was saved. However, because Paul acted in ignorance (see 1 Tim. 1:13), and because he changed his ways the moment he understood the truth, he could say that his conscience was good. You see, when Paul was persecuting believers, he was doing what he thought was right according to how his conscience was programmed as a Pharisee—he felt it was his responsibility to eliminate anything that attempted to undermine the law of almighty God. Yet, when Jesus Christ changed his life, he realized that all of his programming was wrong. People sometimes believe that they're doing the right thing—when they are actually violating God's Word—because that's the way they've been programmed.

##### 3 A blameless conscience.

In Acts 24:16, Paul says, "I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men." A blameless conscience means that he is working at being godly and disciplined. Paul was willing to do whatever was necessary to make sure that he was right with God—to keep his conscience from convicting him. Although there were those who were criticizing him, Paul knew that he was walking in the will of God. A blameless conscience can only occur through obedience to the Holy Spirit.

#### 4 A clear conscience.

Paul also said, “I serve with a clear conscience” (2 Timothy 1:3). A clear conscience is one that’s quiet, clean, and without regret. Paul was always prepared for whatever God called him to do, and he always gave God his best. Paul remained true to the Word of God, and never compromised his convictions. How many times a day does your conscience challenge you about something? Don’t try to silence it; rather, obey God immediately, and you’ll keep your conscience clear.

#### 5 A weak conscience.

Paul also dealt with people with a weak conscience—people not as mature in the faith. We are responsible to live a life that won’t hinder young, immature believers. Others are looking to us as examples of how they can live the Christian life. We must ask ourselves, “If I participate in that, will it hurt my testimony—my example to others?” Understand, if we engage in activities that cause others to fall, we’re accountable to God. Yet, in guarding our own conscience, we’re also protecting others who watch how we live.

#### 6 A defiled conscience.

When a person begins to sin against God and doesn’t acknowledge that he is accountable to Him, he is defiling his conscience. And the longer he defiles it, the dirtier it gets. Our conscience is like a window—when it’s clean, more light can come in. However, if we allow it to be soiled, the light gets dimmer, until we don’t realize we’re walking in the dark. This happens when we watch what others are doing, rather than looking to God’s Word.

#### 7 An evil conscience.

Then there is the evil conscience, which is one that is continually in sin. An evil conscience is one that does things that we could never do—it is a way of life. An evil conscience doesn’t care that there’s a God at all. An evil conscience will suffer the awesome consequences that God warns us about in His Word.

#### 8 A seared conscience.

Yet, there is an even more awful state, and that’s the seared conscience. If we took a branding iron, and put it on our arm, the flesh would become so damaged that it would become hard and have no feeling at all. That’s what sin does—it hardens the heart and conscience until the person doesn’t feel anything. The conscience is seared, and the person can no longer receive the truth.

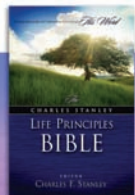
#### 9 Steps to a blameless conscience.

If we want to keep a clean, blameless conscience, we must:

1. Trust Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and Lord.
2. Set the Word of God as our standard for living.
3. Allow nothing in our life that contradicts the Word of God.
4. Surrender to the Holy Spirit.
5. Have a daily cleansing by confessing our sins and repenting of them.

### Conclusion:

We must keep a clear, blameless conscience before God, because it’s a wonderful blessing. When our conscience is pure and clean, we’ll have courage because no matter what we’re accused of, we’ll know we’re in God’s will.



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